Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence

edited by
Giuliana Giusti, Piergiorgio Mura,
Cristina Procentese

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Abstract

In today's global society, an increasing number of people speak a few widely spoken languages enjoying high standardisation and official recognition. Meanwhile, minority and local languages are gaining interest from specialists and society. This volume explores the rich topic of bi(dia)lectal repertoires, focusing on their grammatical as well as attitudinal, social and political dimension. With contributions from the international conference 'Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence (LABiC)', held at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in September 2022, the volume is suited for linguists, educators, policymakers, and language enthusiasts who strive to support minority languages in a globalised world.

Keywords Bi(dia)lectalism. Bilectal competence. Bilectal grammars. Language attitudes. Language policy. Minority languages.

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Introduction

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In today's global society, an increasing number of people speak a very low number of widely spoken languages that enjoy a high level of standardisation, time-dated official recognition and considerable resources. At the same time, minority, local, unofficial, non-standardised, under-resourced languages are gaining interest from specialists, activists and society as a whole.[1] In this respect, diverse labels have been used to describe the countless bi- or multilingual repertoires including at least one minority language. These labels highlight the varying relationships in terms of typological distance between the varieties or languages at issue. Moreover, they highlight the asymmetry in terms of status and power between them. Notable among these terms are 'bidialectalism' (e.g., Chambers, Trudgill 1998; Bright et al. 2018) and 'bilectalism' (Rowe, Grohmann 2013), with the latter better capturing diglossic repertoires, typically characterised by a standardised superposed language as the higher variety and the local 'dialect' as the lower variety. Such special instances of bilingualism have been attracting growing attention in linguistic research. This interest is driven by several factors. One is the richness of data that bilingual contexts with local languages can offer in terms of language documentation, language variation and change, general language theories (see, among the others, De Vogelaer, Selier

1 See Grinevald, Bert 2011; Lee, Wright 2014; Berruto 2018; Hogan-Brun, O'Rourke 2019; Hodges 2021; Ridanpää 2022; Heinrich 2023, among others.

2012 for a general overview of the matter; Ledgeway 2013 on (micro) syntactic variation in Romance languages and their dialectal varieties). Another factor is the growing evidence of the linguistic and cognitive benefits of any type of bilingualism (e.g. Lauchlan, Parisi, Fadda, 2013; Garraffa, Obregon, Sorace 2017; Garraffa et al. 2020). Additionally, such contexts are particularly interesting for the study of identity and attitudes, as they play a crucial role when it comes to endangered language preservation or revitalisation (e.g. O'Rourke, 2011; Sallabank 2013; Vari, Tamburelli 2023).

Given the multifaceted nature of factors contributing to this growing interest, it is no surprise that issues concerning bilingualism with local languages have been approached from diverse perspectives within the field of linguistics. A primary focus of research consists in the mutual influence of the grammatical systems of languages with varying levels of prestige, together with the phenomena of contact-induced variation that are visible at different linguistic levels (see, for instance, Quartaro this volume). Some studies with a similar focus went beyond simple language description and documentation, since they have approached linguistics systems as a set of abstract rules that generate structured sentences with meaning (see Corrigan, 2010; Coronel-Molina, Rodríguez-Mondoñedo 2012; Padovan et al. 2016). From this perspective, non-standard, local or minority languages have informed the field in a meaningful way, since the characteristics of bi- or multilingual grammars are shaped by factors such as prestige, societal attitudes, and the contexts of language use, which determine the quality of input. For instance, non-standardisation has often proven to impact the characteristics of the standard-dialect continuum, generating fuzzy boundaries between varieties, instances of grammatical hybridity, language mixing and/or optionality.[2] Additionally, investigating linguistically close languages can reveal aspects of micro-variation, since they may share most grammatical properties but display minimal differences in morphosyntactic feature specification and spell-out. Such micro-comparisons of closely related varieties may provide meaningful insights into the limits of variation, the role of intra-speaker variation and, more generally, into how variation can be captured theoretically and thus incorporated in the speakers' mental grammar (see Grohmann et al. this volume). Such variation is extremely meaningful to inform future linguistic theories, since it is devoid of the constraints of standardisation, explicit leveling and conscious codifications. As such, it

2 See Cheshire, Stein 1997; Henry 1998, 2005; Milroy 2001; Cornips 2006; Tsiplakou et al. 2006; Papadopoulou, Leivada, Pavlou 2014; Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou 2017; Grohmann et al. 2020; Procentese et al. 2024, among others.

allows us to investigate the natural course of linguistic change and evolution (Romaine 2007; Ihsane, Stark 2020).

A more recent perspective concerns the psycholinguistics field, which has begun to engage with variable linguistic data, embracing investigations that were traditionally of sociolinguistic interest alone. In fact, the field has progressively been trying to shift away from the monolingual prototype of language user and move towards the inclusion of within-individual and between-individual sources of variation, including instances of bi- and multilingualism (see Boland et al. 2016; Bülow, Pfenninger 2020 for a broad discussion on this matter). A recent debate in this field deals with the cognitive advantages of bi(dia)lectalism compared to more prototypical instances of bi- or multilingualism. Interestingly, previous literature on bilingualism with minority languages provides an inconsistent picture concerning its cognitive advantages. On the one hand, some studies found no bilingual advantage in terms of executive functions (see Gathercole et al. 2014 on Welsh–English bilinguals; Duñabeitia et al. 2014 on Basque–Spanish bilinguals). On the other hand, a group of studies did show an advantage for similar populations compared to their monolingual peers.[3] This line of research is particularly relevant as far as the impact on society is concerned. In fact, it contributes to overturn the misconception that such instances of bilingualism (and especially those including non-standardised varieties commonly referred to as 'dialects') should be discouraged in family and educational settings. Despite the above-mentioned progressive shift within the field, it is important to note that an impressively small number of languages is still overrepresented in psycholinguistic research. As reported by Kirk (2022, 1), "it is estimated that only around 0.6% of the world's languages have featured in sentence production research [...] with areas such as child language acquisition not being much higher at around 1.5%". Moreover, "only ten languages account for 85% of the abstracts featured in 4000 leading psycholinguistic conferences and journal articles". As the reader will note, the psycholinguistic perspective is underrepresented in our volume too. This provides further proof of the big gap existing in the literature so far, and perhaps of the barriers that can exist in accessing minority, local and non-standardised varieties. Without doubts, there is still a lot of work to be done to account for non-standard bi- and multilingual repertoires in current psycholinguistic models of language processing and production.

3 See Lauchlan, Parisi, Fadda 2013; Antoniou et al. 2014; Garraffa, Beveridge, Sorace 2015; Garraffa, Obregon, Sorace 2017; Garraffa et al. 2020; Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou 2017; Poarch, Vanhove, Berthele 2019 for investigations on cognitive control, problem solving ability, metalinguistic abilities, and working memory in both adult and child populations.

A perspective that, instead, is well represented in our volume concerns the social, attitudinal, identity and political situation of bi(dia)lectal speech communities. In areas of language contact between a local language and a national one, both become symbols. Traditionally, the local language, which is weaker from a socio-economic viewpoint, becomes a symbol of poorness, scarcity of work opportunities, backwardness. Conversely, the majority language tends to symbolise social mobility, wealth, modernity (Austin, Sallabank 2011; Campbell, Rehg 2018). Such opposite attitudes often lead to an increasing use of the national language and a simultaneous progressive abandonment of the local language. In many cases, this results in the local language not being transmitted to future generations (Brezinger, de Graaf 2009; Austin, Sallabank 2011; Thomason 2015; Campbell, Rehg 2018). However, recent years have witnessed a shift in the way local languages are perceived. In Italy, Berruto (2006) talked of *risorgenze dialettali* 'dialectal resurgences' to highlight a renewed interest in the local varieties and their use in domains that traditionally pertained to national languages. Similar phenomena have been observed in different parts of the world. Globalisation plays a central role in this trend inversion, as its uniformising forces have provoked a reclamation of what is local (Niño-Murcia, Rothman 2008). This tension between global, national and local leads to the presence of multiple identities in bilingual and multilingual societies (see at least Joseph 2004; Niño-Murcia, Rothman 2008). Such identities might emerge at different times, leading to different linguistic behaviours according to contexts and interlocutors (see Tabouret-Keller 1997; Noels, Yashima, Zhang 2020 for overviews on the topic; see also Baruzzo this volume).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that favourable attitudes and a strong identity link with a language do not always correlate with actual proficiency or usage, especially with local languages. In Italy, for instance, while the national language keeps increasing its speakers and domains of use, the use of the so-called 'dialects', despite growing positive sentiment, is often limited to merely tokenistic practices (Dal Negro, Vietti 2011; Berruto 2018). In some areas, it seems that especially those who know and use less the local language hold more positive attitudes towards it (see Besler et al. this volume). In such regard, it should be highlighted that positive language attitudes are one of the first fundamental steps to revitalise or maintain minority languages whose life is in jeopardy (Bradley 2002; Sallabank 2013), but they are not capable of inverting trends of language behaviour alone (Ajzen 1985; Garrett 2010). Indeed, the integrative and instrumental value of a minority language are also important to encourage people to actually use or learn it (see, for example, Gardner, MacIntyre 1991; Lasagabaster, Huguet 2007; Belmar, van Boven, Pinho 2019). As a matter of fact, especially the lower instrumental value of

local languages compared to that of majority languages often leads speakers to underuse or confine the former to private spheres, exacerbating the hierarchies within communities (see, for example, Mura this volume; Simoniello, Ganfi this volume).

In this respect, language policy – both at the macro, institutional level, and at the micro, grass-roots level – can play a pivotal role, as it may aim either to consolidate the current sociolinguistic situation of a community or bring about profound changes to the *status quo*. The latter aim might be an attempt to promote more prestigious uses of a local language, standardising it and introducing it in the public and educational spheres (see Baldauf 2006; Spolsky 2009; Wei, Kelly-Holmes 2022, among others, for a broad discussion on issues pertaining to language policies at different levels of society; but see also the observations by Mura this volume; Simoniello, Ganfi this volume; Tamburelli this volume). When positive attitudes merge with integrative and instrumental reasons for learning and using a minority language, language preservation seems a feasible achievement, leading to an increase an increase in the number of people who know the language and the creation of 'new speakers' (O'Rourke, Ramallo 2013; O'Rourke, Walsh 2020).

Such dynamics generate language practices that are particularly interesting from the viewpoint of contact linguistics. These practices are often characterised by strong intra-speaker and inter-speaker variation – amplified by the presence of both 'semi-speakers' and 'new speakers' of the minority language –, frequent language shifts and code alternations. At the same time, also puristic behaviours and tensions for the legitimacy of the status of speaker of a local language are often present (O'Rourke, Ramallo 2013; Sallabank 2013). Indeed, on the one hand, purism may prevent most of the code-switching from the minority to the majority language from happening. On the other hand, instances of code-switching may frequently occur by virtue of the limited competencies of the speakers (Dal Negro 2005; Mereu, Vietti 2020). More in general, shifts in both directions offer a fertile area of research, for example adopting a socio-functional approach (Auer 1984), which is able to identify the communicative and pragmatic functions of plurilingual practices (see Cerruti, Regis 2005; Dal Negro 2005; Mereu, Vietti 2020; Simoniello, Ganfi this volume, among others).

Plurilingual practices are often carried out in school too. Although stigmatisation against them is still visible in different parts of the world (e.g. Murillo, Smith 2011; Nguyen 2022), the attention of educational linguistics to the advantages of being able to resort to more languages has been recently growing (see Gafaranga 2007; Davies 2020, for overviews on the topic). Notably, accepting the presence in school activities of minority languages, which are often the L1s of students, seems to bring along linguistic and social benefits. Firstly,

acknowledging different linguistic and cultural realities means embracing and not segregating different identities, which can be fundamental for students' attitudes towards their local languages and for their own self-esteem (Davies 2020). It might be argued that this is more likely to happen if the local varieties mastered by students are fully recognised as 'languages' rather than declassify them to 'dialects' or to other terms that may be seen as derogatory (see Tamburelli this volume). Secondly, a plurilingual pedagogy involving minority languages, other than the aforementioned psycho-sociological advantages, appears to be beneficial for learning in general terms and for linguistic learning in particular. By resorting to their bi- / multilingual repertoire, students are able to make positive inferences about language patterns, making them capable to learn key linguistic structures and, with time, even take part in full communicative activities, especially when the starting and the target languages are typologically related (see Davies 2020; Llompart et al. 2020; Varcasia, Atz this volume). Including local (or immigrant) languages in educational practices and teaching materials also strengthens the metalinguistic awareness of students, especially if structured work on language variation is carried out. For this to happen, a thorough study of the characteristics of those languages is necessary, especially as far as school-related elements are concerned (see Cignetti et al. in this volume).

This volume is based on the topics of the international conference 'Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence (LABiC)', which was held at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in September 2022 and it includes the work of some of the conference presenters. We are deeply grateful to all the researchers who contributed to the conference, both those who presented a chapter in this book and those who could not do so for all sorts of reasons. Each single presentation was an enrichment to us and to the whole field of study concerned with bilingualism with local languages. We are particularly thankful to the keynote speakers, Antonella Sorace, Bernadette O'Rourke, Kleanthes Grohmann and Marco Tamburelli for their inspiring talks. Antonella Sorace showed the connection between people's perception of minority languages and cognitive advantages related to bilingual repertoires. Moreover, she stressed the importance of appropriately communicating notions pertaining to bilingualism, in order to allow policy-makers and speakers to make informed decisions about the future of minority languages and their intergenerational transmission. Bernadette O'Rourke proposed new ways of understanding minority language revitalisation, by also re-thinking long-established concepts such as that of language as a stable community of speakers and the notion of 'speaker-hood' itself. The contributions by Kleanthes Grohmann and Marco Tamburelli, which bring different but very fascinating perspectives to the field, can be found in the opening and

closing chapters of this book, respectively. We believe they provide a perfect framework, as the volume brings together research that explores the topic of bi- / multilingualism with local languages from multiple intertwined perspectives, which range from language contact and its effect on grammatical traits, to language attitudes, language policies and educational implications.

The volume has not been divided into sections. This choice was made to reflect the main idea behind the conference and the volume: issues pertaining to bi- / multilingualism with local languages should be addressed in a comprehensive way, with different approaches working together rather than in sealed compartments that do not look at each other. The special characteristics of this type of bi- / multilingual repertoires emphasise the connections between formal linguistic aspects and social ones. On the one hand, language variation and language contact phenomena detectable in such contexts are deeply influenced by identity and attitudinal issues, but also make up an invaluable source of investigation for formal and theoretical linguistics. On the other hand, sociolinguistic phenomena and those related to the social psychology of languages have tight links with matters of language proficiency, language competence and actual language use, with which they should be investigated. Even studies related to teaching multiple languages in school should both comprehend motivation and grammatical aspects, as such elements go hand in hand in creating metalinguistic awareness and tolerance for language variation. This multi-perspective, interdisciplinary approach is obtained both by looking at this volume as a whole and at the single contributions. Clearly, this way of addressing issues in this discipline is not new, but with this volume we want to further encourage this intertwining of approaches and perspectives, which, we believe, is a virtuous direction for the future of this discipline.

Having stressed that, it is also important to clarify that the volume is divided in 9 chapters ordered in a thematic logical progression. The first contributions present instances of contact between a standardised national and a non-standardised language and their implications for grammatical structures or phonetic traits (Grohmann; Quartararo; Baruzzo). Then, the topic of language contact is linked with language attitudes by delving into their role in defining the direction of convergence between varieties with a different social status (Baruzzo, Besler et al; Mura; Simoniello, Ganfi). Afterwards, the issue of language policies is addressed and the educational context is explored as the locus of multilingual interactions and didactic activities that may involve local languages, with interesting implications for today's society (Simoniello, Ganfi; Varcasia, Atz; Cignetti et al.). Finally, the last chapter concludes our inquiry by addressing definitory issues of 'language' in the field of Linguistics, especially when dealing with minority languages (Tamburelli). For the reasons

explained above, we encourage the readers not to feel constrained by this order and feel free to jump around and dig into the chapters in the way that better resonates with their interests or current needs.

Chapter 1, "Bilectal Investigations of Grammar: A Clitic Placement. View from Cyprus", by Kleanthes K. Grohmann, Evelina Leivada, Natalia Pavlou, and Constantina Fotiou, presents an in-depth analysis of clitic placement among bilectal speakers of Standard Modern Greek (SMG) and Cypriot Greek (CG), the non-standardised variety spoken in everyday communication. The chapter meticulously reviews and discusses previous research conducted by the Cyprus Acquisition Lab's team, focusing on both language acquisition and adult grammar. Moreover, it contributes to both linguistic theory and language practices. From a theoretical perspective, it engages in the critical debate on how generativist theories can account for the observed variation between and within speakers. Rather than adopting a strictly parametric approach, the work adopts a 'Universal Grammar from below' approach and considers the different 'lects' of local language speakers as part of a unified, mixed grammar.

Chapter 2, "Object Marking in Aymara. A Case of Linguistic Contact-Induced Phenomenon from Spanish", by Geraldine Quartararo, focuses on the impact of linguistic interaction on the system of marking objects in the Aymara language, centering on the verbal expression of Direct Objects (DO) by Aymara-Spanish bilinguals. It delves into the oral use of DO in two regional Aymara varieties, one from La Paz, Bolivia, and the other from Muylaque, Peru. The La Paz data were collected through spontaneous narratives and two structured tasks, namely the Family Problems Picture task and The Pear Story. Meanwhile, the Muylaque data comprised recorded narratives and dialogues. In a departure from earlier studies, which predominantly highlighted the accusative case as the DO marker in Aymara, this research reveals that bilingual speakers employ a combination of three markers in their speech: accusative, nominative, and dative/allative cases. This diversification in marking, particularly the adoption of nominative and dative cases, is thought to arise from the influence of Spanish, a language known for its specific marking of animate and definite DOs and the absence of markers for other DOs. The quantitative findings of this study lend support to the idea that bilingual speakers of Aymara and Spanish are integrating new, contact-influenced methods for marking DOs in Aymara.

Chapter 3, "Varieties of Spanish in Contact. Overt Sociolinguistic Views Among Young Western-Andalusians", by Valeria Baruzzo, examines the linguistic interaction between Andalusian and Madrilenian Spanish, particularly among highly-educated young Western-Andalusians in Madrid. The study focuses on whether this contact leads to a linguistic shift towards the Madrilenian variety and away from Andalusian features, specifically the 'ceceo/seseo' variant. It

also explores how participants' perceptions and attitudes might influence this linguistic adaptation. Findings indicate that while these individuals retain a strong connection to their Andalusian roots, they also adapt to Madrid's dialect, undergoing a significant shift in their linguistic identity.

Chapter 4, "On the Relation Between Attitudes and Dialect Maintenance (Sicilian and Venetan) in Italy", by Alexandra Besler, Maria Ferin, Ilaria Venagli and Tanja Kupisch, is the first of a series of three papers dedicated to the Italian situation. Here, a comparison is made between the attitudes held by Venetans (northern Italy) and Sicilians (southern Italy) towards their local languages (or 'dialects'). This study confirms that a general revalorisation of local languages has been taking place in Italy. However, only in the Venetan area the appreciation of the local language seems to go hand in hand with actual language use, while in the Sicilian area the local language seems to be more favourably evaluated by those who do not actively use it. Following a multi-perspective approach, in addition to connecting attitudes with use, the authors explored participants' proficiency in both the national and local language. Results show that the latter does not hinder the former, and if anything, within the Sicilian participants, being proficient in the local language turned out to be positively correlated with a higher proficiency in Italian.

In Chapter 5, "students' Attitudes and Opinions in a Context of Bilingualism with a Minority Language. Italian and Sardinian Compared", Piergiorgio Mura presents the results of his attitudinal investigation conducted with schools in another Italian context, Sardinia. On a general level, both the majority and the minority language received very positive ratings by students. Participants' affective bond with both Italian and Sardinian was shown, as well as the willingness of the students – especially the youngest ones in early adolescence – to see both languages included in school activities. However, the perceived instrumental utility of Sardinian turned out to be particularly low, and the author invites policy-makers to reflect on the potential meaning of this result for the long-term vitality of the minority language. In this study, the level of competence and use of the local language by participants positively interacted with their degree of favourableness towards that language.

With Chapter 6, "Effects of National Language Policies on Local Varieties: Campanian and Sicilian Case Studies", by Maria Simoniello and Vittorio Ganfi, southern Italian contexts were examined, namely Campania and, once again, Sicily. A multi-perspective approach is offered to readers, as both participants' linguistic practices and language prestige were studied, also in the light of national and regional language policies. In both contexts, the local language seems to be still quite active in private domains, much less in the public sphere. Moreover, the boundaries between Italian and the local

language often turned out to be not clear-cut, as many instances of code-switching were detected. The authors, then, listed a series of communicative and pragmatic functions fulfilled by the numerous shifts between languages. As far as language prestige is concerned, this study confirms once more that the local languages are generally perceived as valuable nowadays, but especially in terms of cultural heritage. A real change of the sociolinguistic status quo, where Italian is used both in high and low domains and the local languages only in the latter, does not seem to be looked for. This disposition is arguably fostered by the fact that top-down national and regional policies addressing Campanian and Sicilian do not appear focused on such a matter and show little commitment to modify the current roles languages have in people's repertoires and today's society.

In Chapter 7, "How Is the Usage of the Swiss Variety of Italian Perceived in the Educational Context?", Luca Cignetti, Laura Baranzini, Simone Fornara and Elisa Désirée Manetti present the first results of their study on the Swiss variety of Italian, focusing in particular on school-related lexicon. After a thorough overview of the current sociolinguistic situation concerning the Italian language in Switzerland, examples of 'Italian helvetisms' particularly relevant in the school context are presented, and their differences with 'Italiano d'Italia' are described. The authors stress the importance of creating a glossary of lexical entries typical of the Swiss variety of Italian, in order to develop teaching materials and, more generally, a strong metalinguistic awareness of students, with informed reflections on language variation.

Chapter 8, "Multilingual Literacy and Metalinguistic Reflection in Primary School", by Cecilia Varcasia and Emanuela Atz, explores multilingual classrooms in South Tyrol, an area characterised by both native and immigrant multilingualism. Inspired by the 'Éveil aux langues' approach, the study was conducted in primary school and aimed at fostering metalinguistic awareness. Results indicated that regardless of their school system, children use their shared linguistic repertoire to aid and challenge their language learning. For instance, Dutch comprehension was often enhanced by German skills, while Ladin was only partly assisted by Italian. Children's existing language knowledge helped them learn new languages, demonstrating high metalinguistic awareness. This approach, integrating home languages in the classroom, not only improved school language learning but also equipped students to handle unfamiliar languages, highlighting the value of leveraging students' native linguistic resources in education.

The volume ends with Chapter 9, "Attitudes Reversed. How Ausbau-centric Approaches Hinder the Maintenance of Linguistic Diversity and Why We Must Rediscover the Role of Abstand Relations", by Marco Tamburelli. This final chapter addresses the issue of how to

classify languages, which is of particular importance for 'small' and local varieties. The author claims that considering 'languages' just those that already have official recognition or socio-political power is not a fair practice and it conceals the real multilingualism present in speaking communities. Moreover, denying local varieties the status of 'language' can create both communicative and educational problems for the speakers of those varieties. Consequently, speakers are likely to develop negative attitudes towards their own L1s, which in turn seriously hinder their vitality. The author proposes to classify languages not on socio-political criteria (Ausbau approach), but on purely linguistically structural and formal criteria (Abstand approach). This way, linguistic systems that have their own grammar and are not intelligible to speakers of an already established standard language cease to be called 'dialects' and start to be called 'languages', which in turn helps improve speakers' attitudes towards such languages. As a support to his theses, the author presents previous research findings on two different standardisation processes followed by two different communities in Belgium and Luxembourg where varieties of Moselle Franconian are spoken. Opting for an internal variety of the minority language as the standard variety (as happened in Luxembourg) seems to improve speakers' attitudes towards the minority language more than choosing an established majority language (which might be quite distant from an Abstand perspective, as it happens for Moselle Franconian and German).

In conclusion, the notions presented in this book allow scholars, language experts and policy-makers to reflect on their future actions and their impact on language preservation and maintenance. Furthermore, we believe that this volume emphasises two pivotal issues in the study of bilingualism with local, non-standardised or minority languages. Firstly, it advocates for a critical shift towards multidisciplinary approaches. Secondly, it implicitly issues a strong call to linguists worldwide, urging them to step out of their comfort zone and expand their research beyond well-documented national languages, predominantly English. This redirection is imperative not just for academic diversity but also for the preservation of linguistic heritage and a comprehensive understanding of human language in its entirety. The role of linguists is thus reframed not only as researchers but also as guardians of linguistic diversity in this rapidly globalising world. In order to fulfil this role, we should all make small efforts and ensure that languages with fewer resources receive the attention and support they deserve.

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Bilectal Investigations of Grammar
A View from Cyprus

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Abstract Research on variation and concomitant bilingualism arising from local languages has gained a lot of traction recently – and rightly so, since it can inform on so many levels. In this respect, Cyprus is in a special position when it comes to the study of language. This paper reports on one aspect of our lab's research agenda: the relevance of the difference in object clitic placement between the official languages (Standard Modern Greek) and the local vernacular (Cypriot Greek) for linguistic theorising, but also for language practices. This paper also engages with accounts capturing variation in language and among speakers, framing the different lects of local language speakers in terms of a 'UG from below' rather than strictly parametric approach, as merged into a single, mixed grammar.

Keywords Adults. Bilectalism. Children. Clitic placement. Cypriot Greek. Mixed grammar. UG from below.

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1 Introduction and Overview

Cyprus is in a special position when it comes to the study of language for many reasons. This paper reports on one aspect of the CAT Lab's research agenda, the Cyprus Acquisition Team that was initiated some 15 years ago: the relevance of the difference in object clitic placement between Cypriot Greek and Standard Modern Greek for linguistic theorising, but also for language practices. By so doing, it aims to bring closer the potential impact that the confined geographical space of this small island may have on issues pertaining to language acquisition and subsequent development from different perspectives, of imminent relevance for any study of multilingualism, that is, also beyond Cyprus.

Two concepts form the backbone of the discussion, which space does not permit to be presented in more detail: the 'Socio-Syntax of Development Hypothesis' (Grohmann 2011; see also Leivada, Grohmann 2017) and the notion of a gradient scale of multilingualism, dubbed 'Comparative Multilingualism' (Grohmann 2014b; see also Grohmann, Kambanaros 2016). In brief, the former assumes that the local variety, Cypriot Greek, is indeed the native language which Greek Cypriot children acquire. Due to the prevailing diglossia, children not only grow up with this unofficial, non-codified L(ow) variety but also with the H(igh) variety: Standard Modern Greek, one of the two official languages in the Republic of Cyprus (and that of the Hellenic Republic of Greece).

At the CAT Lab – to continue the keyword presentation of the background with the key references – we developed the notion of '(discrete) bilectalism' to characterise speakers in diglossic environments (Rowe, Grohmann 2013), namely, in the context of Cyprus, as bilectal languages users of Cypriot Greek and Standard Modern Greek. Our research further suggests that bilectal children undergo refinements in their grammatical system after the critical period for native first language acquisition, certainly after 3, 4, and even 5 years of age (summarised in Grohmann 2014a). One prominent factor is schooling, which falls within 'socio-syntactic' aspects of language development (Grohmann, Papadopoulou, Themistocleous 2017). The larger picture places bilectalism on a gradient scale, which ranges in its extremes from monolectal monolingual speakers to multilectal multilingual speakers across further differentiations which may possibly be finer characterised as bidialectalism, bivarietalism, bilectalism, and additional different degrees of bilingualism. This scale can arguably be compared to performance in receptive and expressive language assessment tasks (Theodorou, Grohmann 2015; Theodorou, Kambanaros, Grohmann 2016) as well as cognitive tasks tapping into executive control (Antoniou et al. 2016).

The main contribution of this paper is to synthesise and discuss our previous research, as a follow-up to Grohmann et al. (2020), integrating diverse methodologies and examining the topic from various

angles. Specifically, illustrating with patterns of clitic placement, we aim here (i) to show that bilectal children acquire distinct grammars of their linguistic varieties which may result in mixing in development and its final outcome; (ii) to demonstrate the importance of working from corpora of spontaneous speech in the field of experimental linguistics with child, adolescent, and adult speakers; and (iii) to suggest that the existence of closely related varieties in the course of child language development will give rise to a variety that involves so-called 'functionally equivalent variants' in the adult speaker.

This term was originally introduced by Kroch (1994). We therefore build on Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou's (2017) novel study in our contribution to the theme of variation and bilingualism with local languages, which situates the relevance of language research on non-codified varieties. The remainder of section 2 provides further background. Section 3 surveys our research on object clitic placement in bilectal children, while section 4 focuses on adults, including as of yet unpublished data from a recent research project (Fotiou 2019-22). Section 5 puts the two study complexes, child and adult data, in perspective and briefly concludes.

2 Some Relevant Background

Research on variation and concomitant bilingualism arising from local languages has gained a lot of traction in recent years – and rightly so, since it can inform on so many levels, as the other contributions to this volume aptly demonstrate. This section introduces aspects of the relevance of non-standard varieties for language acquisition and, ultimately, for the faculty of language. It also provides some background on the country where the local language explored here, Cypriot Greek, is spoken as well as the grammatical phenomenon highlighted, namely object clitics and their placement in the local language.

2.1 Non-Standard Varieties, Language Acquisition, and Universal Grammar

The relevance of investigating local languages/varieties is self-evident, especially in today's pervasively multicultural, and thereby often multilingual, societies (e.g., Grosjean 2010). In contrast to a heritage language – a bilingual speaker's first language acquired in the home generally weaker than the dominant or majority language of their society (cf. Polinsky 2018) – a local language can often even be the relevant dominant or majority language itself, "the language spoken in the homes and marketplaces of a community, as distinguished from a regional, national or international language" (Bühmann, Trudell 2007, 6).

A local language is still a minority language in many respects, though, primarily because it is typically understudied and lacks codification or standardisation. But when used by a large part of a population, it bears direct relevance for language education in the school system, for measures of language assessment, and, in the context of atypical or impaired language, for the diagnosis of language difficulties, for speech-language therapy, and (later in life) language breakdown.

One complex issue regarding local languages concerns data collection, since these languages do not have official status, are not codified, and are mostly oral varieties. Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou (2017) list a range of difficulties (see also Leivada, D'Alessandro, Grohmann 2019 in a broader context), which start with eliciting acceptability judgments of non-standard varieties from native speakers as well as a high degree of inter- and intraspeaker variation. The difficulties may stem from prescriptive notions of correctness, less clear-cut judgments due to non-standardisation, and unclear dividing lines among the various 'lects' that exist on the standard-dialect continuum. As Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou (2017, 2) put it: "Such features may blur the boundaries of grammatical variants resulting in a high degree of grammatical hybridity, which is attested in the form of utterances that may incorporate elements from different lects without code-switching in place". Interestingly, they continue, existing experimental research provides well-founded evidence "that native speakers may judge a grammatical variant as 'bad' or unacceptable – yet be recorded producing it spontaneously in their own speech".

They further observe that this not only holds for monolingual speakers, but that "a greater degree of discrepancy is expected between speakers' introspective judgments about their linguistic repertoire and the actual repertoire itself" for bi-/multilingual speakers as well as, most relevantly, for cases of bi(dia)lectal speakers which involves non-standard varieties or local languages (see Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou 2017 and references therein). With this hypothesis in mind, we examine the grammar of bilectal speakers of Cypriot Greek and Standard Modern Greek through experimental data gathering in children (summarised as 'study complex I' in section 3) and spontaneous speech in adults (summarised as 'study complex II' section 4).

Now, whether 'local', 'non-standard', or 'minority', epistemologically any language is a grammar minimally defined as the set of abstract rules that generate all the grammatical structures (and rule out all ungrammatical ones) in this grammar – or language, or dialect (e.g., Kayne 2000, 7). In this sense, Cypriot Greek is a bona fide grammatical system, whether called 'language', 'dialect', or 'variety'. Moreover, its historically related linguistic proximity to Standard Modern Greek allows for novel, perhaps even 'micro-parametric', comparisons. Further investigations of child language development, looking at parametric or otherwise derived differences in the adult

grammars of both language varieties, might reveal purported or suspected properties of Cypriot Greek that develop early on and thereby constitute actual core properties of the language (such as clitic placement, as we suggest); likewise, such research could reach additional evidence for treating Cypriot Greek first language acquisition and development differently from Standard Modern Greek.

The Principles and Parameters Theory (Chomsky 1981; Chomsky, Lasnik 1993) is one of the most successful generative approaches to language variation. Its coverage is marked by three cornerstones: diachronic change, synchronic variation, and language acquisition. Since its inception in the 1980s and minimalist developments in the 1990s, much research has gone into more recent treatments, ranging from issues such as how to capture parameters to big questions regarding the nature of the principles (e.g., Roberts 2017; 2019). The Principles and Parameters Theory is thus not only concerned with parameters underlying, for example, language variation, but also with the principles making up Universal Grammar (UG), "the general theory of I-languages, taken to be constituted by a subset of the set of possible generative grammars, and as such characterises the genetically determined aspect of the human capacity for grammatical knowledge" (Roberts 2017, 9).

Yet, there seems to be some confusion that surrounds the notion of 'UG', as recently remarked by Tsimpli, Kambanaros, Grohmann (2017). On the one hand, this concerns the question of whether the language faculty should be considered in the broad sense or in the narrow sense (FLB/FLN; Hauser, Chomsky, Fitch 2002) – and on the other, intimately related, whether we assume a 'big UG' or a 'small UG', to use the coinage Clark (2012) introduced (but see Fitch 2009 for clarifications on both). Clark suggests that

> there is a spectrum of proposals for UG from ones that just propose a small amount of presumably domain general principles […] towards those that posit a very rich and structured set of principles […] which will presumably inevitably be domain specific.[1]

Roberts (2017, 15) characterises small UG as 'first-factor-only UG', in contrast to big UG as 'first-plus-third-factor UG' (see Chomsky 2005 on the three factors of language design). This conception allows approaching UG 'from below' (Chomsky 2007) and even a subsequent move towards 'operations' over 'parameters' (Hornstein 2009).

We will return to this issue in section 5 where we also situate our proposal with respect to child language acquisition. There are a

1 Clark, A. (2012), commenting on 'Poverty of Stimulus Redux'. http://faculty-oflanguage.blogspot.com/2012/11/poverty-of-stimulus-redux.html.

large range of parameter-compatible approaches. To simplify the lay of the land dramatically, the Continuity Hypothesis, for example, assumes (strong/weak) continuity with respect to operable grammatical or even parametric settings in child and adult grammars (e.g., Crain 1991; Crain, Thornton 1998; Crain, Koring, Thornton 2017). In contrast, the Maturation Hypothesis incorporates insights from biological timing, according to which some parameters are operative later than others (e.g., Borer, Wexler 1987; Wexler 1998). More recently, Variational Learning (Yang 2002) explicitly pleads for the interaction of UG and general learning mechanisms (also Yang 2016; Legate, Yang 2007; Yang et al. 2017).

2.2 Cyprus, the Island and Its Language(s)

As a quick background on Cyprus itself, the Republic of Cyprus has been a divided island since the invasion by Turkey in 1974. The southern part represents the government-controlled area, with the occupied 'Turkish Republic of North Cyprus', that is, the Turkish-controlled part internationally recognised only by Turkey, making up about 36% of the island. The Republic of Cyprus has been a member state of the European Union since May 2004. Focusing, as this paper and much of our research do, on the southern part of Cyprus, there are around 920,000 inhabitants, about 21% of whom foreign nationals according to the preliminary results of the 2021 census (PIO 2022).

What makes language research in Cyprus so interesting is the plethora of languages spoken (and signed), heard, taught, and learned. The official languages are *de jure* Greek and Turkish, though *de facto* it is Greek only. Apart from these mainstream languages, there are also heritage languages, including several minority languages, many immigrant languages, and the omnipresent English spoken in Cyprus (for recent discussions, see Grohmann, Pavlou 2021 and Fotiou 2022). For a current overview of the linguistic ecologies of Cyprus, north and south, and a host of references to the relevant literature, see Buschfeld, Grohmann, Vida-Mannl (forthcoming).

The speaker community of Cyprus is typically described as diglossia, with the official language, 'Demotic' or Standard Modern Greek (SMG), as the H and the 'vernacular/dialect' Cypriot Greek (CG) as the sociolinguistic L variety. CG is a Greek 'dialect' which is natively acquired and used for everyday communication. It is a non-standardised language with no official orthography. SMG is learned mainly through formal education, and it is the language used in all forms of official writing. It is also the language of the media, though in the past 20 years or so, the use of CG (and of more standard-like lects that incorporate elements from both varieties) in this domain has been continuously increasing (see Fotiou, Ayiomamitou 2021).

Although the official language in education and other formal settings is SMG, research has shown that the boundaries between the two and their distribution across different registers is not straightforward (Grohmann, Leivada 2012; Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016). There are various intermediate lects between the two. For example, the term 'Cypriot Standard Greek' has been proposed to refer to an emerging variety that may count as the standard in the context of Cyprus (Arvaniti 2010). Our own characterisation of speakers' linguality in diglossia is one of '(discrete) bilectalism' (Rowe, Grohmann 2013 and subsequent work). In this view, Greek Cypriots are bilectal speakers of their native CG and the mainstream variety SMG (possibly with other lectal refinements that may include Cypriot Standard Greek, for example).

Naturally, CG is linguistically very proximal to SMG, so there is, of course, substantial overlap in grammar and lexicon. Yet the two are best described as being asymmetrically mutually intelligible: While SMG is intelligible to Greek Cypriots, without any extensive prior exposure to it, CG is generally unintelligible to Greeks (i.e. from Greece). Among the better understood differences are for lexical, phonetic, and (morpho-)phonological properties of CG and SMG. Unlike SMG, CG possesses palato-alveolar consonants, and CG replaces the palatal glide [j] with the vowel [i], for example. However, there is a growing body of work on morpho-syntactic description and analysis. For example, CG has a different 3rd person plural morpheme from SMG in present and past tense. Indeed, there exists a wide range of differences on every level of linguistic description (e.g., Arvaniti 2010). Research on the differences is progressing, many more examples can be cited, and much of our own work revolves around them as well – including the empirical aspect of this paper: clitic placement.

2.3 Object Clitics and Their Placement in Cypriot Greek

Since Cypriot Greek historically developed from Byzantine Medieval Greek and as such is part of the South-Eastern dialect group of Modern Greek (e.g., Horrocks 2010), it is not surprising that it retained some grammatical features from (Late) Medieval Greek. One prominent such feature concerns pronominal object clitic placement. While SMG is a proclitic language, CG displays mixed clitic placement. The syntactic environments are similar to differences in clitic placement observed for European Portuguese vs. Iberian Spanish, for example. Among many others, see Agouraki (1997; 2001), Terzi (1999a; 1999b), Revithiadou (2006), Revithiadou, Spyropoulos (2008), Chatzikyriakidis (2010), and Mavrogiorgos (2013) for core treatments of placement options, licensing conditions, and historical perspectives for Greek clitics.

Object clitics in CG are marked for case and phi-features (person, number, gender), just as in SMG; in this respect, there is in fact very little variation in form between the two varieties. The mixed clitic placement of CG boils down to the default post-verbal occurrence of the object clitic in indicative declarative clauses (enclisis) and pre-verbal occurrence in special conditions (proclisis). In contrast, object clitics in SMG appear pre-verbally in canonical environments (e.g., indicative declaratives); there are special licensing conditions for post-verbal placement.

This can be illustrated with a simple paradigm, which we use because the indicative declarative clause is the environment we focus on in our data collection for both children (section 3) and adults (section 4). (1) represents a simple matrix declarative with a transitive verb. Greek being a head-initial VO language, the nominal object appears post-verbally in both varieties. (We use IPA-notation to represent significant differences between CG and SMG).

(1) (o ʝan:is/ʝanis) θcavazi/ðʝavazi to vivlio. [CG/SMG]
the John read.3SG the book
'John is reading the book.'

The difference between the two varieties becomes apparent when the direct object is pronominalised. Applying this to the sentence (1), (2) then demonstrates enclisis in CG, while proclisis in (3) is the only option available in SMG, with the object clitic in boldface:

(2) (o ʝan:is) θcavazi **to**. [CG]
the John read.3SG it
'John is reading it.'

(3) (o ʝanis) **to** ðʝavazi. [SMG]
the John it read.3SG
'John is reading it.'

The special conditions for other syntactic contexts do not play a role in this paper, but (4) provides some of these. In imperatives (4a), enclisis is obligatory in both CG and SMG; in negative contexts (4b), Wh-questions (4c), and subjunctives (4d), both require proclisis.

(4) a. θcavase/ðʝavase **to** tora! [CG/SMG]
'Read it now!'
b. en/ðen **to** θcavazi/ðʝavazi (i maria). [CG/SMG]
'Maria doesn't read it.'

c. pu **to** θcavazi/ði̯avazi (i maria)? [CG/SMG]
'Where does Maria read it?'
d. perimeno na **to** θcavasi/ði̯avasi (i maria). [CG/SMG]
'I expect [Maria to read it].'

As a brief note on the syntax of direct object clitics, the (morpho)syntax of cliticisation is admittedly complex. Even leaving aside (morpho) phonological complexities, there are still many contentious issues (for a classic reference, see Cardinaletti, Starke 1999): the internal structure of pronominal clitics (e.g., head vs. phrasal), their phrase-structural status (e.g., adjunction vs. incorporation), their derivational history in the clause (e.g., base-generation vs. movement), and the relation to their host (e.g., a separate clitic projection vs. some functional head), among others. Our database does not allow a deeper engagement in these issues, nor is it our goal at this point. But we would like to raise more general considerations.

For clarification purposes, let us just sketch a line of analysis based on an early proposal for clitic positioning in CG by Terzi (1999a). She captures the difference between proclisis and enclisis through verb movement, that is, in both configurations (and in both languages, CG and SMG), the clitic occupies the same position; it is adjoined to a functional head F above TP. To derive proclisis, F with the clitic sits above the raised verb in T; to yield enclisis, the verb moves to a higher position. This can be a M(ood) head, a Neg(ation) head, or the C(omplementiser) position for illocutionary force or focus, for example. The structure in (5), adapted from Terzi (1999a) and based on Rivero (1994), illustrates:

(5) $[_{CP}$ Spec C^0 $[_{NegP}$ Spec Neg^0 $[_{MP}$ Spec M^0 $[_{FP}$ Spec **CL-F⁰** $[_{TP}$ Spec V-T^0 […(V)…]]]]]]

Terzi (1999a, 110, also fnn. 24-5) further argues that verb movement is related to the properties of the CG tense/inflection domain, "in particular, to the feature composition of M^0". Due to these differences, the verb raises beyond T^0 to M^0 with the result of enclisis in CG (as in (2)), where the clitic stays in F^0 and is "not preceded by a functional head with operator-like properties" (as in (4)). However, when the verb stays in T^0, the result is proclisis, which is also the case in SMG declarative clauses. Details aside, what matters here is that there an analysis according to which (i) there is one common clitic position in SMG and CG and (ii) CG enclisis in indicative declarative clauses is brought about by an additional verb movement step. If the difference lies in verb movement, a possible parametric approach might capitalise on the Verb Movement Parameter or some version thereof. Arguably, such a parameter would have to be formulated in terms of the properties of the tense/inflection domain in CG, which could possibly be done through a parameter hierarchies approach (e.g., Baker 2001; Roberts 2019).

Admittedly, this is a very broad oversimplification, but it does not affect the general point raised here and in section 5 below. One could also imagine a difference in Tense and the CP-layer, as Shlonsky (2004) outlines. While focusing on the Iberian differences mentioned above (European Portuguese and Galician vs. Catalan, Spanish, and Italian) rather than Greek (CG vs. SMG), he proposes "a general theory of clitic placement which takes enclisis […] to apply whenever possible and proclisis only as a last resort" (345). He continues: "This theory is combined with a hypothesis concerning cross-linguistic differences in the position of the cliticisation site relative to finite inflection, negation, and feature-attracting morphemes in the Comp domain". Shlonsky (2004, 337) suggests that "the 'parametric' difference between these two sets of languages does not govern cliticisation directly; rather, it concerns the position of the active finite Infl" (which, despite different argumentation, ultimately underlies the analysis in Terzi 1999a as well).

We will return to general 'parametric' concerns in section 5. First, we will briefly lay out the results from experimental data collection from different child and adult populations carried out in Cyprus. The upshot will be that speakers use a fair amount of SMG-like proclisis even in cases where CG grammar would require enclisis, and this needs to be captured.

3 Study Complex I: Clitic Placement in Development

Regarding first language acquisition, we know that clitic pronouns appear at around 2 years of age (Marinis 2000) and are used frequently at age 3 in SMG (Tsakali, Wexler 2004) – in monolingual children. There is no evidence that CG would differ in any major ways. As early research on this topic by Petinou, Terzi (2002) suggests, correct clitic placement is surely achieved at age 3 by CG-speaking children. The authors also notice 'misplacement', which appears around 2;6, around the time when children start using multi-word utterances. In SMG, however, children do not misplace clitics; there is simultaneous use of pre-verbal clitics in indicative and subjunctive environments and post-verbal clitics with verbs in imperatives (Stephany 1997; Marinis 2000). There is thus probably something else going on in CG child productions.

The first study complex we summarise is a series of data collections with young bilectal children that started with Grohmann (2011). For a detailed report of the results, see Grohmann 2014a and the follow-up analysis of Grohmann, Papadopoulou, Themistocleous 2017. The methodology stayed the same. It is a production task that aimed at eliciting 3rd person accusative direct object clitics within syntactic islands (see Varlokosta et al. 2016 for full description and justification). After two warm-up sentences, 12 target structures and 4

fillers were randomised. Participants were shown a drawn coloured picture depicting a scene involving an agent performing an action on a patient. An example of the 12 target structures is provided here, where the participant was asked to complete the sentence by producing the bracketed sequences with verb and object clitic:

(6) i mama xtenizi ti korua tʃe i korua en omorfi. ɟati i korua en omorfi? i korua en omorfi ɟati i mam:a tis… [xtenizi *tin-CL*]$_{\text{post-V}}$ / [**tin-CL** xtenizi]$_{\text{pre-V}}$
'Mommy is combing the girl and the girl is beautiful. Why is the girl beautiful? The girl is beautiful because her mommy… [combs her-CL]'

In the first study, we set out to test 24 Greek Cypriot children with typical language development ranging in age from 5;0 to 6;0 years (TD5, M = 5;7, 11 girls). The original control group consisted of 8 adults between 27 and 56 years of age (M ~ 37, 4 females) and, for reasons that become apparent presently, we also tested a group of younger children aged between 3;2 and 4;11 years (TD3-4, M = 3;11, 5 girls). The results are summarised in Chart 1.

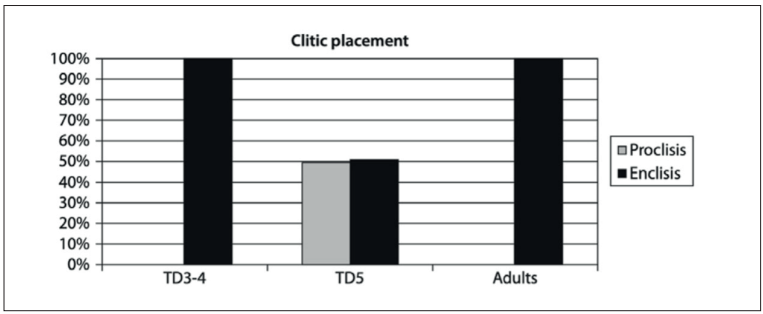

Chart 1 Clitic placement in children and adults (Grohmann 2011, 196)

First off, it should be mentioned that clitic production in the experimental setting was very high: 95.8% for the original target group of TD5 and 91.7% for TD4-4 out of the 12 target structures (Adults: 100%). But in terms of placement, there were surprising results. While it looks like a halfway split between post-verbal (50.3% enclisis) and pre-verbal clitic placement (49.6% proclisis), matters are more complex. Of the 24 TD5 children, 10 mainly used enclisis (10 out of 12 or more), 10 mainly used proclisis (10 out of 12 or more), and 4 children mixed the two (everything in between). Given these numbers, one could ask what the target language is that the children are actually acquiring. A clue comes from the younger TD3-4 group, who performed 100% post-verbal enclisis – like the adult controls.

In subsequent research, additional data were collected with much higher participant numbers and more age groups. On the basis of 431 typically developing bilectal children aged 2 to 9 years, Grohmann, Papadopoulou, Themistocleous (2017) substantiated the original hypothesis based on the results from Graph 1: Children start acquiring enclisis from the beginning. However, at around the age of 5, children go through a stage for approximately two years in which they produce a lot of proclisis instead – in the same context. This age coincides with the onset of schooling, where the language of instruction is the official language, SMG, ultimately giving rise to the Socio-Syntax of Development Hypothesis: Older bilectal children employ variants from both their acquired grammars, that is, their grammatical repertoire develops beyond the critical period.

Looking at the Greek-speaking child population in Cyprus, even more is at stake. Without going into too much detail (e.g., widespread private nursery or even primary school education, often even in English), the conglomerate of constellations leads to a possibly large range of Greek-speaking child populations, most prominently, bilectal Greek Cypriot children, of course (i.e. children of two Greek Cypriot parents, born and raised in Cyprus). But due to intermarriage and other forms of migration, there are sizeable numbers of Hellenic Greek children (with both parents hailing from Greece, who have done at least some schooling in Cyprus), Hellenic Cypriots (one Hellenic Greek parent and one Greek Cypriot, resident and growing up in Cyprus), and all kinds of '*bona fide*' bi- and multilingual children (hailing from all kinds of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, but residing in Cyprus). This led our team to several follow-up clitic placement studies. The first, inspired by an undergraduate research project resulting in Leivada, Mavroudi, Epistithiou 2010, employed the same tool but used both the above CG and an SMG version with Greek Cypriot, Hellenic Greek, and Hellenic Cypriot children (with each version administered by respective native speakers). And we extended data collection to include teenagers and additional groups of adult participants as well.

While the details lead us too far astray for the purposes of this contribution, these follow-up studies relate to the aforementioned relevance of investigating clitic placement to language practices. For example, we carried out a study with 18 Russian-(Cypriot) Greek bilingual children between 4 and 8 years of age who were born, raised, and schooled in Cyprus. Russian is not a clitic language, but also has verb-object order, so the only relevant interference with respect to object clitic placement would come from the father's and society's vernacular language (CG) and the official language (SMG). All children's language abilities were assessed with the Greek DVIQ (Stavrakaki, Tsimpli 2000) and the Russian multilingual proficiency test (Gagarina et al. 2010). While both clisis productions were

found, their distribution differed in interesting ways; for details, see the original study (Karpava, Grohmann 2014). Likewise, we used the clitic elicitation task as one measure of assessing children's language abilities for a potential diagnosis of a developmental language impairment. Theodorou (2013) developed a full battery for the context of Cyprus, the first of its kind, and clitic placement played a crucial role in identifying typical from atypical or even impaired language impairment, and possibly the role of intervention as well (Theodorou, Grohmann 2015; Theodorou, Kambanaros, Grohmann 2016).

These studies showed that the above-discussed TD5 group's acquisition of grammar is affected by other factors that contribute to the results observed. Now, it is possible that children growing up bilectally would be subject to competing factors and even competing motivations (Leivada, Grohmann 2017) as has been argued for bilingualism in general (e.g., MacWhinney 1987). We can thus easily imagine that verbal working memory, attention, and encyclopedic knowledge, to name just a few, also play a role in their linguistic behaviour – in the case at hand, placing a direct object clitic pre- or post-verbally in the same syntactic environment. However, if this is a linguistic behaviour that adults display as well, other explanations should also be taken into consideration. We will closer examine this next.

4 Study Complex II: Clitic Placement in Bilectal Adult Speakers

As described above, there are various intermediate lects in the dialect-standard continuum of CG (e.g., Arvaniti 2010 but also much empirical research since). One could thus expect the presence of what Kroch (1994) called 'functionally equivalent variants' (FEVs) in the linguistic behaviour of neurotypical adults as well. FEVs are doublets that encompass two equivalent forms or constructions that have the exact same function, but are grammatically incompatible. For example, a clitic can be realised either pre- or post-verbally but not both in a given syntactic environment (cases where a complementiser can be found with either pre- or post-verbal clitics have a different underlying structure; cf. Pavlou 2018). That is, no speaker would produce the form CL-V-CL for a single direct object, such as **to θcavazi to* for '(he/she) is reading it' – at least, we are not aware of any such systematic productions from either children or adults.

For example, mixing has been observed between CG enclisis and SMG proclisis in the same utterance – even in the presence of the CG phonological marker [ʃ], so it cannot be argued that there would be a clear (morpho)phonological trigger for a certain configuration:

(7)	ksero	**to**	tuto	ksero	**to**
	know.1SG	it.NEUT.ACC	this.ACC	know.1SG	CL.NEUT.ACC
	to	eʃi	maθitis	mu	
	CL.NEUT.ACC	have.PRES.3SG	student.NOM.SG	my.GEN.SG	

'I know it, this one, I know it! A student of mine has it.'
(Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016, 11)

Data such as (7) gave rise to an interesting research question (Tsiplakou 2007, 25): "Is it at all possible to have continuum-external code-switching, if part of Standard Greek is taken to belong to the Cypriot continuum, or if we are dealing with a 'fused lect'? […] And, finally, do such data allow us to make a case for competing grammars, and, if so, what is the precise nature of the competition?". We addressed some additional points of 'competition' in Leivada, Grohmann (2017) and Grohmann et al. (2020), but for present purposes we would like to rephrase this research question in line with Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou (2017): "When observing hybridity in the case of speakers of CG and SMG, are we dealing with mixed grammars or fused grammars?".

To answer this question, we report on two studies conducted as part of the CAT Lab research activities. To start with, in Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou (2017) five participants and two researchers (21-57 years, $M = 34.5$, 7 females), all Greek Cypriots (i.e. bilectal in CG and SMG), engaged in conversations at the participants' homes (or places familiar to them). The participants were familiar with the researchers to ensure effortlessly flowing conversation. They lacked training in linguistics and were not provided with information as to what the researchers were interested in. This allowed participants to freely talk about any topic they liked.

In total, 4,818 utterances were produced and analysed in terms of three variables that pertain to different levels of linguistic analysis: Morphology was examined through the use of the CG diminutive affix *-u*, as opposed to *-ak* in SMG, one of many possible diminutive affixes in SMG (but not *-u*), and phonology through the use of the CG-specific post-alveolar affricate [tʃ], which corresponds to the SMG palatal [c]. And syntax, finally, was assessed through the empirical lens of the present contribution: clitic placement in declarative clauses pre- (SMG) or post-verbally (CG).

It turned out that not all participants used diminutives in their spontaneous productions. When they were used, there was a clear preference for the CG variant *-u* across all participants (except one of the researchers). Regarding phonology, this corpus analysis shows that almost all participants incorporate both variants to some degree, but generally also prefer CG [tʃ].

Syntax is particularly revealing because all participants incorporated 'conflicting' values (i.e. different values of the same variant)

of the structures in question in their production. Crucially, participants used different values (i.e. FEVs) 'without' any code-switching in place. We can call this 'within-speaker variation', referring to the observation that a (Greek Cypriot) speaker may use both proclisis and enclisis in the same utterance, like (7) above, or even in two sentences uttered in succession, such as (8) immediately followed by (9):

(8) apla **ta** ðiakosmisan
simply CL.NEUT.ACC.PL decorate.PAST.3PL
'They simply decorated them.'

(9) **ta** valan tʃame, ekaman **ta** ʝal:i
CL.NEUT.ACC.PL put.PAST.3PL there do.PAST.3PL CL.NEUT.ACC.PL glass
'They put them there, they cleaned them.'
(Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou 2017, 7)

Overall, the findings obtained from the corpus reveal both 'interspeaker' and 'intraspeaker' variation with respect to the patterns of clitic placement that are featured in the grammar under investigation, but with preference for the CG placement pattern.

The second study we report on in this section is a recently completed CAT Lab research project (Fotiou 2019-22). The innovative aspect of this project with relevance to the present paper was that speakers' clitic placements were coded in two different conditions: during the 'casual speech' part of a sociolinguistic interview (henceforth referred to as 'the interview'), which was conducted in CG, and a language task (henceforth, 'the task'), which was part of the interview where participants were explicitly asked to use SMG. In total, 30 participants were interviewed aged 20-73 years (M = 41.7, SD = 17.32, 15 females). All participants were Greek Cypriots, with both parents being Greek Cypriots; CG is their native language and they learned SMG through formal education. Since Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou (2016) showed that familiarity with the interviewer plays a pivotal role in generating the use of CG in the context of a sociolinguistic interview, all participants were familiar with the interviewer to ensure that they would not opt for a more formal register during the interview.

The interview was based on the original sociolinguistic interview tool, as continually developed since Labov (1966), and adapted for the Greek Cypriot community. For the task, participants were asked to watch a short video – part of the excerpt "Alone and hungry" from Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, which lasted 3 minutes and 47 seconds – and narrate the story depicted in the video in the H variety of Cyprus (SMG). Prior to watching the video, they were told that they should imagine they are part of a group of people who want to teach

primary school children about the silent film industry. In their effort to get the children interested, they have chosen to show them an excerpt from a silent film. Before showing them the film, they should narrate the story depicted in the film to the children and ask them to act it out silently. This was done so the children would then watch the film with great interest to see how similar their acting was to what is shown in the film. The participants were explicitly told that, since this activity will take place on the school premises, they should use the standard Greek language when narrating the story to the children.

All data were transcribed and coded in ELAN. During the coding procedure, all instances of matrix declarative clauses were coded as either exhibiting enclisis or proclisis. Recall from above that this is a syntactic environment in which one would expect the use of enclisis in CG and the use of proclisis in SMG. For the statistical analysis in R (R Core Team 2012), the *lme4* package (Bates et al. 2015) was employed to perform logistic mixed effect regression. The production of enclisis was the dependent variable. Gender (male, female) and age were included as predictors. (Note that in separate models, age was used as a continuous variable (M = 41.7, SD = 17.32) and as a categorical variable (groups of: 20-29 years old, 30-49 years old, and 50-73 years old); since the two variables, age and age group, led to the same results, only the results of age as a continuous variable are mentioned here.)

Participants were included as random effect in all models. A 'step-up' analysis approach was followed, in which predictors were added one by one to the null model (i.e. a model which included only the intercept) so as to compare the model fit and identify whether the predictive power of the new model is significantly better. The group of models was examined in two conditions: the interview and the task. The best predictive model of each condition is briefly summarised below.

To start with, the analysis of the interview data showed that the production of enclisis (n = 1,989, 96.98%) was 'by far more frequent' than the production of proclisis (n = 62, 3.02%). Results from logistic mixed effects regression showed that age was a significant predictor of the production of enclisis vs. proclisis. Perhaps surprisingly (though the overall numbers are very small in our sample), the probability of enclisis production decreases with an increase in age (OR =.90, z = -2.44, p <.05); gender had no significant effect on the production of enclisis, though, and neither did the interaction of gender and age.

In contrast, the analysis of the task data showed that the production of proclisis (n = 209, 90.87%) was much more frequent than the production of enclisis (n = 21, 9.13%). In this model, gender was not used as a predictor variable, since men did not use enclisis at all during the task. Results from logistic mixed effects regression showed that age had no significant effect on the production of enclisis vs. proclisis (OR = 1, z = -.06, p =.95).

5 Discussion and Outlook

So, what does this all mean for local languages? The extremely brief overview towards the end of section 2.1 above served as the background to our focus on the discussion of parameter-setting for each grammar as opposed to, what we suggest, operation-driven mixed grammars in bilectal speakers. Recall that one plausible analysis of clitic placement for Greek, from (7) above, holds that SMG proclisis has V in T, but that CG enclisis raises V further to M qua parameterised verb raising beyond the clitic in F. At this point, we are not so much concerned with the question of whether the parameterisation lies in the Verb Movement Parameter or in the feature make-up of the heads involved (such as M or, more generally, the tense/inflection domain and/or the CP-layer as offered by Terzi 1999a or Shlonsky 2004, for example).

We simply assume that this may be one possible analysis to give us a handle on SMG vs. CG clitic placement. Rather, we would like to ask: What does this mean for the grammar of bilectal speakers? We summarised in the previous two sections our wide-ranging research agenda on the narrow topic of clitic placement by bilectal CG speakers whose findings point to three main conclusions. First, in the relevant syntactic domain of indicative declarative main clauses, children acquiring CG as their native grammar start out with the expected enclisis right from the start. Second, possibly due to the influence of SMG-medium schooling, but also other factors (e.g., languages and Greek varieties spoken at home), proclisis becomes an option, with children going one way ('CG enclisis') or the other ('SMG proclisis') – or even either ('bilectal mixing'). Third, adults are aware of the different placement options, thus do have the two patterns in their grammatical repertoire, though they may use the 'other' option in conversation and frequently do so without any obvious triggers (cf. (7)-(9) above, among others). This led us to characterise the clitic production patterns as available variants in speakers ('FEVs').

Bilingual speakers arguably have distinct grammars of their two (or more) languages, each following the language-specific parameter-setting acquired. So-called 'code-switching' or 'code-mixing' exists, of course, but it is distinct from FEVs. A German-English bilingual adult will not, for example, produce verb second when speaking English or violate it in German. But in our data, FEVs are found across speakers as well as across levels of analysis. If not strictly following from different settings of a parameter, we can then ask whether this incorporation of elements from different lects would make a case for mixed or for fused grammars. Auer (1999) suggests that, in fused grammars, the use of one variety or the other for certain variants and constituents is obligatory. Our findings do not show this

obligatoriness: The same variant might be realised with two different values in the spontaneous production of our participants.

We thus interpret the variation exhibited in bilectal CG as 'language mixing' and not as language fusing, since the observed patterns are not stabilised. Perhaps we observe a passage from once competing grammars (i.e. competing during the process of language acquisition) to a mixed grammar in the production of neurotypical adult speakers. Showing that a syntactic or a morphological pattern can receive two different realisations under the exact same conditions within the production of a speaker is at conflict with the mainstream conception of our initial state of the faculty of language (Leivada, Kambanaros, Grohmann 2017). If so, a strict binary parametric view may not be the most attractive perspective. A (micro-)parametric approach, sensitive to different lexical items instead of different syntactic environments, would arguably not solve the problem at hand either, as speakers may alternate across values for the exact same lexical item when this is realised multiple times in their production.

Criticism of the classic parameter-setting model is not new, nor of its extensions in the form of micro-parameters (Kayne 2000) or hierarchies (Baker 2001). For example, Newmeyer (2005, 79) points out that "'parameter' has simply become a synonym for 'rule'" (referencing Safir 1987 already), something picked up more recently by Hornstein (2009). An alternative, parameter-less theory of UG would, in turn, be compatible with the 'conflicting' values of FEVs, essentially taking a step toward removing parameters from the UG inventory, perhaps by involving operations rather than parameter-setting (Hornstein 2009).

Furthermore, returning to the above-mentioned distinction of 'big UG' (viz. first plus third factor) vs. 'small UG' (viz. first factor only), a parameter-less approach could put rules or operations at the center of variation which would be compatible with the 'conflicting' values of the FEVs that constitute the grammar under investigation. While details remain to be filled in, this move heads in the direction of approaching UG 'from below' (Chomsky 2007) through relegating parametric variation from UG – for example, to the externalisation component of language. This idea is increasingly explored in current work.[2] To mention just one of these, Leivada, Kambanaros, Grohmann's (2017) Locus Preservation Hypothesis holds that syntactic operations are preserved and impenetrable to variation, so the variation observed here must result from different externalisation options. We will return to the necessary details in future work.

In essence, our research substantiates the existence of FEVs within a single repertoire. Variation is manifested across speakers and

2 E.g., Berwick, Chomsky 2011; Boeckx 2011; Leivada 2015; Leivada, Kambanaros, Grohmann 2017; Chomsky et al. 2019.

across experimental methodologies, as evidenced by the fact that different participants may align more with the standard variety than others. Moreover, this variation amounts to a case of language mixing – rather than language fusing – for two reasons: (i) the observed patterns are not stabilised and (ii) intraspeaker variation suggests that speakers do have a choice as to which variant they use. Hence, the presence of FEVs is not a matter of a differential position of participants on the dialectal continuum; inter- and intra-speaker variation exists, even if a preference can be discerned for CG enclisis.

One goal of this work is to illustrate that grammatical hybridity results in the existence of FEVs across speakers and across levels of linguistic analysis. We observe a mixed, hybrid system in the adult performance, in which elements from different 'lects' are merged into a single grammar. In view of the findings reported here, we conclude, with Leivada, Papadopoulou, Pavlou (2017), that a 'UG from below'-approach is compatible with the 'conflicting' values of the FEVs that create the bilectal grammar under investigation – the collection or combination of Greek lects spoken by Cypriots which we collectively call 'CG'.

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Differential Object Marking in Aymara
A Linguistic Contact-Induced Phenomenon from Spanish

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Abstract This study investigates the contact-induced processes underlying the Aymara Object Marking system among Aymara-Spanish bilingual speakers. It explores two diatopic varieties: La Paz (Bolivia) and Muylaque (Peru) Aymara. Unlike previous descriptions, which identified the accusative case as the sole marker of DO, this study reveals that bilingual speakers employ three distinct DO markings: the accusative, nominative, and dative/allative cases. This analysis posits that this departure is due to contact-induced processes, i.e., replica grammaticalisation, influenced by Spanish. Quantitative findings substantiate the hypothesis that Aymara-Spanish bilingual speakers are incorporating contact-induced strategies for DO marking in Aymara.

Keywords DOM. Transitive verbs. Spanish. Aymara. Contact-induced language change.

Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 The Aymara-Spanish Contact Situation in Bolivia and Peru. – 3 DOM in Spanish and Contact Scenarios with Spanish. – 4 Aymara Verb Inflection and Case Marking System. – 5 Materials and Methodology. – 6 Results. – 6.1 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Nuwa, Jiwaya*, and *Yanapa*. – 6.2 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Isa*, *Uña*, and *Thaqha*. – 6.3 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Uma* and *Apthapi*. – 7 Discussion and Preliminary Conclusions.

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1 Introduction

Since Bossong's seminal work (1985), the linguistic phenomenon of employing different markers for direct objects (henceforth DO) within a single language has been referred to as Differential Object Marking (henceforth DOM). DOM is a typological common phenomenon that has been studied from various perspectives, including traditions focusing on properties of the object, e.g., animacy, specificity, and definiteness (Aissen 2003; Kagan 2020), as well as factors like transitivity (Hopper, Thompson 1980), discourse prominence (García García 2014), and sociolinguistic typology (Sinnemäki 2014).

Definiteness and animacy are the primary predictors that trigger DOM in certain languages (see Sinnemäki 2014). These properties are organised hierarchically and display implicational relationships among their constituent elements. Animacy is ranked in the Animacy Hierarchy, which follows a descending order from human > animate > inanimate (Silverstein 1976), while definiteness is structured according to the Definiteness scale, which considers the degree of nominal specification. The definiteness hierarchy is as follows: Pronoun > Proper name > Definite NP > Specific indefinite NP > Non-Specific indefinite NP (Keenan, Comrie 1977). In languages featuring DOM, nominals situated to the left side on either scale are overtly marked. Consequently, if a nominal possesses a semantic or pragmatic property that positions it to the left of a nominal that is already marked with DOM, it will also be expressed with DOM when functioning as DO.

Russian is an example of a language where DOM is constrained by animacy. In (1a), the inanimate DO is marked with the accusative case, while in (1b), the animate nominal *mal'čik* exhibits overt case inflection, namely *-a*.

(1) RUSSIAN
a. On vid-it stul-ø
he see-3SG chair-ACC=NOM
'He sees a chair'
b. On vid-I mal'čik-a
he see-3SG boy-DOM
'He sees a boy'
(Hržica et al. 2015, 359)

In Turkish, the DOM is contingent upon specificity. The suffix *-i* marks specific DOs, as exemplified in (2a) and (2b) in the NP *kitab-i* 'the book'. On the other hand, in example (2c), the marker *-i* would be considered ungrammatical due to the lack of pragmatic specificity.

(2) TURKISH
a. Ben kitab-i oku-du-m
1.SG book-DOM read-PST-1.SG
'I read the book'
b. Ben bir kitab-i oku-du-m
1.SG a book-DOM read-PST-1.SG
'I read a certain book'
c. Ben bir kitap oku-du-m
1.SG a book read-PST-1.SG
'I read a book'
(von Heusinger, Kornfilt 2005, 8)

Finally, in Modern Hebrew, definite DOs are marked by the accusative marker *et* (3a), while indefinite DOs do not exhibit any case marking (3b).

(3) MODERN HEBREW
a. raiti et ha-yeled
I.saw DOM the-boy
'I saw the boy.'
b. raiti yeled
I.saw boy
'I saw a boy.'
(Kagan 2020,134)

Aymara is an agglutinative indigenous language spoken and in Andean Plateau, following a SOV word order. Verb inflectional suffixes possess a significant degree of fusion (Müller 2013, 39), encoding both verb arguments, the subject and objects. In Andean languages descriptions, this phenomenon is referred to as *transición* (Adelaar 1997, 259). Traditionally, Aymara has been described as a language that express DO through the accusative case (Hardman et al. 2001; Hardman 2001; Coler 2014). However, oral data gathered from bilingual Aymara-Spanish speakers reveal the use of three distinct markers to express DOs, i.e., the accusative, nominative, and dative/allative cases. Examples (4), (5), and (6) illustrate these three usages, respectively.

(4) Jaxüm umarasipkisa (AILLA: 2_AY_TASK)
jax(u)-um(a)-ˌ**Ø** uma-ra-si-p-k(a)-i-sa
bitter-water-**ACC** drink-ITER-REFL-PL-INCOMPL-3>3.SPL-ADD
'They are drinking alcohol'

(5) Jarüma umasipkixa (AILLA: 4_AY_TASK)
jar(u)-uma-**ø** uma-si-p-k(a)-i-xa
bitter-water-**NOM** drink-REFL-PL-INCOMPL-3>3.SPL-TOP
'They are drinking alcohol'

(6) Masinakapawa chacharu uñch'uki (AILLA: 2_AY_TASK)
masi-naka-pa-wa chacha-**ru** uñch'uk-i
friend-PL-3.POS-DECL man-**DAT/ALL** watch-3.SPL
'His friends watched the man'

In (4), the accusative case marks the inanimate DO *jaxüma* 'alcohol'. In (5), which is semantically equivalent to (4), the inanimate DO *jarüma* 'alcohol' is marked with the nominative case. Lastly, in (6), the human DO *chacha* 'man' of the verb *uñchuki* 'watch' is marked with the dative/allative case.

This paper aims to argue that the phenomena observed in (5) and (6) for the expression of DOs can be attributed to the contact-induced grammatical replication (Heine, Kuteva 2005) of the Spanish Object Markings System, which encompasses both DOM and zero-marked DO. Animacy and definiteness have been recognised as key factors triggering DOM in Spanish. Since this study aims to demonstrate that the changes in the Aymara object marking system result from the contact with Spanish, a thorough analysis of these factors becomes essential. For these reasons, in this research I will investigate Aymara object marking, focusing on the properties of animacy and definiteness of DOs. Additionally, I will analyse Aymara object marking system from a transitive perspective (Hopper, Thompson 1980), that is, I will investigate whether animate DOs of transitive verbs are more likely to take DOM compared to their inanimate counterparts. To support the hypothesis of an ongoing replication process from Spanish to Aymara, it is pertinent to acknowledge that previous research on Spanish in contact[1] has already documented cases of Spanish DOM replication.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows: Section 2 provides an overview of the Aymara-Spanish contact situation in Bolivia and Peru. Section 3 explores the phenomenon DOM in Spanish and the associated language contact scenarios. Section 4 offers an overview of the Aymara case marking and verb inflection systems. Section 5 outlines the methodologies and materials used in the present analysis. Section 6 presents and discusses the results, followed by a discussion and preliminary conclusions in Section 7.

1 Delille 1970; Döhla 2011; Rodríguez Ordóñez 2017; 2020; Pineda 2021.

2 The Aymara-Spanish Contact Situation in Bolivia and Peru

The arrival of the Spaniards in the Andean territories, which correspond to present-day Peru, occurred in the 1530s. The conquest continued southward until the early years of the latter half of the century, ultimately resulting in the complete subjugation of modern-day Bolivia. As Mannheim (1991, 65) emphasises, bilingualism during the colonial period was a limited phenomenon, restricted to small segments of the colonial society. Among the settlers, only a few members of the mercantile bourgeoisie and the clergy possessed knowledge of indigenous languages. The clergy, in particular, devoted themselves to studying and employing Andean languages, specifically Aymara and Quechua, as a means of facilitating the process of Christianisation. Also, a few indigenous individuals became proficient in Spanish, with the majority being the offspring of indigenous aristocrats who attended specialised schools where Spanish was taught.

In the context of contemporary language contact between Spanish and Aymara, these two languages come into contact in Bolivia, Southern Peru, northeastern Chile, and to a lesser extent, northwestern Argentina. Bolivia and Peru have the highest number of bilingual Aymara-Spanish speakers.

According to the Bolivian National Census of 2012 (INE 2015), approximately 41.7% of the population belongs to an indigenous group, and within this group, 38.1% identify themselves as Aymara. Additionally, 836,570 individuals claim Aymara as their native language, while 998,314 individuals report having acquired it during their childhood. The department of La Paz has the largest number of Aymara speakers in the country (Molina Barrios, Albó 2006, 115). Moreover, the Aymaras constitute the predominant ethnic group in the metropolitan area encompassing La Paz and El Alto, accounting for 68.4% of the total population (72-4).

Regarding Peru, there is relatively limited clarity concerning the sociolinguistic situation. According to the Peruvian Census of 2017 (INEI 2018), approximately 20.4% of the population identified as belonging to an indigenous group, with 9.2% specifically claiming as Aymara. Furthermore, 18.6% of respondents reported having learned an indigenous language during their childhood, with 10.3% specifying that they acquired Aymara during that period. Aymara is spoken in the departments of Lima, Madre de Dios, Tacna, Moquegua, and Puno. The *Documento nacional de lenguas originarias del Perú* (2013) supplements this information by noting that Aymara communities in Tacna, Madre de Dios, and Lima are the result of recent migration, whereas those in Moquegua and Puno are native settlements.

Official data for the number of individuals who have been bilingual in Aymara and Spanish in the past decade in both countries is

lacking. However, the available data indicate the presence of extensive bilingualism in both countries. Particularly, in the case of Bolivia, bilingualism is institutionalised, as Aymara has been recognised as an official language throughout the state since 2009.

3 DOM in Spanish and Contact Scenarios with Spanish

DOM is a phenomenon observed in various Romance languages, and it has been the subject of extensive debate in the case of Spanish, both from synchronic and diachronic perspectives.[2] Research on Spanish DOM supports the following claims: DOs possessing the semantic/pragmatic features [+human] and [+definite] are usually marked with an *a*.[3] The usage of *a*-marking is exemplified by (7a).

(7)

a.	Traj-eron	a	un	amigo	con	ellos
	bring-PFV.3PL	DOM	a	friend	with	them
	'They brought a friend with them'					
b.	Traj-eron	una	maleta	con	ellos	
	bring-PFV.3PL	a	suitcase	with	them	
	'They brought a suitcase with them'					
	(Melis 2021, 40)					

However, specific Spanish varieties may exhibit other linguistic mechanisms, such as clitic-doubling and clitic dative forms, referred to as *leísmo* (Rodríguez Ordóñez 2017, 319). The Spanish variety spoken in the La Paz department (Bolivia) follows a *leísmo* system (Mendoza 1991, 140), which involves using the dative of the clitic pronoun *le* instead of the accusative forms *lo* and *la*, as illustrated in (8).

(8)

El	niño	le	est-á	observ-ando
the	child	LEÍSMO	be-PRS.3SG	watch-GER
'The child is watching him'				
(Quartararo 2021, 85)				

2 For a detailed overview, see Fábregas (2013).

3 Scholars hold divergent views regarding the primary determinant of DOM activation between two key features. Indeed, the prevailing consensus among most authors posits that definiteness typically carries greater significance that animacy. Consequently, animate nouns have the potential to lack DOM marking when they exhibit the feature [-definite].

DOs that possess only one of the two features, i.e., either [+human] or [+definite], show certain variability.[4] Inanimate DOs, as illustrated in (7b), do not receive overt marking and instead employ zero marking.[5] Furthermore, the inherent lexical semantics of the verb plays a role in triggering DOM. Von Heusinger and Kaiser (2011, 595) emphasise the role of affectedness, which is the degree of change imposed on the DO by the main transitive predicate. They argue that affectedness is a crucial factor in the use of DOM in Spanish and establish a scalar correlation between DOM and the degree of affectedness implied by verb semantics. This scale of affectedness is exemplified in Table 1.

Table 1 The affectedness scale

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Direct effect on patient	Perception	Pursuit	Knowledge	Feeling
Matar 'to kill' *golpear* 'to beat'	*Ver* 'to see' *oir* 'to hear'	*Buscar* 'to search'	*Conocer* 'to know'	*Querer* 'to like'
Source: Heusinger and Kaiser (2011, 609), simplified				

Verbs that directly impact the object, such as *matar* 'to kill', *golpear* 'to hit', but also *ayudar* 'to help', trigger DOM. Conversely, transitive verbs like *ver* 'to see' or *buscar* 'to search', which do not imply a change in the state or condition of the patient, may optionally require overt marking before animate DOs (Fernández Ordóñez 1999; Lapesa 2000).

Limited attention has been given to the relationship between DOM and language contact. Some studies have yielded interesting results regarding the connection between Spanish DOM and its presence in the languages spoken in the Iberian Peninsula. For example, a diachronic study on Portuguese DOM conducted by Delille (1970) suggests that it has been diachronically susceptible to contact-induced language change. The analysis establishes a link between the intensity of Spanish-Portuguese language contact and the evolution of object marking in Portuguese. Portuguese DOM saw increased usage

4 Fábregas (2013, 14) signals that "some animals are more difficult to get with DOM than others, and it seems that those are the animals which are normally construed as not being active enough [...] one can imagine that this has to do with the fact that animals like fish normally do not interact actively with humans – so perhaps they are even categorised as non-animate for the purposes of grammar".

5 García García (2014), among others, has observed that in the Spanish speaking world the *a*-marking sporadically occurs with inanimate DOs both in spontaneous spoken and written language.

during the Iberian Union but returned to its original *status* after Portuguese independence in 1640. Concerning Catalan, Pineda (2021) suggests that while DOM was already present in Old Catalan (thirteenth century), predating the intense contact with Spanish, its expansion to encompass a wider range of DOs in modern Catalan is a result of the intense language contact with Spanish. Similarly, in the case of Basque, an isolated language spoken in the Iberian Peninsula, the presence of DOM is argued to be a consequence of intense contact with Spanish (Rodríguez Ordóñez 2017; 2020). Rodríguez Ordóñez (2017) demonstrates that certain Basque varieties developed a DOM system that shares both formal and semantic features with the Spanish counterpart. In both languages, DOM is expressed using forms typically employed to mark indirect objects, and both animacy and definiteness are key factors of its occurrence.

When it comes to the presence of DOM in Amerindian languages resulting from contact with Spanish, very few studies have been conducted. Döhla (2011), for example, notes that Guaraní exhibits a DOM system similar to that of Spanish. Modern Guaraní uses the postposition *pe* (9), which functions similarly to the Spanish preposition *a* (see example 7a).

(9) GUARANÍ
Ai-kuaa nde sý-pe
1-know your mother-DOM
'I know your mother'
(Bittar Prieto 2021, 95)

Further support for the hypothesis of DOM acquisition in Guaraní due to language contact comes from the examination of Missionary grammars. These grammatical analyses reveal that Old Guaraní did not possess DOM. Interestingly, therefore, the emergence of this construction took place either after or during the period of the Spanish colonisation.

4 Aymara Verb Inflection and Case Marking System

Aymara is a highly agglutinating language that exhibits a complex system of suffixes. Its preferred word order is Subject-Object-Verb with a modifier-head structure. Verb inflectional suffixes possess a significant degree of fusion (Müller 2013, 39), encompassing tense, mood, evidentiality, and person. Each verb inflectional suffix encompasses a combination of two verb arguments. Table 2 provides an illustration of the conjugation of the simple tense and the corresponding arguments involved in each inflectional suffix.

Table 2 The simple tense paradigm

		OBJECT			
		1EXCL	1INCL	2	3 or none
SUBJECT	1EXCL			-sma	-ta
	1INCL				*-tan*
	2	-ista			-ta
	3	-itu	-istu	-tam	-i

The interactions presented in Table 2 do not represent the inflectional paradigms of all verbs. Aymara verbs exhibit two distinct paradigms, as explained by Cerrón Palomino (2000, 218).

The first paradigm entails interactions between one of the four persons as the subject and the third person (1EXCL>3; 2>3; 3>3, and 1INCL>3). This type of inflection includes all intransitive verbs. Conversely, the second paradigm, which encompasses all interactions in Table 2, involves transitive verbs, verbs derived through a causative suffix, and verbs necessitating an indirect object.

Case marking occurs at the end of the noun phrase, corresponding to the head. The nominative case lacks overt marking, a shared feature across all Aymara varieties. The other cases display overt marking. The accusative case is subtractive (Coler 2014), it is achieved by dropping the final vowel of the nominal base or suffix that precede it. The interlinear gloss in examples depicts the presence of the accusative with the symbol -$_{c}$Ø, where 'c' represents 'consonant', indicating that the previous suffix or base lost the final vowel and ends with a consonant. Additionally, the suffix *-na* serves for marking both the genitive and locative cases, while the suffix *-ru* marks both the allative and dative cases. The declension pattern of nouns is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Aymara declension of the nominal base uta

case	**suffix**	**UTA 'HOUSE'**
Nominative	-ø	uta
Accusative	-$_{c}$Ø	ut
Genitive	-na	utana
Locative	-na	utana
Dative	-ru	utaru
Allative	-ru	utaru
Ablative	-ta	utata
Benefactive	-taki	utataki
Comitative	-mpi	utampi
Comparative	-hama/-jama	utjama
Purposive	layku	utalayku
Limitative	-kama	utakama
Perlative	*-kata*	utakata
Interactive	*-pura*	utapura

In this section, the primary focus will be on two specific cases: the accusative and the dative.

The subtractive accusative case serves as default case marker for DO marking. Coler (2014, 210) notes that loanwords, which have not been fully integrated into the Aymara phonetic system or compete with native synonyms, may not exhibit inflection for the accusative case. Additionally, the scholar mentions instances of different markings for DOs, such as the dative/allative case (see example 17).

On the other side, both contemporary Bolivian Aymara grammars (Hardman et al. 2001; Hardman 2001) and Old Aymara grammars (Bertonio 1603; Torres Rubio 1616) do not mention distinct markers for expressing DOs. Interestingly, Old Aymara grammars often omit the subtractive accusative case and exemplify DOs using the unmarked nominative case. Examples (10) and (11) come from contemporary Aymara grammars, while (12) is extracted from Bertonio's grammar.

(10) Jum t'aqtam (Hardman 2001, 158)
jum(a)-$_c$Ø thaqh(a)-tam
2.PR-ACC look.for-3>2.SPL
'She was looking for you'

(11) Janiw tatalamx uñjtti (Coler 2014, 385)
jan(i)-w(a) tata.la-m(a)-$_c$Ø-x(a) uñj(a)-t(a)-ti
no-DECL dad-2.POS-ACC-TOP see-1EXCL>3.SPL-NEG/IR
'I don't see your dad'

(12) Yacamataqui ccahua saurapitha (Bertonio 1603, 32)
yacama-taqui ccahua-ø sau-rapi-tha
boy-BEN t-shirt-NOM knit-BN-1EXCL>3.SPL
'I knitted a t-shirt for a boy'

According to grammatical descriptions, the suffix *-ru* serves to indicate both the destination of a motion verb (13) and indirect objects (14). In the context of Muylaque Aymara,[6] Coler (2014, 219) emphasises that *-ru* is used in certain contexts to mark nominal constituents that function as DOs. The scholar associates these specific usages with particular verbs, such as 'deceive' or 'escort' (15).

(13) Markar Chukiyagu markaru sarawayxta (AILLA: 1_AY_TASK)
marka-ru Chukiyagu marka-ru sara-way(a)-x(a)-ta
city-ALL La Paz city-ALL ir-DF-COMPL-1EXCL.SPL
'I went to the city, to La Paz city'

6 Muylaque Aymara is spoken in the village of Muylaque in the Southern part of Peru.

(14) Aka piskaw[7] wawamarux churtxa (Coler 2014, 220)
aka piskaw(u)-ç-Ø wawa-ma-ru-x(a) chur(a)-t(a)-xa
this fish-ACC child-2.POS-DAT/ALL-TOP give-1.SPL-TOP
'I give this fish to your child'

(15) Inkañt'awjchix tawaqurux (Coler 2014, 219)
inkaña-t'a-wja-ch(i)-i-x(a) tawaqu-ru-x(a)
deceive-MOM-BFR-DUB-3>3.SPL-TOP young.woman-DAT/ALL-TOP
'He must have deceived the young woman'

This brief grammatical overview highlights two crucial elements aligned with the goals of this study. Firstly, Old Aymara grammars do not mention the dative/allative marker, i.e., *-ru*, as a DO marker. In these grammars, the accusative case is portrayed as formally similar to the nominative case. Secondly, contemporary grammars unanimously assert that in all Aymara varieties, the DO is expressed using the subtractive accusative case, with only the description of Muylaque Aymara (Coler 2014) mentioning the other two possible markings, namely the nominative and the dative/allative cases.

5 Materials and Methodology

Two linguists collected the data used in this study during fieldwork. The author of this paper gathered materials related to the Aymara variety spoken in the La Paz department (Bolivia), while Matt Coler collected materials of the Aymara variety spoken in the village of Muylaque (Moquegua-Peru).

In the two data collection areas, there exists significant linguistic contact between the two languages, with Spanish being more widely used than Aymara. In the department of La Paz (Bolivia), Aymara people comprise 68% of the total population, with the vast majority being bilingual. In the sociolinguistic context of the Muylaque people in Peru, as noted by Coler (2014, 24), individuals who are fluent in both languages typically tend to be over 40 years of age. However adults, in general, have a good oral comprehension but they struggle to express themselves in Aymara. On the other hand, younger generations and children possess very limited knowledge of Aymara, primarily communicating in Andean Spanish.

7 The term *piskawu*, meaning 'fish', serves as an instance of an adapted Spanish loanword in Aymara. The original Spanish word for fish is *pescado*. In this particular example, the loanword *piskawu* undergoes inflection in the accusative case.

For La Paz Aymara, the materials were obtained through spontaneous narratives and two semi-structured tasks designed to stimulate the expression of knowledge: the Family Problems Picture task (San Roque et al. 2012) and The Pear Story (Chafe 1980). The Family Problems task includes 16 black-and-white pictures. Participants described these images and arranged them into a story. The Pear story is a six-minute film: participants watched it and narrated it to the fieldworker. These materials, comprising 16,480 words, are a valuable source for analysing various grammatical and contact phenomena of Aymara. Transcriptions are available in AILLA (the Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America). Eighteen Aymara-Spanish bilinguals, ranging in age from 22 to 63 years, participated in the recordings. All participants were initially Aymara monolingual speakers and learned Spanish through interactions outside their homes and formal education.

In contrast, information about the materials from Muylaque Aymara is limited. Coler (2014, XV) indicates that the data was gathered between 2007 and 2009 and consists of recorded narratives, field notes, and dialogues with Aymara and Spanish bilingual speakers from the village. However, specific details about the number of informants, word count, or the extent of transcriptions are not available. This study draws data from Coler's (2014) comprehensive grammar.

The data analysis was conducted in three main stages. Firstly, the selection of verbs was based on the animacy of their DOs and their affectedness, as established by von Heusinger and Kaiser (2011). The transitive verbs *jiwaya* 'to kill', *nuwa/nuwja* 'to hit', and *yanapa* 'to help' were chosen due to their high degree of affectedness and likelihood of having an animate DO. In Spanish, these verbs (*matar* 'kill', *golpear* 'hit', and *ayudar* 'help') typically require DOM. This is essential to comprehend whether DOM from Spanish is being replicated in Aymara. Perception verbs *uña* 'see' and *isa* 'hear' were selected because they can occur with both animate and inanimate objects. In Aymara, the verb *uña* also means 'to know'. This semantic overlap allowed for the integration of the knowledge verb into the analysis. The verb *thaqha* 'to search' was included based on the affectedness scale (von Heusinger, Kaiser 2011, 609). The verb *muna* 'to like' was excluded due to its broad semantic range. Two other transitive verbs, *apthapiña* 'to harvest' and *umaña* 'to drink', which inherently require inanimate objects, were included to explore variations in marking inanimate objects. In total, eight verbs were selected.

Secondly, the verbs were extracted from the corpus, focusing on the cases where DOs were explicitly referenced through lexical devices – e.g., to kill the cat *vs*. to kill. Cases where the DO was exclusively indicated through verb inflection suffixes were excluded. Section 6 will present the absolute frequency of the verbs in the data, distinguishing between cases with a lexically expressed DO and those without.

In the third and final stage, the analysis focused on the suffixes used to express DOs, along with descriptive statistics for the three cases and the properties of animacy and definiteness.

6 Results

The second stage of the analysis focused on distinguishing between lexically expressed and non-expressed DOs, and its findings are presented in Table 4. In the subsequent tables of this study, I will use LA, as an acronym for the La Paz variety and MA for the Muylaque variety.

Table 4 Lexically expressed and non-expressed DOs in the data

VERBS	Lexical DOs				Non-lexical DOs				TOTAL
	LA		MA		LA		MA		
	n_i	%	n_i	%	n_i	%	n_i	%	
Uña 'to see'	81	42	8	4	94	49	10	5	193
Nuwa 'to hit'	57	36	2	2	93	58	7	4	159
Uma 'to drink'	18	14	4	3	105	79	5	4	132
Isa 'to hear'	15	32	1	2	28	60	3	6	47
Yanapa 'to help'	2	6	2	6	21	62	9	26	34
Thaqha 'to search'	6	26	8	34	4	18	5	22	23
Jiwaya 'to kill'	7	37	5	26	3	16	4	21	19
Apthapi 'to harvest'	6	43	0	0	8	57	0	0	14
TOTAL	194	31	30	5	355	57	43	7	622

Table 4 illustrates the discrepancy in the absolute frequency of the selected verbs between the two Aymara varieties.[8] La Paz Aymara dataset exhibits a higher number for almost all verbs, except for *thaqha* 'to search' and *yanapa* 'to help'.

6.1 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Nuwa*, *Jiwaya*, and *Yanapa*

In terms of animacy, the La Paz Aymara dataset displays that DOs of the verbs *nuwa* 'hit', *jiwaya* 'kill', and *yanapa* 'help' are frequently marked with the dative/allative marker *-ru*. All DOs consistently

8 The ratio between the total number of occurrences of each verb and the number of instances with lexically expressed direct objects reveals that there is a tendency to express objects through verb inflection. In this regard, the instances with lexically expressed DOs account for approximately 36% of the total occurrences. The explicit expression of verb arguments could be influenced by pragmatic factors. However, these

possess the semantic feature [+human]. On the other hand, the Muylaque Aymara dataset exhibits a more heterogenous situation, with four instances of the DOs possessing the semantic feature [+animate] and five instances possessing the semantic feature [+human].

Table 5 provides a quantitative breakdown of DO marking in both datasets, while Table 6 and Table 7 illustrate the distribution of DOs in the two Aymara varieties along the animacy and the definiteness scales, respectively.

The findings from the analysis of La Paz Aymara dataset, as presented **[tabs 5-7]**, provide valuable insights. Table 5 reveals that the majority of cases involving the three verbs exhibit the dative/allative case marking *-ru* on the DO (63 out of 66 cases). However, three cases deviate from this pattern (see example 18) and employ the nominative case marking. These three cases involve DOs positioned at lower levels of the definiteness scale ('Specific indefinite NP' in Table 7). DOs at higher levels than 'Definite NPs' on the scale bear the *-ru* marking, while those at lower levels do not. Examples (16) and (17) illustrate the use of the suffix *-ru* on DOs related to the verbs *nuwa* 'to hit' and *yanapa* 'to help', respectively. In (16), the DO is the personal pronoun *juma* 'you' which denotes the interlocutor and, thus, conveys a high level of definiteness. In (17), the DO is *jilanakama* 'your brothers' which, due to the presence of the possessive, is categorised as a definite noun phrase. Finally, in (18), the description of the people killed remains indefinite. The analysis considers *jaqinaka* 'people' as a specific indefinite NP. Interestingly, this last DO bears the nominative case marking.

(16) Jumarus nuwakirakiyasma (AILLA: 1_AY_TASK)
juma-**ru**-s(a) nuwa-ki-raki-yasma,
2P-**DAT/ALL**-ADD hit-DL-ADD-1>2.PE
'I hit you too'

(17) Jilanakamaru yanapañamawa (AILLA: 6_AY_MIS)
jila-naka-ma-**ru** yanapa-ña-ma-wa
brother-PL-2.POS-**DAT/ALL** help-ANMZ-2.POS-DECL
'You have to help your brothers'

(18) Uka k'añaskun q'al wulkasxi, jaqinaka jiwayxi (AILLA: 4_AY_MIS)
uka k'añasku-na q'al(a) wulka-s(i)-x(a)-i, jaqi-naka-**ø**
that car-GEN/LOC all roll.over-REFL-COMPL-3.SPL person-PL-**NOM**
jiwa-y(a)-x(a)-i
die-CAUS-COMPL-3>3.SPL
'He rolled over in that car, he killed people'

particular observations fall beyond the scope of this article, and further exploration is recommended in future works.

Table 5 The distribution of the object markings with the verbs nuwa, jiwaya, and yanapa

Verbs	DO allative/ dative		DO nominative		DO accusative		TOTAL
	LA	MA	LA	MA	LA	MA	
Nuwa 'to hit'	57	-	-	-	-	2	59
Jiwaya 'to kill'	4	-	3	-	-	5	12
Yanapa 'to help'	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
TOTAL	63	2	3	0	0	7	75

Table 6 The intersection between animacy and case markings for nuwa, jiwaya and yanapa

	Animate				TOTAL
	+Human		-Human		
	LA	MA	LA	MA	
Nuwa					
Allative/dative	57	-	-	-	57
Nominative	-	-	-	-	
Accusative	-	2	-	-	2
Jiwaya					
Allative/dative	4	-	-	-	4
Nominative	3	-	-	-	3
Accusative	-	1	-	4	5
Yanapa					
Allative/dative	2	2	-	-	4
Nominative	-	-	-	-	-
Accusative	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	66	8	0	1	75

Table 7 The distribution of the DOs in relation to the definiteness scale in both varieties

VERBS	Pronoun		Proper name		Definite NP		Specific indefinite NP		Non-Specific indefinite NP		TOTAL
	LA	MA	LA	MA	LA	MA	LA	MA	LA	MA	
Nuwa 'to hit'	16	1	-	-	41	1	-	-	-	-	59
Jiwaya 'to kill'	-	-	-	2	4	1	3	2	-	-	12
Yanapa 'to help'	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	4
TOTAL	16	1	0	2	47	2	3	4	0	0	75

Turning to the analysis of Muylaque Aymara dataset, it is important to acknowledge that the limited number of occurrences hinders a comprehensive analysis. Nevertheless, some observations can still be made. Firstly, unlike La Paz Aymara speakers, Muylaque Aymara speakers exclusively employ the accusative case with the DOs of the verbs *jiwaya* 'kill' and *nuwa* 'beat'. In (19), for instance, despite the high level on both the animacy and the definiteness scales of the DO *juma* 'you', the personal pronoun is marked with the subtractive accusative.

(19) Jum nuwirikill sartxa (Coler 2014, 222)
jum(a)-**ɾØ** nuw(a)-iri-ki-ll(a) sar(a)-t-xa.
you-**ACC** hit-AG.NMZ-DL-EXC go-1>3.SPL-TOP
'I just went to hit you.'

It is noteworthy that although the verb *nuwa* 'hit' is associated with the 2nd person pronoun in both examples (16) and (19), the DOs are marked differently. Thus, in (16) from La Paz Aymara, *juma* 'you' receives the allative/dative case, while in Muylaque Aymara (19), the same pronoun receives the accusative case marking.

When it comes to the verb *yanapa* 'help', both varieties use the dative/allative case *-ru* to express the DOs. However, in one of the two cases from the Muylaque Aymara dataset, the *-ru* marking occurs with a human DO positioned at the 'Specific indefinite NP' level of the definiteness scale, as shown in (20). This last observation provides further insights. The boundary between 'definite NP' and 'specific indefinite NP' for the differential selection of the object marking, noted in La Paz Aymara, does not seem to apply to Muylaque Aymara, which uses different markings to indicate objects placed at the same level of definiteness scale, i.e., 'Specific indefinite NP'. Thus, Specific indefinite NPs that function as the DOs of the verb *jiwaya* 'to kill' receive the accusative case, while Specific indefinite NPs that function as the DOs of the verb *yanapa* 'to help' are marked with the suffix *-ru* (see examples 17 and 20).

(20) Kumunpach ma jaqirux yanapt'asiphirix (Coler 2014, 359)
kumun(a)-pach(a) ma jaqi-**ru**-x(a) yanap(a)-t'a-si-ph(a)-iri-x(a)
community-INC one person-**DAT/ALL**-TOP help-MOM-REFL-PL-AG.NMZ-TOP
'The entire community would help a single person'

Given the evident difference in the selection of DO markings observed with the verbs *nuwa* 'hit' and *jiwaya* 'kill' between the two varieties, the presence of *-ru* on the DOs of the verb *yanapa* 'help' could likely be attributed to the bilingual speakers' need to employ a DOM to comply with the obligatory requirement imposed by the Spanish language for the verb *ayudar* 'to help'.

Finally, in regard to the verbs *nuwa* 'hit' and *jiwaya* 'kill', the results obtained from the datasets of the two varieties show contrasting patterns. In the case of La Paz Aymara, speakers strongly prefer employing the *-ru* marking when dealing with objects characterised by a semantic feature [+human], alongside possessing a significant level of definiteness (see examples 16 and 17). The *-ru* marking is indeed observed in conjunction with all definite forms, whereas the nominative marker is employed with the indefinite forms. In Muylaque Aymara, on the other hand, neither animacy nor definiteness appears to trigger the use of a distinct marker for the objects of the two verbs (see example 19).

6.2 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Isa*, *Uña*, and *Thaqha*

When examining the perception and pursuit verbs, specifically *isa* 'hear', *uña* 'see', and *thaqha* 'search', a significant contrast is observed compared to the verbs discussed in Section 6.1. This group stands out with the highest absolute frequency of lexically expressed DOs, with a total of 119 instances. This larger sample size provides a more comprehensive representation of the distribution of the analysed predictors. In particular, the verb *uña*[9] 'see' showcases the use of all analysed case markings to indicate DOs **[tab. 8]**, represents all three levels of the animacy scale **[tab. 9]**, and includes all levels of the definiteness scale **[tab. 10]**.

Table 8 The distribution of the object markings with the verbs *uña*, *isa*, and *thaqha*

Verbs	**DO allative/ dative**		**DO nominative**		**DO accusative**		**TOTAL**
	LA	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	
Uña 'to see'	14	3	32	3	35	2	89
Isa 'to hear'	10	-	3	-	2	1	16
Thaqha 'to search'	-	1	5	-	1	7	14
TOTAL	24	4	40	3	38	10	119

9 The data includes derived forms of the verb *uña*, such as *unjaña* 'observe/to take care of', *uñt'aña* 'know' and *uñch'ukiña* 'watch'.

Table 9 The intersection between animacy and case markings for *uña*, *isa* and *thaqha*

	Animate				**Inanimate**		**TOTAL**
	+Human		**-Human**				
	LA	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	
UÑA							
Allative/dative	9	2	4	-	1	1	17
Nominative	2	1	-	-	30	1	34
Accusative	3	-	-	1	32	2	38
ISA							
Allative/dative	9	-	-	-	1	-	10
Nominative	2	-	-	-	1	-	3
Accusative	2	-	-	-	-	1	3
Thaqha							
Allative/dative	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Nominative	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
Accusative	-	1	-	-	1	6	8
TOTAL	32	5	4	1	66	11	119

The analysis of the interaction between case marking and animacy reveals that the verbs *uña* 'see' (15 out of 22 cases) and *isa* 'hear' (9 out of 13 cases) tend to prefer the dative/allative case marker *-ru* when expressing animated DOs. However, in some cases, despite the semantic feature [+human], the markings correspond either to the accusative or the nominative cases. In the case of inanimate DOs associated with *uña* 'see', they are predominantly marked by the accusative or the nominative (65 out of 67 cases). The limited number of occurrences for those correlated with *isa* 'hear' (3 instances) and their distribution do not allow for meaningful observations.

The results for the verb *thaqha* are less conclusive. All inanimate objects receive an accusative case marking in both varieties, while human DOs receive all three markings, with the nominative case being the most common (5 out of 7 cases).

Table 10 presents the distribution and intersection between the case marking and the definiteness property of the DOs associated with the three verbs. Across all levels of the hierarchy, the use of the allative case can be observed in at least one of the two varieties **[tab. 10]**.

Table 10 The intersection between definiteness and case markings for the three verbs

	Pronoun		**Proper name**		**Definite NP**		**Specific indefinite NP**		**Non-Specific indefinite NP**		**TOTAL**
	LA	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	
UÑA											
Allative/ dative	3	1	-	-	7	2	5	-	-	-	17
Nominative	-	1	-	-	26	-	6	-	-	1	34
Accusative	-	-	-	1	24	1	7	1	2		38
ISA											
Allative/ dative	3	-	1	-	4	-	-	-	2	-	10
Nominative	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Accusative	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
THAQHA											
Allative/ dative	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nominative	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	5
Accusative	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	8
TOTAL	6	4	1	1	67	4	24	1	4	7	

Further exploration of the results presented in tables 9 and 10 reveals that in 80% of cases (8 out of 10), personal pronouns are expressed with *-ru* (see examples 21 and 22). Only two instances of proper names are found in the data. However, even in these cases, the proper name referring to a human being bears the dative marking *-ru*, while the proper name of a city lacks such marking and instead shows accusative inflection. Regarding 'Definite NPs', the use of case markings by speakers displays significant variability. For 'Definite NPs' referring to animate entities, approximately 59% of the cases (10 out of 17 cases) prefer the use of *-ru* marking, while the remaining 41% is expressed through the nominative (5 cases) and accusative (2 cases) markings (see examples 23, 24, and 25). In the remaining cases of 'Definite NPs', where DOs are inanimate entities, they are marked with the allative (3 cases), the nominative (24 cases), and the accusative (26 cases).

(21) Jum thaqasmaxa (Coler 2014, 130)
jum(a)-ɾ**Ø** thaqa-sma-xa
you-**ACC** search-1>2.SPL-TOP
'It's you that I look for'

(22) Jumaruw thaqasmaxa (Coler 2014, 536)
juma-**ru**-w(a) thaqa-sma-xa
you-**DAT/ALL**-DECL search-1>2.SPL-DECL
'It's you that I am looking for.'

(23) Wawanaksa näx uñjäwa (AILLA: 1_AY_TASK)
wawa-nak(a)-**ˌØ**-sa nä-x(a) uñ.ja-:-wa
child-PL-**ACC**-ADD 1PR-TOP see-1>3.FUT-DECL
'I will take care of the children'

(24) Wawanakasa sum uñjañani (AILLA: 1_AY_TASK)
wawa-naka-sa-**ø** sum uñ.ja-ñani
child-PL-1INCL.POS-**NOM** good see-1INCL>3.FUT
'We will take good care of our children'

(25) Wawanakar sum uñjaña (AILLA: 2_AY_TASK)
wawa-naka-**r(u)** sum(a) uñ.ja-ña
child-PL-**DAT/ALL** good see-ANMZ
'It is necessary to take good care of the children'

With respect to 'Specific Indefinite NPs', a clear trend is observed in favour of distinguishing between *-ru* marking and the other two cases. All animated 'Specific indefinite NPs' are marked with *-ru*, while inanimate 'Specific indefinite NPs' are marked with the accusative and nominative cases. In contrast, 'Non-specific indefinite NPs' demonstrate a distinct pattern in the selection of case marking. Out of the seven cases analysed, human DOs exhibit the nominative marking, while the remaining two cases receive the *-ru* marking. Inanimate DOs consistently display accusative or nominative marking.

In the realm of perception and pursuit verbs, as well as the previously discussed verbs (cf. § 6.1), animacy emerges as a prominent semantic feature that strongly influences the choice of the *-ru* marker by speakers. However, in the case of the verbs *uña* 'see', *isa* 'hear', and *thaqha* 'search', definiteness does not seem to be a determining factor. In La Paz Aymara, the predominant usage of the *-ru* marking occurs with animate DOs accounting for 22 out of 36 cases (61%). The other two markers are also present, but with lower percentages: the nominative case is observed in 9 instances, representing approximately 25%, and the accusative case is found in 5 instances, representing 14%. In Muylaque Aymara, despite a limited number of cases (6 occurrences), the suffix *-ru* appears in 3 instances with the verbs *uña* and *thaqha*.

With regard to the marking of the nominative case, the analysis of the considered predictors does not indicate a difference between the nominative and accusative object marking. Both forms are used without implying any semantic differences. Nevertheless, the La Paz

Aymara dataset exhibits a proportionally higher usage of the nominative case on DOs, whereas, in Muylaque Aymara, this phenomenon appears to be rare, as the accusative case is preferred over the nominative case.

6.3 The Object Marking with the Verbs *Uma* and *Apthapi*

The final subset of verbs consistently governs inanimate DOs. Table 11 illustrate how case markings are distributed on DOs with the verbs *uma* 'drink' and *apthapi* 'harvest'.

Table 11 The distribution of the object markings with the verbs uma and apthapi

Verbs	**DO allative/ dative**		**DO nominative**		**DO accusative**		**TOTAL**
	LA	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	**LA**	**MA**	
apthapi 'to harvest'	-	-	2	-	4	-	6
uma 'to drink	-	-	10	-	8	3	21
TOTAL	0	0	12	0	12	3	27

In the dataset, there is no *-ru* marking on DOs with the verbs *uma* 'drink' and *apthapi* 'harvest'. Based on previous observations, it is reasonable to suggest that this lack may be due to the fact that these two verbs do not take animate DOs. In this group of verbs, the observable object markings include both the nominative (26) and accusative (27 and 28) cases.

(26) Janiw jichax sirwis umktti (Coler 2014, 648)
jani-w(a) jicha-x(a) sirwis(a)-$_{c}$**Ø** um(a)-k(a)-t-ti
no-DECL now-TOP beer-**ACC** drink-INCOMPL-1>3.SPL-NEG/IR
'I am not drinking beer now.'

(27) Mä chacha apthapiskiw muxsa achunaka (AILLA: 2_AY_PEAR)
mä chacha apthapi-s(i)-ka-i-w(a) muxsa achu-naka-**ø**
one man harvest-REFL-INCOMPL-1>3.SPL-DECL sweet fruit-PL-**NOM**
'A man is harvesting fruit'

(28) Jupa willtat makatix uka muxsa achunak apthapiri (AILLA: 3_AY_PEAR)
jupa willta-t(a) makat(a)-i-x(a) uka muxsa achu-nak(a)-$_{c}$**Ø**
3PR again-ABL climb-3.SPL-TOP that sweet fruit-PL-**ACC**
apthap(i)-iri
harvest-AG.NMZ
'He again climbed the ladder to harvest those fruits'

The nominative case is used when the DO originates in a Spanish loanword (cf. Coler 2014, 210), as seen in the case of the word *alkula* 'alcohol' (29). This noun always appears in the nominative, as exemplified in (29), and is never inflected in the accusative.

(29) Ukana nayax yatiqawayta kuka akhulliña alkula umaña awtoridadanakampi (AILLA: 1_AY_TASK)

uka-na	naya-x(a)	yati-qa-way(a)-ta	kuka-ø	akhulli-ña
that-GEN/LOC	1PR-TOP	know-DW-DF-1EXCL.SPL	coca-NOM	chew-ANMZ
alkula-**ø**	uma-ña	awtoridada-naka-mpi		
alcohol-**NOM**	drink-ANMZ	autoridad-PL-COM		

'There I learnt to chew coca and drink alcohol with the authorities'

This data further supports the distinction between the two Aymara varieties, which was somewhat noticeable in the previous groups of verbs but it is clear here. The data reveals that the variation in the choice between the nominative and accusative cases for inanimate DOs is more pronounced in the Bolivian Aymara variety, whereas the Peruvian variety displays minimal instances of such variation, especially with the verb *uma* 'drink', which is exempt from this variation.

7 Discussion and Preliminary Conclusions

Using Thomason's definition of language contact as "the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time" (Thomason 2001, 1) and expanding upon Weinreich's ([1953] 1979, 1) assertion that multilingual speakers serve as the primary *locus* of linguistic contact, this study investigates two distinct instances of linguistic contact between Spanish and Aymara. Specifically, in focuses on Aymara spoken by Aymara-Spanish bilingual speakers of two diatopic Aymara varieties: La Paz (Bolivia) and Muylaque (Moquegua-Peru). Both of these contact situations exhibit the traditional social predictors that promote contact-induced language change, namely, the duration of contact and the social, political, and economic subordination of the language experiencing the contact relative to the source language. Over the course of nearly five centuries of linguistic contact between Spanish and Aymara, Aymara-speaking population has been subjected to Spanish socio-economic dominance. This dominance was initially established during the colonial era through the promotion of the coloniser-colonised dichotomy and later enforced in the republican era through social and educational policies imposed by a non-indigenous ruling class which mandated the use of Spanish in all institutions and medias.

Additionally, this study examines contact-induced variation of a morphosyntactic phenomenon, particularly the DO marking system, between these two genetically and typologically diverse languages. In this sense, it aligns itself with both the "anything goes" perspective (Matras 1998), which suggests that any linguistic material can be borrowed given sufficient social pressure (Thomason 2001) and the idea that typological differences do not serve as a deterrent to contact-induced variation.

The analysis of the DO markers in the two Aymara varieties reveals a more robust presence of lexically expressed DOs in La Paz Aymara compared to Muylaque Aymara. Nevertheless, the findings support the hypothesis that both Aymara varieties are developing a DOM system due to their extensive contact with Spanish.

Specifically, La Paz Aymara exhibits a more advanced acquisition of DOM, with strong tendency to use the allative/dative case marker *-ru* to indicate animate DOs. This DOM system shares formal characteristics with its Spanish counterpart, both employing forms typically reserved for marking indirect objects to express DOM. However, the predictors for DOM activation differ between the two languages: in La Paz Aymara, animacy seems to be the primary factor, while definiteness plays a negligible role.

Another notable phenomenon is the use of the nominative case as a marker for DO. La Paz Aymara shows more variation in this regard compared to Muylaque Aymara, although conclusions about this marker remain preliminary. Examining Old Aymara grammars suggests two potential conclusions: either the use of the nominative as a DO marker is an existing but unacknowledged feature in contemporary Aymara grammars,[10] or it is a result of contact with Spanish, where Aymara bilingual speakers replicate both overtly marked and zero-marked DOs. The analysis suggests that this process is ongoing, resulting in a competition between nominative and the accusative case markers, for inanimate objects. It is proposed that the omission of the subtractive accusative description in Old Aymara grammars (Bertonio 1603; Torres Rubio 1616) can be attributed to the missionaries' limited understanding of the complex system of vowel deletion[11] that typifies the Aymara language.

Based on data from Muylaque and La Paz Aymara, this analysis demonstrates the extent to which the Object Marking system in Aymara, as spoken by bilinguals, results from grammatical replication (Heine, Kuteva 2005), that is, the transfer of grammatical

10 If we deem this conclusion as valid, then it is imperative to undertake additional research to comprehend which factors trigger the nominative case over the accusative case.

11 For a detailed overview, see Coler et al. 2020.

concepts and models of grammaticalisation from the Model language (M) to the Replica language (R). In the contact between Aymara (R) and Spanish (M) this replication process seems to have operated as follows:

1. Aymara speakers (R) have observed the DO marking system in Spanish (M), specifically the distinction between DOM (+animate) and zero-marked DO (-animate).
2. They identified the dative case (*-ru*) and the nominative case (*-ø*) as potential replicating forms in (R) for the distinction DOM *vs*. DO.
3. They replicated the process of grammaticalisation that occurred in (M), using the formulas such as [*a* preposition + DO (+animate) > DOM] = [allative/dative *-ru* + DO (+animate) > DOM] and [zero marker + DO (-animate) > OD] = [(nominative *-ø* + DO (-animate) > OD], creating the constructions Ry1 and Ry2, respectively.
4. They grammaticalised Ry1 and Ry2 in the constructions dative case + animate DO and nominative case + inanimate DO.

In summary, Aymara-Spanish bilingual speakers use the dative/allative case to indicate the differential marking of animate DOs, similar to Spanish speakers who use the DOM marker *a*. Additionally, they use the nominative case to mark DOs that do not require differential marking in Spanish. In other words, when replicating the zero-marking Spanish DO, bilingual speakers choose the nominative since it is the sole case that lacks overt marking.

This variation seems to be triggering a transformation in the complete Aymara DO marking system. Nevertheless, further research, involving other transitive verbs and alternative analytical approaches, is necessary to comprehensively grasp this ongoing phenomenon.

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Varieties of Spanish in Contact: Overt Sociolinguistic Views Among Young Western-Andalusians in Madrid

Findings from a Preliminary Study

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Abstract The Andalusian variety is one of the most recurrently studied in Spanish. However, little research has been made so far to investigate intra-language variation among young and highly-educated Andalusians. Additionally, in approaching the study of intra-linguistic variation, delving into speakers' own views on certain linguistic elements is important to gain a deeper understanding of the beliefs behind their linguistic behaviour. For these reasons, this contribution presents the sociolinguistic views of a group of young and highly-educated Andalusians in a displacement situation, where their less prestigious vernacular variety faces a more prestigious variety, i.e., the one of the capital city of Spain (Madrid).

Keywords Intra-language variation. Madrid. Andalusia. Language attitudes. Identity.

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1 Introduction

The present contribution is an extract from a preliminary investigation whose purpose was to investigate the consequences of contact between two diatopic varieties of Peninsular Spanish after an internal migration process. The varieties considered in the study were the Andalusian and the Madrilenian, which receive different types of overt and covert prestige among the Spanish speech community. The investigation focused on a specific group inside the Spanish speech community: highly-educated young Western-Andalusians. The main reason to choose this specific sample was to fill the empirical gap resulting from the limited research conducted on educated speakers with academic studies when exploring the linguistic accommodation of Andalusians migrants in the north-central Spanish regions.

The investigation set out to determine whether the contact between the two varieties produced convergent accommodation towards the Madrilenian variety and the abandonment of Andalusian vernacular traits. The phenomenon chosen for the analysis was the shift from the *ceceo*/*seseo* variant, which belongs to participants' vernacular variety, and the convergence to the /s/ and /θ/ phonemic split, i.e., the variant of distinction, which is typical of the variety spoken in Madrid and also is associated to the standard pronunciation for these phonemes. In addition to that, the investigation also intended to understand speakers' views and ideas on the effects produced by the contact between the two varieties, altogether with exploring interviewees' attitudes towards the varieties spoken in Spain. This contribution will mainly focus on this latter part of the study, but will also provide some background information and some details on the phonetic analysis in order to contextualise the remarks on sociolinguistic views. The chapter is structured as follows: the first section introduces the theoretical framework chosen to approach the investigation; the second section describes the methodology and the sample whilst the third provides information on the phonetic data, preceding insights on participants' views and attitudes towards their vernacular variety and the one of Madrid in the fourth section; lastly, conclusions and indications for the future are presented.

1.1 Background ideas on language, variety and identity

The approach adopted in this preliminary study consists of a twofold perspective on the effects produced by language (or variety) contact, that is, on the one hand, its effects on language in the strictest sense; on the other, its impact on the identity of individuals. Concerning the first point of view, i.e. the consequence of contact on

language, I have looked at the manifestation of contact between the two varieties as a phenomenon of 'over-differentiation' (Weinreich 1979, 18). In this case-study, I considered the central-northern variety as the 'primary system', the southwestern variety as the 'secondary system', and the distinction between /s/ and /θ/ as the imposition of phonological distinctions. This type of contact would lead to the creation of new varieties, a process that Zentella (2003) defines as 'trans-dialectalization' (quoted in Moreno Fernández 2013, 83). In the present investigation, this process may be ignited by what Villena Ponsoda (2013, 174) calls 'imposed or improper variation', which is juxtaposed to 'natural or proper variation'. In other words, alternation between forms would not refer to structural reasons, i.e. proper variation, but to intentional ones, i.e. improper variation, meaning that speakers use variants to mark the differences (or similarities) between them and other individuals in the speech community. This leads to considering the second point of view of the investigation, which is the relationship between language contact and identity-related issues. In a displacement situation, linguistic identity is an especially critical factor, since the original language (or variety) can either be a reason for discrimination or facilitate integration within the new community. As Turner and Reynolds (2010) argue, individuals respond to a social mechanism by which people define their identities according to the group to which they (want to) belong. This mechanism can impact the domain of language, because linguistic acts are also acts of identity (Le Page, Tabouret-Keller 1985), both from the point of view of manifestation and construction (Calamai 2015). In this sense, positive or negative attitudes towards the vernacular variety spoken by the displaced person plays a crucial role, as it can determine whether the person will be likely to maintain or abandon one or more features of the original vernacular variety. For all these reasons, I believe that the connecting point of the two perspectives is the well-known process of accommodation, which Gallois, Ogay and Giles (2005, 137) define as:

> the process through which interactants regulate their communication (adopting a particular linguistic code or accent, increasing or decreasing their speech rate, avoiding or increasing eye contact, etc.) in order to appear more like (accommodation) or distinct from each other (non-accommodation).

In the specific case of this investigation, I applied this twofold perspective on the basis of some observations made by Villena Ponsoda (2000). Firstly, that vernacular traits are lost in contact with the national standard because the closer individuals approximate to their national identity, the more willing they are to lose the regional traits of their speech; secondly, that the identification to national values

grows with the levels of education and young people in urban spaces are leaders of linguistic disloyalty. The vernacular traits under observation in this investigation belong to the phonetic level because, as Calamai (2015) argued, phonetic traits are the most exposed levels of language and, as a consequence, the most susceptible to judgments and evaluations, such as expressions of linguistic attitudes.

1.2 Two Varieties of Peninsular Spanish: Confronting Madrilenian and Western-Andalusian

Madrilenian and Western-Andalusian varieties are characterised by different historical, social, political, and cultural peculiarities that contribute to the construction and maintenance of their sociolinguistic status within the linguistic community of Spain. Specifically, the Madrilenian variety receives higher open prestige at the national level because it belongs to the central-northern macro-variety and is therefore associated with the 'exemplar' variety (Moreno Fernández 2006, 79). On the other hand, the Andalusian variety receives the covert prestige inside the regional boundaries – even if attitudes tend to be ambivalent even inside the Andalusian community (Carbonero Cano 2003; Villena Ponsoda 2000).[1] Over the centuries several events contributed to determining these different layers of prestige for the varieties of the linguistic repertoire in Spain. The developments in the twentieth century were especially significant when, on the one side, political actions were taken to centralise both power and language and, on the other, important economic investments were made to convert Madrid into the political, economic, and social center, as it became the destination for many national and international migrants in search of work (Otero Carvajal 2010). At the same time, concerning the Andalusian variety, its position in the Spanish linguistic panorama was influenced by both the linguistic centralisation policy and the regionalist movements that claimed the dignity of the Andalusian heritage, in addition to those that promoted old negative stereotypes about the Andalusians (González 2000). This probably led to the development of ambivalent attitudes towards this variety, both on the part of Andalusians themselves and by other Spaniards, which persist until the present day.

1 To have a broader view of the sociolinguistic attitudes of other Spaniards towards the Andalusian variety, see Yraola 2014.

1.3 On *Ceceo*, *Seseo* and Distinction

Seseo, *ceceo* and distinction are the linguistic phenomena under interest in the present study. They all refer to the pronunciation of sibilants in syllabic onset. For the *seseo* and *ceceo* variants, /s/ and /θ/ are not two distinct phonemes, but two possible realisations of the [s] in onset that can be articulated with *seseant* tone, and thus traceable to /s/, or with *ceceant* tone and thus traceable to /θ/. Therefore, *seseo* is to be understood as the /s/ pronunciation of 'ce, ci, z' and *ceceo* as the /θ/ pronunciation of 's'. Alternatively, sibilants in syllabic onset can be realised by maintaining the phonological opposition of /s/ and /θ/. In this case, /s/ is articulated with [s] and /θ/ with [θ]. This latter realisation corresponds to the 'distinction' variant. I chose to focus on this particular set of traits for several reasons: firstly, because *ceceo* and *seseo* are considered the most characteristic and stereotypical linguistic element of the Andalusian variety and, historically, they are the features used to identify and recognise the Andalusian origin of a person (Narbona Jiménez, Jesús de Bustos 2009); secondly, because it is only in the region of Andalusia where polymorphism between the three possibilities (*ceceo*/*seseo*/distinction) is given;[2] lastly, because *ceceo* and *seseo* are already losing social acceptance within the Andalusian language community (Santana Marrero 2016; Carbonero Cano 2003) and, therefore, it is interesting to see whether, once uprooted from the community of origin, the *ceceo* or *seseo* is maintained, perhaps as a sign of identity attachment, or is abandoned, either due to the tendency of convergence towards the distinction already present in the community of origin, or as a sign of willingness to fit, even linguistically, within the new linguistic community (the one of Madrid, in our case). However, it should be noted that in this research I am considering language variability when Andalusian speakers use the vernacular variety outside its geographical boundaries and it is difficult to foresee whether the return of immigrants to their community of origin will affect somehow the varieties spoken in the region.

2 If considering other varieties that are included in the southern macro-variety (*canario*, *murciano*, *extremeño*), in *canario* only *seseo* is given, in *murciano* mainly distinction is given – except for a *seseante* area in Cartagena – and in *extremeño* only distinction is given.

2 Methodology

The study employed a qualitative multi-method approach combining semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The interviews were conducted face-to-face between November 2019 and January 2020 and had a minimum duration of 20 minutes. However, two intervals were considered for the analysis, one at the beginning (5'-10') and one at the end (15'-20') of the interview, with a total of 10 minutes. This choice is explained by the attempt to explore eventual changes between the initial and final moments of the conversation, due to the likely reduction of tension along the interview. The first minutes of the interview were discarded, because it is assumed that during this time frame individuals feel more uncomfortable and exhibit a higher degree of self-monitoring in their speech. The interviews started with questions by the interviewer on simple, familiar, and possibly emotionally relevant topics (childhood episodes, funny stories, 'strong' experiences such as study mobilities or life in the army). The choice of these subjects had a dual goal: on the one hand, to provide a sufficient amount of conversational material, thereby minimising the interviewer's interventions, on the other hand, to establish an informal register, which is considered the most appropriate to elicit a spontaneous style (Moreno Fernández 2009), although this is never possible in the context of a formal study. The second part of the data collection was carried out through questionnaires on linguistic attitudes. The set of questions was inspired by the PRECAVES-XXI (*Project for the Study of Beliefs and Attitudes towards Varieties of Spanish in the 21st Century*) and LIAS (*Linguistic Identity and Attitudes in Spanish-speaking Latin America*) projects and adapted to the specific aims of the research. The questionnaires addressed two main aspects: collecting opinions regarding the variety of origin and the Madrid variety, as well as finding out beliefs about the regions where participants think the best/worst Spanish is spoken and about the regions where a Spanish they like/dislike is spoken. It consisted of 19 questions: 6 inquired about personal data and information about participants' life in the capital, 9 pertained to the assessment of the two considered varieties, and 4 focused on beliefs about the speech of different regions of Spain. I opted to investigate these topics using this device, rather than relying only on the interviews, to prevent participants from additionally controlling their speech. The questionnaire[3] was made on the Google Form platform and sent to each participant after the conclusion of the interview.

3 See Appendix.

2.1 The Sample

The sample selected for the study consisted of 10 people, 5 men and 5 women and it is not intended to be statistically representative. To reach participants, the method of network sampling[4] was chosen. The criteria used to select eligible informants were: gender (F-M); aged between 20-35; high level of education or training; exclusive geographical origin in Western Andalusia (Cordoba, Seville, Huelva, Cadiz). In the process of selection of participants, the isoglosses drawn from the *Atlas lingüístico y etnográfico de Andalucía* (Alvar, Llorente, Salvador 1961-73) were taken into account to avoid the enclaves where the distinction between /s/ and /θ/ is already established[5] and thus results as a feature of the vernacular variety. Table 1 summarises the details of the sample:

Table 1 The sample

Participant	Gender	Age	Origin
1	F	25	Puerto Real (Cádiz)
2	M	27	Seville
3	F	28	Línea de la Concepción (Cádiz)
4	M	21	San Pablo de Buceite (Cádiz)
5	M	21	San Pablo de Buceite (Cádiz)
6	F	26	Seville
7	M	25	Puerto Real (Cádiz)
8	F	35	Seville
9	M	26	Rociana del Condado (Huelva)
10	F	26	Córdoba

All participants arrived in Madrid for professional or study-related reasons. Four of them lived in Madrid for more than one year, other four for exactly one year, and finally, two participants lived in the Spanish capital for less than a year. Most of them (6) plan to stay in Madrid for an undefined time, the others (4) for another 2-3 years.

4 Sampling began with a couple of participants and then continued with other connections that my first participants referred.

5 During the collection process, I obtained the contact of a person from Cortegana (Huelva) who met all the age and education requirements. However, the person was excluded from the study because he came from an area of the province where the phonological opposition of /s/ and /θ/ is already established as the dominant variant. Taking this into consideration has been crucial, otherwise the results of the analysis would have been completely distorted. As a matter of fact, I would have assessed his case as a convergence towards the Madrilenian variety, while the presence of distinction in his production is purely due to the fact that the variant is part of his vernacular. Therefore, as for this trait, a real strategy of convergence could not have been uncovered.

The number of times per year they return to Andalusia varies between 9-12 times for four people, 5-6 for three of them and 3-4 for the others.

3 Analysis: Comments on the Phonetic Data

As this contribution primarily focuses on the sociolinguistic attitudes of the participants, rather than on the phonetic realisation, I will not dwell on the outcomes of the oral production. Nevertheless, I should share what I believe to be information useful to enhancing the meaningfulness of the second part of my findings. To observe oral productions, interviews firstly underwent a process of manual transliteration. Then, I isolated the words where the syllabic structure contained a sibilant in onset. Subsequently, the segments where /s/ and /θ/ would appear were identified and, finally, I proceeded with the recognition of each phonetic realisation through hearing recognition process. Dubious cases were proof-heard by a native speaker. Acoustic analysis using adequate software, such as PRAAT,[6] was not carried out, as the hearing recognition alone gave satisfactory results considering the aims of the study. However, it is clear that this operational choice might have conveyed a certain degree of subjectivity to the analysis. The total number of detected segments is 2,160. Among these, 1,435 correspond[7] to /s/ and 725 to /θ/. Within the first group (1,435), I found 1359 cases of /s/ realised as [s] and 76 of /s/ realised as [θ]. On the other hand, within the second group (725), I found 720 cases of /θ/ realised as [θ] and 5 where it was produced as [s]. In other words, there were 2,079 cases in which the variant distinction occurred, 76 cases of *ceceo* (/s/ > [θ]) and 5 of *seseo* (/θ/ > [s]). The variant that prevailed in the majority of cases is the distinction, followed by *seseo*, and then by *ceceo*.

Table 2 Occurrences of the variants

Variant	Cases	Total number	%
Distinction	/s/ → [s]	1,359	63%
	/θ/ → [θ]	720	33%
Ceceo	/s/ → [θ]	76	4%
Seseo	/θ/ → [s]	5	0%
Total		2,160	100%

6 https://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/.

7 According to what is considered the standard and prestigious pronunciation for these phonemes (Cruz Ortiz 2020).

I used two criteria to interpret the results: firstly, the 'level of integration', which refers to the solution preferred by the speakers, i.e., the one predominantly used in the analysed minutes; secondly, 'the level of confidence' which indicates whether the speaker combined different variants or consistently stuck to a single choice (Santana Marrero 2016, 265-6). Concerning the level of integration, the majority of speakers (9) preferred the distinction variant, while only one participant used *ceceo* as his preference variant. This was evident as, out of his 108 instances of /s/, 73 were realised as [θ] and 35 as [s].

Table 3 Level of integration

L. of integration	N
Predominant use of distinction	9
Predominant use of other variants	1

As for the level of confidence, it is noteworthy that six people only used the distinction variant, while four participants combined two different variants. Specifically, two combined distinction and *ceceo*, while the other two combined distinction and *seseo*.

Table 4 Level of confidence

L. of confidence	N
Use of a single variant	6
Use of multiple variants (alternation)	4

To conclude the general observations, it should be emphasised that within the context of this study, it is not possible to verify whether the speakers were already making the distinction before moving to Madrid. Furthermore, the moment of the interview (initial or final) did not particularly impact the results, since the manifestations of insecurity occurred both in the first and in the last parts of the conversations. The linguistic context also seemed to have little influence, since hesitations were not linked to specific lexemes or lexical categories. This last aspect is demonstrated by the fact that in several occasions the speaker repeated the same word with the *seseante*/*ceceante* variant or with the distinction.

4 Analysis: Comments on the Sociolinguistic Views

According to Wilton and Stegu (2011), the sociolinguistic views of speakers are a fundamental starting point for any study that is interested in the relationship between language and issues of everyday life in both the public and private spheres. In my study, the collection of sociolinguistic views was intended to complement and support the interpretation of phonetic data which, alone, would have been insufficient given the focus on the relationship between the object of the study and extra-linguistic factors such as identity, social status, prestige, and culture. However, the observations of the overt language attitudes questionnaire turned out to be extremely interesting alone, providing insightful perspectives on the phenomena. In the following paragraphs, some extracts[8] of overt language attitudes of participants are presented.

4.1 Reflections on a (possible) Diglossic Relationship

When asked if they think to speak differently from people in Madrid, all participants answered affirmatively. Given this, the significance of preserving their Andalusian identity through linguistic patterns becomes even more pertinent for seven individuals, although it is worth questioning what 'maintaining the identity' means to them and what features constitute this 'Andalusian identity'. In addition, it should be considered that for some participants this relationship may exist, but might not hold significant importance. In fact, when questioned about the eventual changes in their speech after moving to Madrid, four people reported that they modified some features, five stated that they made no changes, and one participant expressed uncertainty. Among the four people who thought they had modified their speech, two individuals stated that maintaining their original linguistic features to preserve their identity was not necessary, while two stated its necessity. Example (1) is a quote from a participant, who initially dismissed the relevance of the relationship between language and identity and also stated to changing his speech since arriving in Madrid:

> (1) F. tiene más acento que yo, pero es porque yo vivo con dos… una de Galicia y una de Extremadura entonces es como que lo pierdo […] yo voy a mi pueblo y estoy un día en mi pueblo y tengo acento de… igual que F., de ceceo y demás con las eses.

8 In this contribution, I have included comments on questions 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the questionnaire.

> F. has more accent than me, but it is because I live with two… one from Galicia and one from Extremadura so it is like I lose it […] I go to my town and after one day I am in my town and I have an accent… just like F., with a *ceceo* and so on with the 's'. (Author's transl.)

This statement offers an example where the speaker himself describes his process of communicative accommodation, which is strongly determined by the communicative context: on one hand, there are non-Andalusian interlocutors, with whom the participant 'loses' his 'accent'; on the other, there are his Andalusian family members and people from his home town, with whom he regains his 'accent', including the *ceceo*. From his statement, it is possible to infer that he actually exerts some self-monitoring when speaking with non-Andalusians interlocutors and avoids the *ceceo*. As a matter of fact, in his production I have detected 0 cases of *ceceo*. Even more interesting is that the participant to whom the interviewee refers (F.) comes from the same town, and is one of the two people combining the variant of the distinction with the *ceceo*.

The awareness of the use of different varieties according to interlocutors is enhanced by participants' answers when asked if they believed they spoke differently with their Andalusian family or friends. Almost all of them (9 out of 10) answered affirmatively. Table 5 is a record of the clarifications they provided when asked on this matter **[tab. 5]**.

A note of caution is due here, since these statements cannot be treated as absolute truths. However, they reveal interesting elements that deserve scrutiny. Firstly, participants define the Spanish spoken in Madrid as 'more neutral', maybe because it is perceived as closer to the north-central variety which is considered the 'target' to follow. Secondly, certain patterns emerge from interviewees' answers when they are asked to explain how their speech changes depending on the Madrilenian or Andalusian interlocutor. The following three topics arose in the majority of answers: differences in accent and speed, the presence of 'more southern expressions', and the idea that the change in speaking style happens 'unconsciously', and 'without realising it', as they are adapting to the interlocutor. From my perspective, these recurrent themes suggest a possible consistency and, therefore, a shared view on the topic.

Table 5 Differences of speech according to place and/or interlocutors

Participant	Quote (ES)	Quote (EN)
1	En mi caso creo que me 'adapto' más a como hablan ellos	In my case I think I 'adapt' more to the way they speak (Author's transl.)
2	No	No
3	[en Madrid] Más 'lento' y 'pronunciando las s finales'	[in Madrid] 'Slower' and 'pronouncing the final s' (Author's transl.)
4	En ocasiones el propio entorno te 'influye' a la hora de hablar. No es lo mismo hablar con personas desconocidas que con personas con las que tienes más trato, te sientes más cómodo e inmediatamente hablas de forma más 'natural'	Sometimes the surrounding environment 'influences' you when it comes to speaking. It is not the same to speak with strangers as with people with whom you have more contact, you feel more comfortable and immediately speak in a more 'natural' way (Author's transl.)
5	Cambio 'inconscientemente' el 'acento' cuando 'escucho alguien de mi pueblo'	I 'unconsciously' change the 'accent' when 'listening to someone from my town' (Author's transl.)
6	'Sin darme cuenta' tengo un 'acento' más de Madrid que de Sevilla	'Without being aware?' I have an 'accent' more from Madrid than from Seville (Author's transl.)
7	Pues cambia el 'acento y expresiones' propias del sur	Well, there is a change in 'accent and expressions' typical of the south (Author's transl.)
8	Diría que no cambio mucho mi forma de hablar. En todo caso, quizás a veces en Madrid, en ciertos contextos (con no andaluces) siento que tengo incluso 'más acento' o uso incluso 'más expresiones andaluzas' que con mi familia o amigos de Sevilla. Lo que sí puede que cambie un poco es que cuando voy a Sevilla o estoy con Sevillanos-andaluces uso más expresiones 'sevillanas profundas'	I would say that I don't change my way of speaking very much. In any case, maybe sometimes in Madrid, in certain contexts (with non-Andalusians) I feel that I have even 'more accent' or use even 'more Andalusian expressions' than with my family or friends from Seville. What may change a bit is that when I go to Seville or when I am with Andalusians from Seville more 'deep Sevillian' expressions. (Author's transl.)
9	Mayor 'velocidad'	More 'quickly' (Author's transl.)
10	En mi casa tengo el 'acento andaluz muy marcado' y en Madrid es 'más español neutro'	At home I have a 'very strong Andalusian accent' and in Madrid it is 'more neutral Spanish' (Author's transl.)

4.2 Perceptions on Spanish Varieties

Another highly informative section of the questionnaire concerns the answers about the Autonomous Communities (AC) where the best/worst Spanish is spoken, according to speakers' opinion, and where the one they like/dislike is spoken. Each participant was required to indicate one or more ACs for each scenario and explain the reasons for the choice. These questions aimed to unveil how people indirectly value their linguistic variety and whether linguistic stereotypes remain unchanged. In the case of these questions, not only the answers but also their absence was considered relevant. Indeed, the act of not answering the questions that required an open judgment on a specific variety suggests how important and sensitive the topic is for the linguistic community under consideration.

Table 6 Regions whose variety participants like

Region/city	N° quotes
Galicia	3
Andalusia	3
Valencian Community	2
Canary Islands	2
Extremadura	1

Out of all the participants, only one person did not indicate any preference, whereas another mentioned more ACs (Galicia, Extremadura and Andalusia). The justifications behind the responses were quite consistent, with most participants referring mainly to the 'pleasant intonation' of the chosen variety. Andalusian variety, in particular, was appreciated for being 'richer, more comfortable' and 'playable'.

Table 7 Regions whose variety participants do not like

Region/city	N° quotes
Catalonia	2
Murcia	2
Andalusia (Western Andalusia)	2 (1)
Galicia	1
Castile and León	1

In this case, two people preferred not to indicate any AC and it is highly likely that one of those who answered 'Andalusia' did not read the question carefully, since her justification was "tenemos mucha variedad y mucho arte" (we have a great variety and much art; Author's transl.), which is undoubtedly positive. Moreover, she included herself in the group, by using the verb inflection of 1-person plural,

and, therefore, an open criticism of her own speech seems implausible. The justifications of disliking certain varieties, given by interviewees pertain to intonation, to some phono-morphological phenomena. For instance, "no me gusta la forma de hablar de Andalucía oriental, abren las vocales" (I do not like the way of speaking in eastern Andalusia, they open the vowels; Author's transl.). However, cacophony is hardly a true justification for determining the appreciation or dislike for a particular linguistic variety. This is demonstrated by the fact that the participants who 'criticised' the Catalonian accent did so because of "la influencia del catalán le da un acento raro" (Catalan's influence gives it an odd sounding; Author's transl.) and because "lo mezclan mucho con su idioma y no suena bien" (they mix it too much with their own language and it doesn't sound good; Author's transl.). Thus, they based their judgment on extra-linguistic factors or at least factors beyond the specific variety, since a judgment on Spanish is justified through the contact with another language (Catalan). It seems that socio-political factors may be more influential than linguistic ones, also because if the influence of another official language in the region was adopted as a criterion for 'dislike', it would not be explained why Galicia and Valencian Community – which are AC where a local language is spoken together with Spanish – were appreciated in answers to the first question.

Table 8 Regions whose variety participants think is the best

Region/city	N° quotes
Castile and León / Valladolid	4
Malaga	1

What stands out in this case is that half (5 out of 10) of participants preferred not to indicate any region, stating that "en cada zona se dicen unas palabras u otras o un acento u otro, pero al final el hablar bien depende de personas no de la zona donde sean" (in each area there are different words and different accents, but speaking well ultimately depends on people, and not on the area where they find themselves; Author's transl.), they also emphasised that "hablar 'bien' o 'mal' no es una cuestión de la zona que se considere" (speaking 'well' or 'badly' is not a question of the area considered; Author's transl.), and that "no existe un 'mejor español', solo variedades" (there is no 'better Spanish', only varieties; Author's transl.). One participant who indicated Malaga justified his choice by stating that "se entiende bien y no tienen ceceos ni seseos" (it is easy to understand and there are no *ceceos* or *seseos*; Author's transl.). On the other hand, those who indicated the areas of Castile and León argued that in that area the pronunciation was more correct: "pronuncian

bien" (they have a good pronunciation; Author's transl.), "son más correctos en la pronunciación" (they are more correct in pronunciation; Author's transl.), and "pronuncian muy bien todas las palabras" (they pronounce all the words very well; Author's transl.). They also mentioned that the grammatical rules were respected, and there was no accent. It is noteworthy that, as in the case of the responses about the most liked Spanish, the justifications mainly refer to the phonetic level. However, it is not a matter of 'intonation', which is more related to melody – something sweet and pleasant – and was often attributed to the Andalusian variety. Instead, the respondents focus on 'pronunciation', which is closely linked to the respect of grammatical rules and linguistic norm.

Table 9 Regions whose variety participants think is the worst

Region/city	N° quotes
Community of Madrid	3
Catalonia/Valencia	3
Murcia	1

Finally, four people preferred not to answer this last question, while two participants indicated two ACs each, namely Valencian Community and Catalonia, and Madrid and Catalonia, respectively. The motivations refer to grammatical aspects (*dequeísmos* and *laísmos*), as well as spelling 'mistakes', which were influenced once again by Catalan. Furthermore, interesting are also the reasons that explain the views about the speech of Madrid, considered 'worse' also because of "la mezcla de acentos y cambios lingüísticos" (the mixture of accents and linguistic changes; Author's transl.) and its "acento cerrado" (closed accent; Author's transl.).

4.3 Final Highlights from an Interviewee

As a final remark, I present an extract from an interview that outstandingly summarises all concepts explored so far. The interviewee spontaneously offered this reflection, which can be considered especially meaningful not only for its spontaneity but also for touching all the key issues that emerged in the study.

> (2) Yo por ejemplo no ceceo, la gente de mi pueblo cecea mucho […] mi compañera de piso es del mismo pueblo y yo la escucho hablar y ella me escucha hablar y ella cecea más que yo. A lo mejor si me cabreo algún ceceo sí qué suelto, pero normalmente como estoy hablando contigo no lo suelto. Luego soy una persona que se les pegan muy los acentos, pero al parecer no pasa con este de

> Madrid. Cuando estaba en Granada y volvía a casa mis padres se burlaban de mí porque hablaba granadino. Al principio sí que se me pegaba el de Madrid per cuando llegaba a casa se reían de mí porque hablaba muy fino, con las eses. Sí que es verdad que aquí cuando estoy hablando con gente de aquí intento hablar con las eses ultimas para que me entiendan y hablar lo más lento posible […]. También es verdad que intento que no se me pegue el acento porque el acento que tengo no creo que sea feo, que ya que estoy en Madrid que por lo menos llevarme algo de mi tierra, no tengo a mis padres, no tengo a nadie. Antes me sentía rara porque parecía que la que hablaba mal era yo. Y no. No es que hablemos mal. Es acento y punto.
>
> I, for example, do not use 'ceceo'. People from my town largely use it […] my roommate is from my village and I hear her speaking, she hears me speaking, and she use 'ceceo' much more than I do. Maybe when I get angry, I release some 'ceceo', but in ordinary situation, like now talking to you, I don't. I am a person who is very affected by accents, but apparently it doesn't happen with this one from Madrid. When I was in Granada and returned home my parents made fun of me because I used to speak Granadino. At the beginning I did catch the Madrid accent, but when I got home my family laughed at me because I spoke very posh, with the 'eses'. It is true that when I am talking to people from here I try to speak with the last 's' so that they understand me and speak as slowly as possible […]. It is also true that I try not to catch the accent because I don't think the accent I have is ugly. Since I am in Madrid I should at least keep something of my homeland: I don't have my parents here, I don't have anyone. In the past, I used to feel uncomfortable because it seemed that I was the one who spoke poorly. But no. It is not that I speak poorly. It is just an accent, that is all. (Author's transl.)

This excerpt is quite revealing on several grounds. Firstly, the interviewee provides a perfect example of divergent accommodation, when she says "como estoy hablando contigo no lo suelto" (as I am talking to you, I don't let it go: Author's transl.) referring to the vernacular variant under study. In other words, she indicates that the vernacular trait is part of her repertoire, but she consciously avoids using it during controlled speech, especially when conversing with someone not from her village. It is highly probable that the vernacular trait belongs to her repertoire because she states that her roommate, who is from the same village, produces it 'more' than she does. Moreover, she declares that when she is angry, she "lets [the vernacular] go". This not only confirms the presence of the trait in her repertoire but also reveals that the shift to the distinction – which was

the only choice found and analysed in her oral production – is a consequence of a controlled process. When she loses "control", she reverts to using the vernacular. Another core issue coming from this spontaneous declaration is the conflict of identity related to language use and accent. The interviewee states that "accents normally 'stick' to her", as the experience in Granada shows. During this time, her family made fun of her for having lost her original accent[9] and for speaking with 's'.[10] A similar situation occurred after her displacement to Madrid, where she adopted the local accent which her family did not like. So, she dropped it and came to the realisation that she does not even want to adopt the accent from Madrid because, while being alone there, she wants "por lo menos llevarme algo de mi tierra" (at very least carry something from my homeland). Finally, she says to have realised that her way of speaking is not worse than others'. It is just a different accent, and that distinction does not hold any significance.

5 Open Conclusions and Indications for the Future

The objective of this chapter was to illustrate some examples of the sociolinguistic views collected in the context of a broader study, which aimed at investigating the possible communicative accommodation towards the Madrid variety and the consequent abandonment of certain vernacular traits. The core assumption underlying this inquiry was that, within the realm of intra-linguistic variation, delving into speakers' views on certain linguistic elements is not only important but also intriguing. The examples presented here allow to draw the following final observations. Firstly, it is evident that individuals maintain a positive attitude towards their original context, emphasising the importance of preserving their way of speaking to uphold their sense of belonging to the Andalusian community. Secondly, participants are aware of speaking differently from individuals in Madrid, and some of them acknowledge (or believe) that they have modified certain elements of their original variety. What confirms the intuition of these speakers, even those who believe they have not altered anything, is the recognition of having a different linguistic behaviour when returning home or speaking with Andalusian family and friends. In this regard, one could argue for the existence of a diglossic relationship for these speakers between the

9 She is from the province of Cádiz.

10 One can infer that the family was claiming that, maybe, she was not using /θ/ anymore, together with other manifestations of the /s/ where normally it does not occur in the southern varieties.

Andalusian and Madrid varieties, strongly influenced by location and interlocutors. Furthermore, linguistic stereotypes prevalent in the Spanish linguistic community are pronounced, particularly regarding the 'preferred' variety identified by those who chose to respond with the central-northern variety. The relevance of linguistic judgments formulated based on extra-linguistic factors is noteworthy, as evidenced by negative judgments about the variety spoken in Catalonia, disparaged for Catalan influences. Lastly, it is interesting to note how certain historical stereotypes towards the Andalusian variety are maintained even in this small sample, as participants attribute to the Andalusian variety the traditional characteristics of being playful, light, and entertaining. All of this is relevant if one also observes the fact that, firstly, this preliminary study shows a general trend towards the loss of the vernacular trait (*ceceo*/*seseo*) and secondly, these traits – altogether with broader accent-related issues – are quoted as being 'negative' or at least 'under observation' when interviewees self-evaluate their variety and speaking habits. However, in my opinion, the most poignant observation is that the shift from the vernacular identity to the one of the new place – expressed both in terms of sociolinguistic views and linguistic behaviour – appears to be rather fluid, dynamic and strongly related to internal and external circumstances of the individuals. To conclude, I am aware that the small number of informants and the foreign origin of the interviewer are substantive limits to the generalizability of the speakers' responses. As such, this preliminary work means to serve only as a starting point to explore new perspectives on the study of sociolinguistic accommodation in groups such as young university students/workers as well as on the intricate relationship between language and identity.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire – Spanish version (original)

1. Nombre
2. ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en Madrid?
3. ¿Hasta cuándo piensas quedarte en Madrid?
4. ¿Has vivido en otros sitios antes de mudarte a Madrid?
5. ¿Cuántas veces vuelves a tu casa al año (aproximadamente)?
6. Tienes más amistades con personas…
☐ De Madrid
☐ De otras procedencias geográficas
7. En tu opinión, el andaluz (o las hablas andaluzas) es (son)
☐ Una lengua
☐ Un dialecto
8. Hablas…
☐ Español
☐ Castellano
☐ Andaluz
☐ Otro…
9. ¿Piensas que la forma de vida de los madrileños es más interesante que la de los andaluces?
☐ Sí
☐ Tal vez sí
☐ Tal vez no
☐ No
10. ¿Piensas que mantener tu forma de hablar es necesario para mantener tu identidad andaluza?
☐ Sí
☐ Tal vez sí
☐ Tal vez no
☐ No
11. ¿Has cambiado tu forma de hablar desde tu llegada a Madrid?
☐ Sí
☐ Tal vez sí
☐ Tal vez no
☐ No
12. Cuando hablas con tu familia o tus amigos andaluces, ¿hablas de manera diferente con respeto a cuando hablas con los madrileños? En caso de respuesta afirmativa, ¿podrías explicar en qué términos es 'diferente'?
13. ¿Piensas que tu forma de hablar es distinta que la de los madrileños?
☐ Sí
☐ Tal vez sí
☐ Tal vez no
☐ No
14. Nombra una comunidad autónoma de España, si hay, donde te gusta el español que se habla.
Motiva la respuesta

15. Nombra una comunidad autónoma de España, si hay, donde se habla el mejor español.
Motiva la respuesta

16. Nombra una comunidad autónoma de España, si hay, donde no te gusta el español que se habla.
Motiva la respuesta

17. Nombra una comunidad autónoma de España, si hay, donde se habla el peor español.
Motiva la respuesta

18. ¿Cómo valoras el habla de Madrid?
Agradable(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Bonita(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Cercana(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Divertida(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Sencilla(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Cortés(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Blanda(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Suave(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Variada(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Clara (totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Rápida(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Urbana(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)

19. ¿Cómo valoras el habla de tu ciudad de origen?
Agradable(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Bonita(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Cercana(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Divertida(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Sencilla(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Cortés(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Blanda(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Suave(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Variada(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Clara (totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Rápida(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)
Urbana(totalmente) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (para nada)

Appendix 2

Questionnaire – English version

1. Name
2. How long have you been in Madrid?
3. Until when do you plan to stay in Madrid?
4. Have you lived in other places before moving to Madrid?
5. How many times do you go back home per year (approximately)?
6. Do you have more friendships with people…
☐ From Madrid
☐ From other places
7. In your opinion, is the Andalusian variety (or the Andalusian varieties)
☐ A language
☐ A dialect
8. Which language(s) do you speak?
☐ Spanish
☐ Castilian
☐ Andalusian
☐ Other
9. Do you think that the way of life of people in Madrid is more interesting than that of Andalusians?
☐ Yes
☐ Maybe yes
☐ Maybe not
☐ No
10. Do you think that maintaining your way of speaking is necessary to preserve your Andalusian identity?
☐ Yes
☐ Maybe yes
☐ Maybe not
☐ No
11. Have you changed your way of speaking since you arrived in Madrid?
☐ Yes
☐ Maybe yes
☐ Maybe not
☐ No
12. When you talk with your family or friends from Andalusia, do you speak differently compared to when you talk with people from Madrid? If yes, could you explain in what terms it is 'different'?
13. Do you think that your way of speaking is different from that of people from Madrid?
☐ Yes
☐ Maybe yes
☐ Maybe not
☐ No
14. Name one autonomous community in Spain, if any, where you like the Spanish spoken. Please explain your answer.

15. Name one autonomous community in Spain, if any, where the best Spanish is spoken. Please explain your answer.

16. Name one autonomous community in Spain, if any, where you do not like the Spanish spoken. Please explain your answer.

17. Name one autonomous community in Spain, if any, where the worst Spanish is spoken. Please explain your answer.

18. How would you evaluate the speech of Madrid?
Pleasant (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Beautiful (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Approachable (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Fun (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Simple (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Polite (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Soft (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Smooth (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Varied (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Clear (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Fast (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Urban (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)

19. How would you evaluate the speech of your hometown?
Pleasant (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Beautiful (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Approachable (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Fun (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Simple (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Polite (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Soft (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Smooth (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Varied (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Clear (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Fast (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)
Urban (completely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 (nothing at all)

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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On the Relation Between Attitudes and Dialect Maintenance (Sicilian and Venetan) in Italy

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Abstract Despite recent revalorization, Italian dialects are still stigmatized. Our study compares the attitudes towards Sicilian and Venetan and their relation to language use and proficiency. An online survey with 56 Sicilian and 135 Venetan users reveals the importance of the dialect for identity in both groups, but the interaction between attitudes, use and proficiency varies: positive attitudes towards Venetan align with active use, whereas positive attitudes towards Sicilian are stronger in low-proficiency users. We propose that the revalorization of dialects is happening under different circumstances, impacting their future use and maintenance.

Keywords Bilectalism. Sicilian. Venetan. Attitudes. Use. Proficiency.

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1 Introduction

Language attitudes can be defined as largely unconscious individual attitudes towards a linguistic variety and its speakers (Adler, Plewnia 2018). Within social psychology, language attitudes are seen as a mental construct that comprises three different dimensions. The first dimension, referred as 'cognitive' is associated with individuals' understanding of various aspects of language. It encompasses knowledge of regional and diastratic variation as well as personal experiences of language use. The 'affective' component makes up the second dimension and is strongly related to the emotions that individuals have towards different language varieties and their speakers, including their own language variety. The third dimension is the 'behavioural' one that influences our linguistic behaviour in different situations (Ladegaard 2000). While attitudes towards a language focus on the language itself and its perception, attitudes towards speakers of a language are additionally linked to stereotypes (Schoel et al. 2012), thus comprising also extra-linguistic and societal aspects (Schlieben-Lange 1991). The latter are key to the use of a language and its transmission to the subsequent generation.

Attitudes towards a language can be positive or negative. This has implications for language use because negative attitudes can lead to a decrease of use, while positive attitudes can lead to an increase of use. This is especially evident in contexts where minority languages (often associated with negative attitudes) compete with a majority language (associated with positive attitudes). While for majority languages there is usually a high amount of input, which comes with different qualities (e.g., from many different speakers and in various registers), minority languages are more restricted in domains of use and lack institutional support. If attitudes towards minority languages are negative and linked to discrimination, it is unlikely that they will be used and passed on to the next generation (Murillo, Smith 2011), especially when using the minority language is considered an obstacle to economic success and social mobility (Mohanty 2010). Instead of transmitting the minority language to the forthcoming generations, speakers might pass their traumatising experiences to their children and grandchildren, making it less likely for the minority language to survive (Dołowy-Rybińska, Hornsby 2021).

The impact of negative attitudes on language use and intergenerational transmission can be seen in different types of minority language settings, including indigenous languages, heritage languages and dialects. Brenzinger et al. (2003) have argued that speakers of indigenous languages might see their language (and culture) as an impediment to participating in modern society and, consequently, refrain from transmitting it to the next generation. Heritage speakers often face a similar situation (Zhang, Slaughter-Defoe 2009; Kutlu,

Kirchner 2021). While feeling the pressure to integrate into the host society, they often see their heritage languages as an obstacle and therefore stop using it, which results in fading language proficiencies over generations. Similarly, the use of dialects and regional minority languages highly depends on the attitudes the speakers themselves and others have towards them: positive attitudes towards a dialect will favour its use and negative attitudes will cause its avoidance (Grassi, Sobrero, Telmon 1997). A decline in dialect use and in the number of speakers can cause the loss of linguistic structures and the transfer of structures from the majority language into the dialect so that the dialect loses its value and importance for communication (Moretti 1999). Thus, language attitudes are crucial determinants for the existence of a linguistic variety, especially in the case of minority languages. In such contexts, attitudes towards minority languages can be investigated from the point of view of the 'others' (the majority) as well as from the perspective of the speakers themselves.[1] In this paper, we will examine the latter, focusing on the attitudes that Italian speakers of Sicilian and Venetan have towards their own dialects.

2 Attitudes and Dialects in Italy – Sicilian and Venetan

With Italian and numerous Italo-Romance dialects being spoken in Italy in the past and today, the Italian linguistic landscape provides a good basis for research on regional varieties. The dialects in Italy, just like Italian, have developed independently from Latin, and from a linguistic point of view they must be regarded as independent (regional) languages rather than dialects 'of Italian' (Berruto 1989; Tosi 2004). However, contrary to Italian, the dialects are mostly used as spoken languages and their use is generally restricted to informal situations. By using the term 'dialect', we are thus following the Italian linguistic tradition that captures the difference between Italian (high variety) and the dialects (low variety) from a sociolinguistic point of view (Loporcaro 2009).[2] In the past, the dialect was the common means of communication for all kinds of oral situations and Italian was mostly used for formal and written purposes (de Renzo 2008). This diglossic relationship (Ferguson 1964; Berruto 1987a) changed in the second half of the twentieth century when Italian began to

1 Baroni 1983; Galli de' Paratesi 1984; Volkart-Rey 1990 and Ruffino 2006 for the Italian context.

2 By contrast, 'regional varieties' are some modern varieties of Italian that have developed from standard Italian under the influence of dialects spoken in those areas (Berruto 2018).

spread and entered the domains of oral communication. Both Italian and dialect were used for informal conversations, resulting in functional overlap between the high and low variety in this domain – a situation referred to as *dilalia* (Berruto 1987b). With this change dialect use not only decreased but also became increasingly stigmatised since dialects were seen as an impediment to learning Italian and to having social and economic success (Cremona, Bates 1977; de Renzo 2008; Rubino 2014). This resulted in the repression of dialects at school as well as in negative attitudes towards dialects more generally, characterised by the hierarchical opposition between the prestigious standard variety and the disdained dialect (Grassi, Sobrero, Telmon 1997).

Language attitudes have been subject to several studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. Baroni (1983) investigated the attitudes towards Italian, regional varieties and dialects spoken in Milano, Padova, Bologna and Catania by means of the matched guise technique. Thus, participants were not explicitly asked about their attitudes towards these language varieties, but they heard recorded speech samples and rated them with regard to personal and socioeconomic traits without knowing where the speakers were from. While speakers of Italian received higher ratings than speakers of dialects on socioeconomic dimensions, they received lower ratings on personal dimensions (e.g., solidarity and likeability of a speaker). These results were confirmed by Volkart-Rey (1990), who investigated the attitudes of teachers in Catania and Rome towards accents in Italy. In his study, teachers in both cities listened to a text read by different speakers with varying degrees of dialectal features, ranging on a continuum from a marked Catanese and Roman dialect to a more controlled standard Italian pronunciation. He found that Italian was mostly connected to a high socioeconomic status whereas regional accents were linked to positive personal traits. He further observed that as regional accents moved further along the continuum toward the strong dialectal variant, both their socioeconomic and personal appeal declined.

Volkart-Rey's findings on accent prejudices in Italy have been mirrored by studies in many other national contexts. While speakers of standard languages are mostly associated with a high socioeconomic status and low degrees of solidarity, the situation is inverted for speakers of nonstandard varieties (Giles, Coupland 1991; Giles, Billings 2004). To explain such findings, social scientists have relied on Social Identity Theory (e.g., Tajfel, Turner 1979). Accordingly, we categorise the world and perceive ourselves and others in terms of social groups. Membership in such groups forms part of our social identity, which can be positive or negative, depending on how this group is compared to other groups. Language plays an important role in this process of categorisation and perception of social group members

since it enables persons to intuitively classify a speaker based on the stereotypes that are linked to the specific group he is part of (Brewer 1996). Therefore, in the context of regional variation, a speaker might be assigned to a social group based on his accent and associated with the stereotypes pertaining to this group (Grondelaers, Van Hout 2012). Consequently, linguistic varieties are connected to group stereotypes through the unconscious process of categorising members of different language communities.

In the Italian context, further differences in attitudes appear to persist between southern and northern varieties. In Baroni's (1983) study, speakers of southern varieties generally received more negative ratings compared to speakers of northern varieties. Not only did speakers of other (northern) varieties have negative attitudes towards southern varieties, but speakers of southern varieties themselves also had negative attitudes towards their own dialects. By devaluating their own variety, southern Italians incorporated their inferior status resulting from less economic progress during the 1980s and 1990s, comparing themselves to the privileged and superior North (Baroni 1983, 106). This behaviour can be explained with the social phenomenon known as self-stigmatisation of self-censorship (Bourdieu 2017). A group of people, knowing about the prejudices and stereotypes against them, starts to internalise and project those attributions on themselves (Corrigan, Watson 2002).[3]

Galli de' Paratesi (1984) came to similar findings as Baroni when conducting a study in Milan, Florence and Rome in which she asked the participants directly whether they liked the Italian accent in different parts of Italy (including Milan, Rome, Florence, and the South of Italy) and the Italian variety used by the national broadcasting company RAI. While attitudes towards northern varieties were mostly positive, those towards the Italian used by RAI were ambivalent, i.e., positive from a socioeconomic perspective, while at the same time associated with being cold and unnatural. Again, attitudes towards the southern varieties were mostly negative, especially among the participants with southern origins. In the 1990s, Ruffino (2006) collected data on dialect attitudes among primary school children from all over Italy. Even the children expressed the idea that dialects in general, but especially the southern varieties, were stigmatised. This was especially the case for children living in the southern regions, suggesting that language attitudes start to be internalised from a very early age.

3 The term 'self-stigmatisation' is usually used in relation to mental illnesses, but it can also be applied to other contexts in which people suffer from stigmatisation (Bathje, Marston 2014), including that of linguistic minorities.

In a recent account, Berruto (2018) has pointed out that attitudes towards dialects in Italy have changed. They are no more associated with a low socioeconomic status and a low prestige, but instead are seen as an enrichment for individual communication. The detachment of the dialects' stigmatised status in the 1980s and 1990s is a change that Berruto (2018, 506) refers to as "revalorisation of dialects". This trend becomes apparent even in more stigmatised dialects like Sicilian. For example, Sicilian is now used for advertising purposes, e.g., in names of restaurants (D'Agostino, Ruffino 2005). Similarly, Parry (2010, 72) highlights a 'come-back' of dialects. She suggests that it might be the result of higher proficiencies in Italian: Now that most speakers are confident and fluent in Italian, they are no longer 'ashamed of' using the dialect. Furthermore, in the spirit of the 'multilingual turn', it has been pointed out that dialect use neither hinders the development of the standard language (as portrayed in the past), nor does it affect cognitive abilities negatively. Garraffa, Beveridge, Sorace (2015) tested bilingual Sardinian-Italian primary school children in their receptive competence in Italian and executive function. The bilingual children performed on par with monolingual Italian children, and the older bilingual children even outperformed the monolingual controls. The cognitive advantages of being bilingual in the standard language and a dialect have also been found among adults living in the same area (Garraffa, Obregon, Sorace 2017), thus indicating that the positive effects of bilingualism on cognitive abilities (Bialystok 2009) can be extended to cases where one of the languages is a regional minority language.

Despite the decline in the number of dialect speakers in the past decades, for half of the Italian population the dialect is still a part of their linguistic repertoire (Berruto 2018). However, the number of actual dialect speakers is not equally distributed in Italy and largely depends on sociolinguistic factors, such as age, gender, education, context and especially regional origin. Data collection carried out at regular intervals since the 1980s shows that the dialect is mostly spoken by male older persons with lower levels of education and within the family and that the highest numbers of dialect users can be found in the South and in the North-east (Istat 2017). Sicilian (spoken in the South of Italy) and Venetan (spoken in the North-east of Italy) are two of the dialects that are spoken in these regions. Both are considered to be amongst the most vital dialects in Italy. There are about 4.7 Mio. speakers of Sicilian (Eberhard, Simons, Fennig 2022) and about 7.8 Mio. speakers of Venetan (International Commission of European Citizens 2022) in Italy and worldwide.[4] Berruto

4 Another number reported in an online article by Fitzgerald-Crozier (2011) is 20 million, but we suspect that this is an overestimation. https://unicoac.org/sicilian-americans-have-something-to-say-in-sicilian/.

(2018, 503, based on Istat 2014) estimates that 72% of the Sicilian population (3.5 million) and 70% of the Venetan population (4.2 million) uses the dialect actively for their communication. Sicilian and Venetan are both recognised as languages on a local level. Nevertheless, like most of the other Italo-Romance dialects, they are not mentioned in the law 482/99 that was established to protect the linguistic minorities in Italy (Van der Jeught 2016; Ganfi, Simoniello 2021). What makes the comparison between Sicilian and Venetan particularly interesting is that although both are amongst the most widely spoken dialects in Italy, the attitudes towards them differ drastically. As Berruto (2018) points out, paradoxically, negative attitudes towards the dialect are found especially in those regions that have the highest numbers of dialect users, i.e., primarily the Southern Italy ones, whereas positive attitudes are connected to regions with low degrees of dialect use, especially those spoken in the North-West.[5] Following the Italian linguistic tradition, we refer to Sicilian and Venetan as 'dialects', and will consequently speak of "bilectalism" (Rowe, Grohmann 2013) to refer to the linguistic situation of (most) Sicilians and Venetans. In this respect, 'bilectals' are a specific group of bilinguals that have two varieties of different sociolinguistic statuses in their linguistic repertoire.

3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This paper investigates attitudes towards Sicilian and Venetan by looking at the relationship between dialect attitudes, use and proficiency in these two dialects. More specifically, we ask:

RQ1 What attitudes do Sicilians and Venetans have towards their dialect(s)?
RQ2 How do these attitudes relate to their (self-reported) language use?
RQ3 How do self-reported language use and attitudes relate to objective proficiency in Italian and in the dialect?
RQ4 How do dialect attitudes towards Sicilian and Venetan differ?

First, concerning RQ1, we assume that speakers' attitudes towards their own dialects are determined by the different status of the dialect and Italian. As has been pointed out by Baroni (1983), Galli de' Paratesi (1984) and Volkart-Rey (1990) in the Italian context and by Giles, Billings (2004) more generally, we expect that speakers will

5 This seems to reflect the Sicilian case well. Attitudes towards Venetan, by contrast, are not predominantly negative. Although Venetan has a high number of speakers, it is perceived to be an important part of the regional identity that its speakers are proud of (Perrino 2019).

attribute a higher prestige to the standard variety compared to the non-standard variety. We further assume that speakers will be aware of the functional distinction between the two varieties and will therefore associate Italian with a higher status. However, this does not mean that dialect attitudes will be negative. Following Parry (2010) and Berruto (2018), we can assume that speaking a dialect today is no more linked to negative attitudes but rather as an opportunity to develop one's identity and preserve cultural heritage.

With regard to the relationship between attitudes and (self-reported) language use (RQ2), we are considering Berruto's (2018) observation that negative attitudes are mostly found in regions with high dialect use. By looking at language use within and outside the family in two regions with high degrees of dialect use we aim to investigate whether these two regions show the same patterns in the interaction between attitudes and language use. Unlike in the past, today's Italian population is proficient in Italian and no longer dependent on the use of the dialect for the purpose of communication, although half of the Italian population still uses it (Berruto 2018). In this respect, language use is a "matter of choice" that, on the one hand, is influenced by social variables and attitudes and, on the other hand, is left to the speakers' decisions which variety to use in a specific situation (Parry 2010). Since dialect use is determined by social variables (Berruto 2018), we investigate how age and education influence language choices. Moreover, given diminishing numbers of dialect users, albeit a shift towards more positive attitudes, we assume that especially age will affect dialect use and dialect attitudes. We therefore expect older speakers to use more dialect while displaying more negative attitudes, while younger speakers might entertain more positive attitudes. Furthermore, we focus on education and dialect to see whether we can confirm the link between lower education and higher dialect use, as indicated by previous research (Istat 2017; Berruto 2018; D'Agostino, Paternostro 2018). It has been shown previously that attitudes are key to the use and transmission of heritage languages and indigenous languages (Brenzinger et al. 2003; Zhang, Slaughter-Defoe 2009; Kutlu, Kirchner 2021). Herein, we apply these ideas to the context of dialects.

We further hypothesise (RQ3) that positive attitudes correlate with high degrees of language use (as pointed out in RQ2) and with higher dialect proficiency. Especially in research on bilingualism, language use has been shown to be an important factor that affects proficiency in the minority language (e.g., Lloyd-Smith, Einfeldt, Kupisch 2020; Vorobyeva, Bel 2021). Moreover, we assume that higher dialect proficiencies will correlate with higher proficiencies in Italian, as has been shown for Italian-Sardinian speakers (Garraffa, Beveridge, Sorace 2015; Garraffa, Obregon, Sorace 2017). By looking at vocabulary proficiency, we thus expect dialect proficiency to be positively correlated with proficiency in the standard language.

Finally, comparing the attitudes towards Sicilian and Venetan (RQ4), we expect that speakers of Sicilian will show more negative attitudes towards their dialect compared to Venetan speakers. Given the unequal economic development of different parts of the country, southern varieties (and, by extension their speakers) tended to be attributed a low social status, at least in the past. Facing negative stereotypes and stigmatisation from others, Southern Italians might have internalised this view. By contrast, speakers of northern varieties have faced this kind of stigma more rarely because their regions and (by extension) varieties have always been associated with economic progress.[6] Following Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, Turner 1979), we can assume that membership in a group of dialect speakers is part of identity-building and consequently affects the attitudes that speakers have towards their dialects. Although we know from the literature that all dialects in Italy underwent a process of revalorisation, there can be remaining differences in attitudes towards dialects, which may be reflected in the comparison of Sicilians and Venetans.

4 Method

4.1 Procedure

Two surveys were carried out online using SoSci Survey (Leiner 2014): One survey on Sicilian and one survey on Venetan. The survey on Sicilian was carried out in the summer of 2022 and the one on Venetan in the Spring of 2023. Participants were recruited through personal contacts, flyers in universities and social media.

In order to address the questions on attitudes, use and proficiency, a questionnaire with an in-built vocabulary task was designed. The procedure started with an introduction to the tasks. After giving their consent, the participants were asked for biographical data on age, education, place of birth, place of residence and gender. The second part consisted of a Yes-No vocabulary task modelled after the Dialang battery (Alderson 2005) to assess objective dialect proficiency. The third part focused on dialect use in different contexts. These questions were presented using a Likert scale ranging from 0 (= only Italian) to 4 (= only dialect). Herein, we focus on the fourth part, which asked about attitudes towards the dialect using Likert scales and single-choice questions which will be reported in

6 Baroni 1983; Galli de' Paratesi 1984; Grassi, Sobrero, Telmon 1997; Ruffino 2006.

detail in the result section. The Sicilian questionnaire was developed earlier and the findings were used to improve the subsequent Venetan version. Therefore, some questions were changed and/or added.[7] The last part assessed proficiency in Italian using the Italian version of the Dialang. The entire questionnaire took about 40 minutes to complete.

The two lexical tasks on vocabulary knowledge in Sicilian and Venetan (henceforth, LexSIC and LexVEN) consisted of real Sicilian/Venetan verbs and pseudo-verbs. The analysis of participants' proficiency was carried out on 75 items: 50 real verbs and 25 pseudo-verbs that were selected through an IRT analysis performed with the *RM* function from the eRm package in R (Mair, Hatzinger, Maier 2021). For further details on the item assessment criteria and the creation of LexVEN and LexSIC see Kupisch et al. (2023) and Ferin et al. (2023). Following Brysbart (2013) and Amenta, Badan, Brysbaert (2021), we calculated the test score for both the LexSIC and LexVEN as in (1). This formula helps penalise test-takers when answering 'yes' to a pseudoword, as well as guessing behaviours (Izura, Cuetos, Brysbaert 2014, Kupisch et al. 2023). The maximum possible score of both tests is 50, which can only be obtained by accepting all the real verbs and rejecting all pseudo-verbs. The same formula was used to assess the DIALANG placement test scores.

(1) LexSIC/LexVEN Score = **N** yes to words – 2 * **N** yes to nonwords

4.2 Participants

199 participants from Sicily (n=63) and Veneto (n=136) took part in the survey. Nine participants were excluded because of guessing behaviour in the lexical tasks, eight from Sicily and one from Veneto. The final dataset included 56 Sicilian participants (age range: 18-69, *M*=35.6, SD=11.51; gender: 41 female, 14 male, 1 rather not say) and 135 Venetan participants (age range: 18-78, *M*=37.3, SD=15.7; gender: 98 female, 37 male).

The participants of both groups had diverse provinces of origin: for Venetan speakers, Vicenza (n=48), Padova (n=32), Treviso (n=17), Venezia (n=15), Verona (n=14), Rovigo (n=6) and Belluno (n=2); one participant did not answer. For Sicilian speakers, Palermo (n=22), Messina (n=13), Caltanissetta (n=7), Catania (n=7), Agrigento (n=2),

7 The questions of both versions are successively presented in 5.1. The version in the appendix only includes the questions that we propose for future use and does therefore not fully correspond with the questions listed in 5.1.

Ragusa (n=1) and Trapani (n=1); three participants did not answer. Education was collected on a scale from 1 (no formal education) to 7 (PhD). In short, 33 Sicilian speakers (52%) reported a university degree, 19 a high school diploma and three a lower title; one participant did not respond. Similarly, among Venetan speakers, 67 (49%) had a university degree, 45 a high school diploma and 23 a lower title.

5 Results

To investigate Sicilian and Venetan speakers' attitudes towards their respective dialects, we start by analysing their answers to selected questions descriptively and discuss them in light of the existing literature on attitudes and beliefs towards dialect speakers. Our analysis takes into account the differences between the two versions of the questionnaire. Likert plots were obtained with the *plot_likert* function from the R package *sjPlot* (Lüdecke 2022). In Figures 1 through 4, answers within the green range indicate positive attitudes, while answers within the brown range indicate negative attitudes (grey being neutral) **[figs 1-4]**. For statements asking for participants' degree of agreement, we indicate 'T-F', where 'T' (true) is associated with the left of the scale and 'F' (false) with the right. For example, in Figure 1 answers to the statement 'Sicilian is spoken by old people' were given on a 4-point scale. 'True' answers were coded as 0 (dark brown) or 1 (light brown), and appear on the left side of the bar, indicating negative attitudes. Neutral answers were coded as 2 (grey). Conversely, 'false' answers were coded as 3 (light green) or 4 (dark green), and appear on the right side of the bar, indicating positive attitudes.

5.1 Attitudes

Figures 1 and 2 show the Sicilians' attitudes towards their dialects. In line with Guedri Giacalone (2016), speakers are divided in terms of whether they consider Sicilian a dialect (48.2%) or a language (51.8%). As for prestige, most participants give neutral answers (58.9%), indicating no difference in prestige between the two varieties, which underlines the revalorisation of the dialects (Berruto 2018; Parry 2010). At the same time, those Sicilians who express a biased view, are more inclined to see Italian as the variety with more prestige (37.5%), which is expected due to the negative attitudes that have been prevailing at least in the past and may have been passed on to subsequent generations. These perceptions of prestige are also expected given Social Identity Theory (Giles, Billings 2004), according

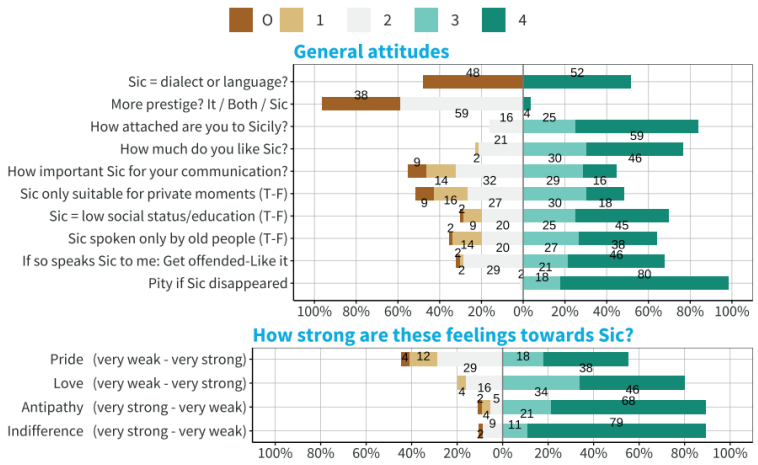

Figure 1 Attitudes towards Sicilian

to which standard varieties are generally viewed as being more prestigious because they are used in formal contexts, including in educational contexts **[figs 1-2]**.

Questions concerning personal opinions (e.g., "How much do you like Sicilian?") and personal attachment to Sicily reveal mostly positive attitudes, again potentially underlining the ongoing revalorisation process pointed out above, a strong attachment and solidarity with the region as well as a sense of 'ethnic belonging'. Relatedly, participants strongly agree that it would be a pity if Sicilian disappeared, which might be interpreted as underlining the feeling of ethnic belonging, since the dialect is part of their culture, traditions and identity, which are to be protected. Participants' direct expressions of feelings associated with Sicilian **[fig. 1]** confirm these trends, as the majority links Sicilian to love (80.3%) and pride (55.4%), while only a small minority does not have these associations. By contrast, participants reject indifference (89.3%) and antipathy (89.3%) as associations to their dialect. In a similar vein, Sicilian participants reject negative stereotypes, supporting Berruto's (2018, 506) claim that the dialect today is no longer perceived as "the language of the lower socio-educational classes". Only a small minority (10.7%) believes that the dialect is an indicator of a low social class or that it is spoken only by elderly people (16.1%), while the majority believes that these stereotypes are not true or take a neutral stand.

The overwhelmingly positive reactions to Sicilian are somewhat compromised by the question on the functional relevance of the dialect: 44.7% of the respondents consider the dialect (very) important for daily communication, while the remainder takes a neutral

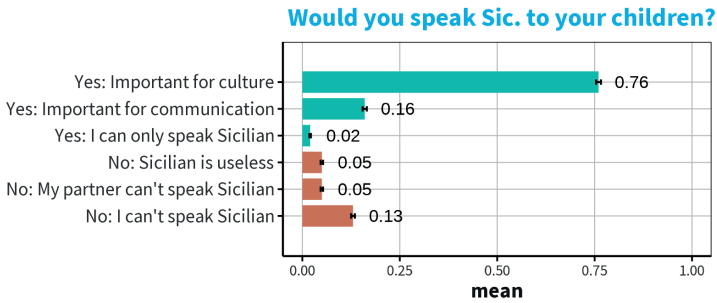

Figure 2 Attitudes towards the transmission of Sicilian

or negative position. Somewhat similarly, only 48.3% seem to think that Sicilian can be used beyond private occasions, while other participants remain neutral or (strongly) disagree.

Another way to gauge the attitudes of Sicilian speakers toward their dialect is to examine their responses to the question "Would you speak Sicilian to your children?" **[fig. 2]**. The question was asked as a multiple-choice question and participants could select multiple answers. They could choose between three reasons why to speak Sicilian to their children (green bars for positive attitudes), and three reasons why not to speak it to their children (orange bars for negative attitudes). Most participants (76%) agree that speaking Sicilian to their children is crucial for maintaining their cultural heritage, while only a small minority would do so because they see Sicilian as essential for communication or because it is their only language. Similarly, as to reasons why they would not use Sicilian, two participants reported that they or their partner cannot speak Sicilian, or because they consider it useless ($n = 2$). These results underline that the dialect is valued more for cultural reasons than for communicational ones and that lack of intergenerational transmission is not due to negative attitudes.

Taken together, our findings underline the emotional attachment to the dialect and its role for the speakers' identities. They indicate that the expression of positive attitudes has become possible through ongoing revalorisation, and that the dialect is still transmitted to and spoken by younger people, regardless of social status. On the other hand, the perceived functional relevance of Sicilian appears to be somewhat restricted beyond the private sphere.

Figures 3 and 4 show Venetans' responses to attitude questions. Based on experience with the Sicilian survey, we simplified some of the original questions, making them more uniform (e.g., the question about categorising Venetan as dialect or language was phrased in a scalar rather than binary way), and we created a clearer distinction

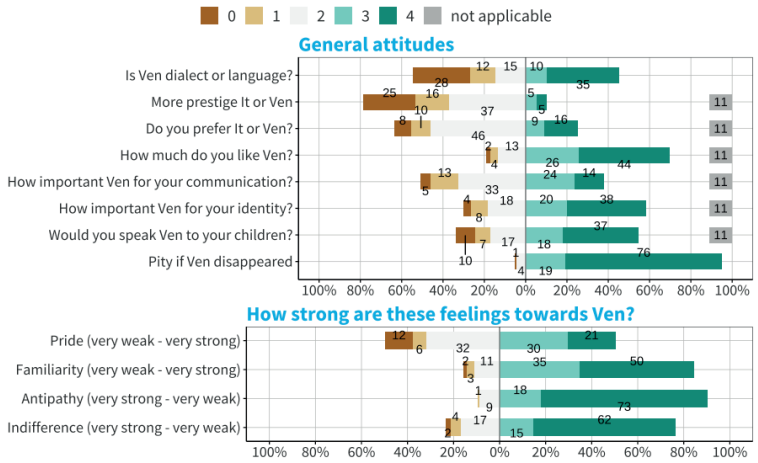

Figure 3 Attitudes towards Venetan

between the participants' personal attitudes to the dialect, their feelings associated with it **[fig. 3]**, and their perceptions of others speaking the dialect. We also rephrased the questions on the consequences of dialect transmission **[figs 2, 4]**. Some questions were only asked to active users of Venetan (the portion indicated as 'non applicable' comes from Venetans with receptive competence who did not see these questions).

The results for Venetan mirror those obtained for Sicilian with some minor exceptions. Respondents are divided in their views on whether Venetan is a dialect (40%) or a language (45%), while 15% remains neutral. Similarly, the majority of the participants attribute the same prestige to Venetan and Italian (37%), or believe that Italian has more prestige than Venetan (41%). The overwhelming majority of the participants likes Venetan (70%), but when asked to express a preference, Venetans often remain neutral (46%), although they are more inclined to indicate a preference for Venetan (25%) rather than for Italian (18%). Similar to Sicilians, Venetans consider the dialect important to their identity (58%), they would speak Venetan to their children (55%), and they would find it a pity if Venetan disappeared (95%). Also like Sicilians, many Venetans (38%) express that Venetan is important for their communication, although a fair number (18%) does not share this view or stays neutral (33%). Feelings towards Venetan (bottom block) are predominantly positive, although pride is less clearly expressed (51%) than familiarity (85%). In terms of negative feelings, antipathy is virtually absent (1%), and indifference is close to absent (6%).

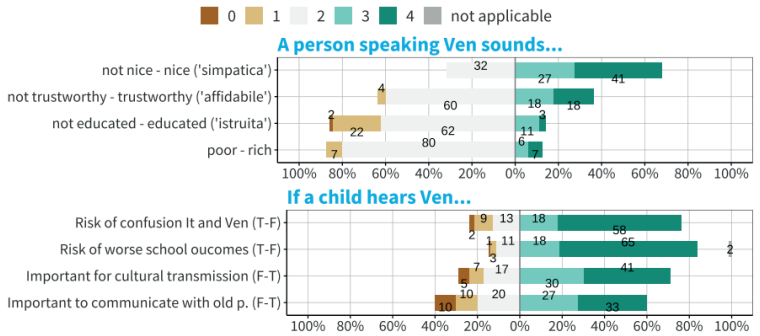

Figure 4 Attitudes towards Venetan speakers and towards the transmission of Venetan

Figure 4 shows that associations with people speaking Venetan are strongly positive when it comes to sympathy (68%), but respondents often remain neutral with respect to other attributes, including trustworthiness (60%), education (62%) and economic status (80%). This is somewhat unexpected considering SIT, according to which attitudes towards dialects are positive on the personal dimension, while being negative on the socioeconomic dimension (Giles, Coupland 1991; Giles, Billings 2004). Figure 4 further shows participants' reactions to questions on the transmission of Venetan to the next generation **[fig. 4]**. Generally, Venetans do not fear negative consequences resulting from dialect exposure, neither for the mastery of the standard language (11%) nor in education (4%), and they think that the transmission of Venetan is important for cultural reasons (71%) and, to a lesser degree, for the purpose of communicating with the older generation (60%).

Overall, the emerging picture is very similar to that for Sicilian, although the two regional languages were expected to present a different picture. Questions about prestige indicate that Venetans, like Sicilians, perceive the standard variety as being more prestigious. At the same time, many respondents stay neutral, which could be an effect of revalorisation. The possible effect of revalorisation is also indicated by the fact that some Venetans prefer Venetan over Italian and by their predominantly positive opinions and feelings pertaining to the dialect. They further express positive opinions about the transmission of Venetan. Like the Sicilians, the Venetan respondents are more reluctant in expressing importance for communication, possibly due to fewer opportunities to use the dialect outside of the home. Overall, the dialect is more important from an identity perspective than for functional reasons. When asked about other people speaking Venetan, respondents express sympathy, while being reluctant to automatically attribute specific social attributes.

5.2 Use of Dialect vs. Italian

Figure 5 shows the participants' responses to questions on language use within and outside of the home. This time, we directly compare responses in the Sicilian and Venetan survey because the questions were asked in the same way. Participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale to what extent they used Sicilian/Venetan compared to Italian, with '0' (orange) indicating 'only Italian', and '4' (purple) indicating 'only Sicilian/Venetan', while '2' (white) indicates using of the two equally often. An additional option was 'not applicable' (grey), for example, if participants did not have any siblings or grandparents **[fig. 5]**.

The results show that the highest degrees of dialect use can be observed within the family, which is consistent with Istat reports (Istat 2017). In the Sicilian survey, dialect use is noticeably more frequent with grandparents (42%), in line with the observation that dialect is mostly used by the older generations (Istat 2017; Berruto 2018). Indeed, for some speakers it might be the only way of communicating with their grandparents, who grew up during a time when there were no opportunities for learning Italian and exposure to Italian could not be taken for granted (i.e., the times before television and obligatory schooling). The situation resembles that of trilingual heritage speakers, where the possibility to communicate with grandparents is often mentioned as one major reason for preserving the heritage language (Braun 2012).

When comparing the two groups, Venetan and Sicilian, the results for dialect use diverge more strongly compared to those for attitudes. Venetans indicate exclusive dialect use more often in all domains except for school/university and chat/social networks. By contrast, Sicilians more often report that they use Italian and dialect to equal degrees, especially within the family. This observation is consistent with Istat (2007), reporting the highest amount of exclusive dialect use in Italy for Venetans (38.9%), whereas the most common pattern in Sicily is use of the dialect in alternation with or mixing with Italian (46.2%).

5.3 Towards Linking Attitudes, Use and Proficiency

In the previous section, we explored the reported attitudes of Venetans and Sicilians towards their respective dialects. This section summarises the results of our statistical analyses, modelling the relationship between speaker's attitudes towards dialect, their use and their proficiency in the dialect itself (measured by LexSIC and LexVEN) and in Italian (RQs 2-4). To this end, we calculated aggregate scores to be used as continuous variables in our statistical analysis.

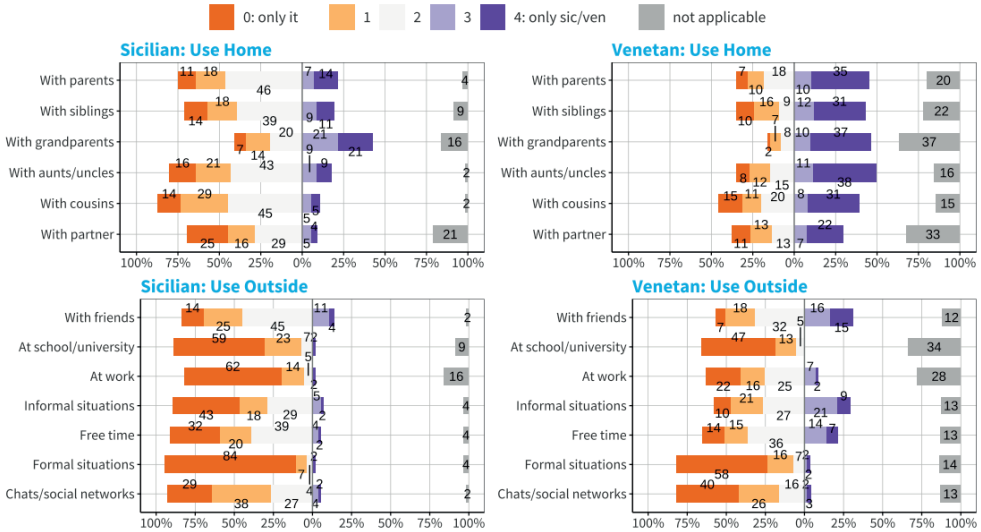

Figure 5 Use of Sicilian (left) /Venetan (right) vs. Italian within the home (top) and outside the home (bottom)

First, we calculated two separate use scores, 'Use in the family' and 'Use outside the family' (henceforth abbreviated as 'UseHome' and 'UseOutside'). They were obtained from the questions on use **[fig. 5]**, where 0 = only Italian and 4 = only dialect. We calculated the mean of answered questions in each category (a higher mean indicates more dialect use), and then multiplied the mean by a 'variety' coefficient (a higher multiplier indicates more domains of use). Thus, the coefficient was higher if the dialect was spoken with more people and/or in more situations, and lower if the dialect was spoken with fewer people and/or in fewer situations. Overall, the final use scores ranged from 0 (only Italian in all situations) to 4 (only dialect). Second, we calculated an 'Attitudes' score. As the set of questions was different between varieties, and some Venetan speakers did not answer all questions, we calculated the score based on a subset of questions, in common to all participants in both groups: questions on speaker's feelings towards their dialects (pride, love/familiarity, indifference, hate), the question on dialect maintenance, and the question on the perception of a dialectal speaker as educated/uneducated (see Appendix; questions in bold were used for the score).[8]

8 To check the validity of this score, we calculated a different score for Sicilian respondents and for some of the Venetan respondents, including a higher number of questions. The two scores, the more detailed and the more selective one, were highly correlated (r =.95), proving that the simplified score was adequate for the present analysis.

The score was obtained by summing up the answers to each question, and it ranged between 0 (completely negative attitudes towards the dialect) and 24 (completely positive attitudes towards the dialect). Third, we included 'LexSIC' and 'LexVEN' scores as measures of proficiency in Sicilian and Venetan respectively, and 'DIALANG' as a measure of Italian proficiency. All vocabulary measures range from 0 to 50. Finally, 'Education' (1 to 7), 'Age' and 'Group' (categorical: Venetan vs. Sicilian) were included as predictors where appropriate.

For the statistical analysis, we fitted several (generalised) linear models, using the functions *lm* and *glm* included in the *stats* package (R core team 2022). When a model included interactions, we followed a procedure of stepwise model selection to obtain the best fit, removing interactions when not significant, based on the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). Main predictors, by contrast, were kept in the model even when not significant. As a first step, we addressed RQ2 and RQ3 separately for Venetan and for Sicilian. Subsequently, in order to address RQ4, we fitted a model directly comparing the two groups. However, given the strong unbalance in the number of participants (56 vs 135), we run this comparison using only a subset of Venetans (n=82).[9]

5.3.1 How Attitudes Relate to (Self-Reported) Use

To address this question (RQ2), we fitted two linear models, one for Venetan and one for Sicilian, with Attitudes as dependent variable. UseHome, UseOutside, Age and Education were added as predictors, including an interaction term between UseHome and Age, and between UseOutside and Age.

For Sicilian speakers **[fig. 6]**, there was a significant effect of UseOutside (β = -4.87, SE = 2.38, t = -2.05, p = 0.05), qualified by an interaction between UseOutside and Age that, however, only approached significance (β = 0.1, SE = 0.06, t = 1.79, p = 0.08). Predicted values were extracted for two discrete values in the age distribution, i.e., 20 and 50 years of age. The interaction shows that, while for older speakers attitudes are not predicted by the amount of dialect use outside the family, for younger speakers there is such an effect: while little or no use outside the family is associated with positive attitudes, higher reported use is associated with more negative attitudes. All other predictors were not significant (UseHome: β = 0.63, SE = 0.58, t = 1.09, p = 0.28; Education: β = 0.14, SE = 0.36, t = 0.39, p = 0.70).

9 In order to preserve province variation in the sample, we included all participants from Verona, Treviso and Venezia, and we randomly sampled 18 participants from Vicenza and 18 from Padova.

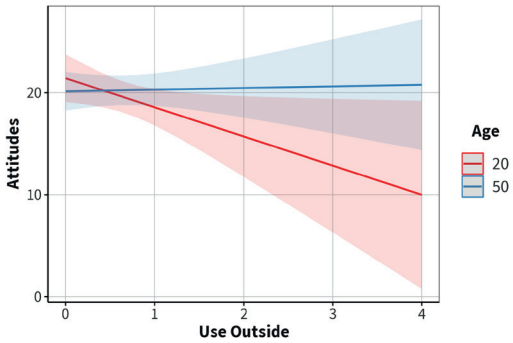

Figure 6 Predicted values of attitudes for Sicilian speakers, by age and use outside the family

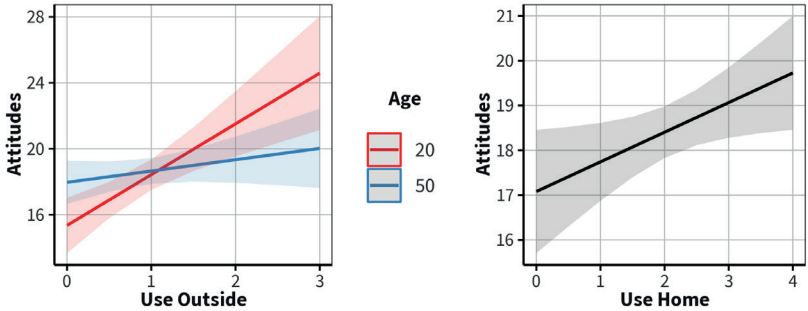

Figure 7 Predicted values of attitudes for Venetan speakers, by age and use outside the family (left) and use in the family (right)

For Venetan speakers **[fig. 7]**, there was a significant main effect of Age (β = 0.09, *SE* = 0.03, *t* = 2.76, *p* = 0.007) and UseOutside (β = 4.67, *SE* = 1.22, *t* = 3.85, *p* <0.001), qualified by a significant interaction between the two terms (β = -0.08, *SE* = 0.02, *t* = -3.21, *p* = 0.002). While for older speakers there was no effect of use outside the family on their attitudes, there was a positive effect for younger speakers, such that higher use outside the family predicted more positive attitudes. We also found a positive main effect of use in the family (β = 0.66, *SE* = 0.3, *t* = 2.2, *p* = 0.03).

5.3.2 Relations Between Self-Reported Language Use, Attitudes and Proficiency

To address how self-reported language use, attitudes and proficiency are related, we fitted a poisson model for each group, with LexSIC and LexVEN as dependent variables. UseHome, UseOutside, Attitudes, Age and Education were added as predictors, including an interaction term between UseHome and Age, between UseOutside and Age, and between Attitudes and Age. Furthermore, we fitted two additional poisson models (one for each group) with DIALANG as a dependent variable. We included the same predictors as above, with the addition of LexSIC/LexVEN as an additional fixed effect.

For Sicilian, dialect proficiency (LexSIC) was predicted by a significant interaction between Age and Attitudes (β = 0, *SE* = 0, *t* = -2.65, *p* = 0.008), which qualified the significant main effects of both predictors (Age: β = 0.03, *SE* = 0.01, *t* = 2.64, *p* = 0.008; Attitudes: β = 0.05, *SE* = 0.02, *t* = 2.24, *p* = 0.03). The interaction is plotted in Figure 8. The effect of attitudes on proficiency differed at different ages: while there was no effect for younger speakers, the effect was negative for older speakers (i.e., positive attitudes were linked to lower proficiency). Furthermore, there was a significant main effect of UseOutside (β = -0.08, *SE* = 0.04, *t* = -1.96, *p* = 0.05) **[fig. 8]**. This effect was negative, indicating that higher dialect use outside the family predicts, on average, a slightly lower proficiency. Sicilian speakers' performance in the DIALANG was not affected by dialect use or attitudes towards dialect, nor by age or education. There was a positive main effect of LexSIC: a higher score in the Sicilian vocabulary test also predicted a better score in the Italian vocabulary test (β = 0.01, *SE* = 0, *t* = 1.98, *p* = 0.047).

Venetan speakers' LexVEN score was not predicted by Attitudes and Use. There was a positive effect of education (β = 0.04, *SE* = 0.01, *t* = 3.26, *p* = 0.001); while the positive effect of age only approached significance (β = 0, *SE* = 0, *t* = 1.87, *p* = 0.06). Overall, an increase in age or a better level of education predicted a slightly higher LexVEN score **[fig. 9]**. Venetan speakers' performance in the Italian vocabulary task (DIALANG) was not predicted by any parameter.

5.3.3 Dialect Attitudes Towards Sicilian vs. Venetan

As previously discussed, the direct comparison between groups (Sicilian and Venetan) was carried out with a subset of Venetan speakers, to reduce the strong imbalance in the two samples. Before investigating attitudes in the two groups, we controlled for possible differences in the amount of dialect use. We fitted two linear models, one with UseHome and one with UseOutside as dependent variable. Group, Age and Education were added as predictors, with an

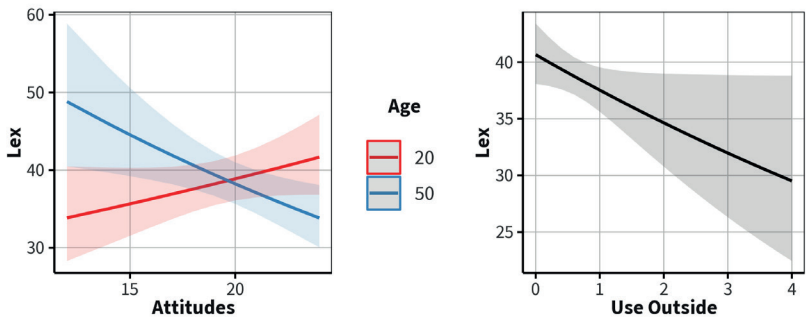

Figure 8 Predicted values of LexSIC for Sicilian speakers, by age and attitudes (left), and by use outside the family (right)

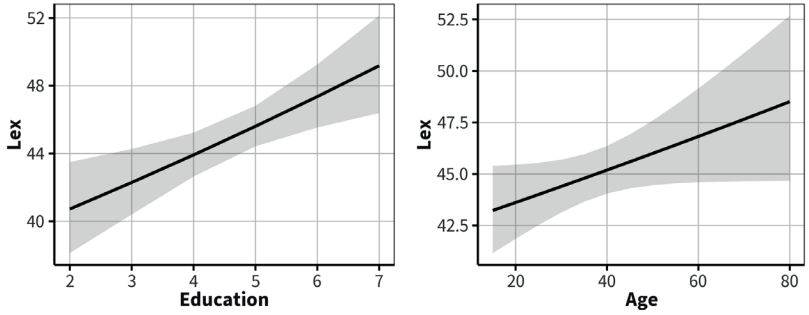

Figure 9 Predicted values of LexVEN by education (left) and age (right)

interaction term between Group and Age and between Group and Education. All interaction terms were removed because they were not significant. Results suggested a positive effect of Age (β = 0.02, *SE* = 0.01, *t* = 2.82, *p* = 0.005) and a negative effect of Education (β = -0.22, *SE* = 0.07, *t* = -3.2, *p* = 0.002) on UseHome: a lower level of education and higher age predicted higher self-reported use of dialect in the family. No difference between groups was observed (β = 0.3, *SE* = 0.19, *t* = 1.59, *p* = 0.11). UseOutside was negatively predicted by education: overall, a lower level of education indicated a higher use of dialect outside the family (β = -0.17, *SE* = 0.04, *t* = -4.09, p < 0.001). We observed no significant effect of age (β = 0.01, *SE* = 0, *t* = 1.45, *p* = 0.15) or group (β = 0.18, *SE* = 0.12, *t* = 1.59, *p* = 0.12).

We then addressed the research question, by assessing potential differences in attitudes towards dialect and its interaction with other factors in the two groups. We fitted a linear model with Attitudes

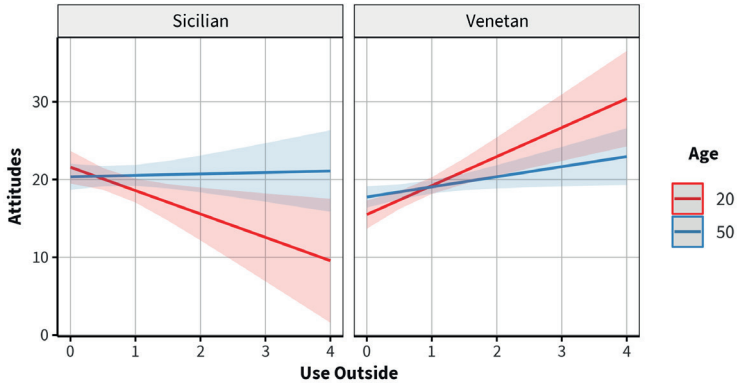

Figure 10 Predicted values of Attitudes by group and use outside the family

as dependent variable, and Group, UseHome, UseOutside, Age and Education as independent variables. We included an interaction term between Group and UseHome, and a three-way interaction between Group, UseOutside and Age. The choice of the latter was determined by the observation that UseOutside and Age interacted differently in Sicilian and Venetan speakers in the previous models, and we wished to control for possible effects in this sense.

The three-way interaction proved to be significant (β = -0.19, *SE* = 0.06, *t* = -3.23, *p* = 0.002), confirming the already observed patterns **[fig. 10]**. In both groups, older speakers' attitudes towards dialect were not affected by the amount of use outside the family, while the effect for younger speakers was reversed in the two groups. For Venetans, higher UseOutside predicted more positive attitudes, while for Sicilians a higher UseOutside predicted worse attitudes towards the dialect.

6 Discussion

We set out to explore Sicilians' and Venetans' attitudes towards their dialects (RQ1), how these relate to their (self-reported) language use (RQ2), and how both relate to proficiency (RQ3). In doing so, we explored similarities and differences between Sicilian and Venetan (RQ4). Following previous work (e.g., Baroni 1983; Galli de' Paratesi 1984; Volkart-Rey 1990) and SIT (Giles, Billings 2004), we expected that speakers would attribute a higher prestige to the standard variety compared to the non-standard variety. At the same time, we expected to see changes such that dialect use is no more exclusively linked to negative attitudes but rather as an opportunity to develop

one's identity and preserve cultural heritage (Parry 2010; Berruto 2018). We further expected higher dialect use to correlate with higher proficiencies and positive attitudes, but also with more advanced ages. Speakers of Venetan were expected to show more positive dialect attitudes, because the Southern Italian dialects have been relatively more stigmatised for a longer time, and even if revalorisation has taken place recently, feelings of inferiority may take several generations to heal.

6.1 Attitudes and Language Use

We have discussed participants' dialect attitudes from a descriptive standpoint in section 5.1, observing that they were generally more positive than negative. While this fact points to a revalorisation of dialects, it may also be attributed to an implicit bias in our survey, which may have reached people with an overall more positive attitude towards dialects.[10] The following discussion should be read with this potential caveat in mind.

Sicilian speakers' attitudes were not significantly determined by language use within the family, while they were affected by language use outside the family. This may point to the fact that use within the family is considered more normal, as witnessed by the high proportion of exclusive or alternating dialect use in Sicily within the family (68.8%; Istat 2017); it is not questioned and not affected by a change in attitudes. However, while it may be natural to use dialect within the family, it is not always contextually appropriate to use dialect outside the family, where the speaker has to ponder the appropriateness of their language use. The relation between attitudes and use outside the home was dependent on age. While older speakers' attitudes were not affected by the amount of dialect use, younger speakers showed an effect, though the opposite of what we expected: higher dialect use in the wider community was linked to more negative attitudes. In other words, those who expressed the most positive attitudes towards Sicilian were those who reported using it less in the community. This mirrors previous research with a focus on other regions, which also found a discrepancy between positive attitudes towards a variety and its use. In South Tyrol (Alto Adige), where German and Italian coexist alongside several minority languages, positive attitudes towards the different varieties exist, but actual use of these languages may be nevertheless low for historical and sociocultural

10 At this point we would like to point out that, given the high educational levels of the participants in both groups, our sample might be overrepresentative for people with a high education.

reasons (Dal Negro 2017). For example, speakers may declare that German is their mother tongue despite always using Italian (Dal Negro 2017). Similarly, speakers of Sardinian have positive attitudes towards Sardinian, but these do not translate into practical language use (Rindler Schjerve 2017). In the case of Sicilian, we interpret this finding as an effect of the past stigma towards the dialect, which, in spite of the recent revalorisation, may still affect the perception of social judgement of those who actually use it. In this light, the re-evaluation of dialect as a positive aspect of Sicilian culture is less operative in those who use it as an actual means of everyday communication, but in those who do not use it actively.

Venetan speakers, by contrast, behaved more in line with our predictions. As expected, more use within the home predicted more positive attitudes. As to attitudes and use outside of the family, the relation was inverted compared to Sicilian: older speakers' attitudes were not affected by use outside the family, while younger speakers who use Venetan more outside of the family had more positive attitudes. In principle, we may interpret this positive link between attitudes and use in either direction: either people who speak more dialect are led to have a higher opinion of it, as part of their linguistic repertoire, or having a more positive attitude towards dialect leads to using it more. While our data does not allow us to choose between these two possibilities, this distinction provides a tool for interpreting the difference in relation between attitudes and use between Venetans and Sicilians, to which we return below.

6.2 How Do Use and Attitudes Relate to Objective Proficiency?

For Sicilians, dialect proficiency (LexSIC) was predicted by age and attitudes together. The effect of attitudes on proficiency differed at different ages: while there was no effect for younger speakers, older speakers showed positive attitudes when having lower proficiency. This result is only partially expected. The negative correlation between attitudes and proficiency resembles that between attitudes and use: more proficient dialect speakers perceive the negative social judgement more strongly, perhaps because they have experienced it more. This effect is found for older speakers, while it was true for younger speakers in the case of attitudes and use. Thus, in Sicily more use or higher proficiency in the dialect are not necessarily tied to more positive attitudes, but quite the opposite. This observation is in line with Berruto's (2018, 507) proposal of an "inverse relationship" between dialect attitudes and use, i.e., that dialect acquires a new positive value among those speakers who do not use it for everyday communication anymore, but who use it for expressive purposes. It

is paralleled by the aforementioned context of Alto Adige, where the declared mother tongue is primarily associated with a speaker's sociocultural identity rather than reflecting the language that is used actively (Dal Negro 2017). Likewise, Sardinian, associated with values of tradition and identity (Euromosaic 1995), adheres to this dialectal trend. This line of interpretation may help us explain why in Sicily more dialect use outside the family was also linked to a slightly lower proficiency – an unexpected outcome, if we expect more use to be connected with higher proficiency. The explanation may be that Sicilians interpret 'dialect use' differently from Venetans: Using dialect in Sicily may not necessarily involve speaking a distinct linguistic code with its own grammar and vocabulary. Instead, it may involve using dialectal traits and expressions within a regional Italian register for expressive purposes (Berruto 2018). In the latter case, reporting more 'dialect use' may not necessarily correspond to higher competence in Sicilian vocabulary.

Venetan speakers' proficiency, by contrast, was not predicted by either attitude or use. Rather, proficiency increased with higher age and education. The process of revalorisation is more advanced here and Venetans, regardless of age, have positive attitudes. Scores in the LexVEN were overall very high; this fact may be attributed either to a general familiarity with Venetan vocabulary in the population, even among those who do not speak (much) dialect, or LexVEN being overall easier than LexSIC.[11]

When exploring the relation between lexical proficiency in the regional variety and the standard variety, we found that Venetan speakers' performance in the Italian vocabulary task (DIALANG) was not significantly predicted by any parameter. On the other hand, for Sicilians, a higher score in the Sicilian vocabulary test also predicted a better score in the Italian vocabulary test. This is unexpected given previous stereotypes on dialect use (Cremona, Bates 1977; De Renzo 2008), but in line with more recent studies on the beneficial effects of acquiring typologically close languages (Garraffa, Beveridge, Sorace 2015; Garraffa, Obregon, Sorace 2017). It is plausible to assume positive effects of having larger lexicons, which can easily 'carry-over' between typologically close languages. An alternative explanation is that some participants may be better at performing at yes-no vocabulary tasks than others. For example, a risk taker may over-accept items, i.e., indicate that they know it even if slightly insecure, and may do so in both languages.

11 The latter is less likely, however, because both the Sicilian and the Venetan tests were piloted with speakers of distant varieties, with expected low proficiency levels, in order to identify and control for the number of items whose meaning can be guessed easily given knowledge of Italian.

6.3 Comparing Sicilians and Venetans

When comparing Sicilians and Venetans directly, we found the relation between attitudes, use and age illustrated in Figure 11. Paraphrasing the discussion above, Sicilian might be in a transitional phase, where loss of proficiency and use is balanced by more positive attitudes on the part of those speakers who do not actively use the language, and therefore may have perceived less linguistic discrimination. Venetan revitalisation, on the contrary, presents itself as more structural and tied to active use. As pointed out by Berruto (2018, 520), the maintenance or the revitalisation of a dialect depends on the significance of its use. Whereas the 'actual' or 'effective' use of the dialect for the purpose of communication, as in the Venetan case, is of utmost significance for the maintenance of the dialect, other uses such as the 'expressive', 'symbolic' or 'folkloric' one only have a restricted effect because they do not result in the use of dialect in everyday communication. Contrary to Sicily, the Veneto region appears to maintain a situation of diglossia, with both languages playing a role in communication, albeit in different contexts **[fig. 11]**. A further point to consider is that positive attitudes and use in the community in Venetan may be linked not only to a cultural revitalisation, but also to a political one, as the regional language has been taken by some political parties as part of the construction of a "Venetan identity" (Perrino 2013).

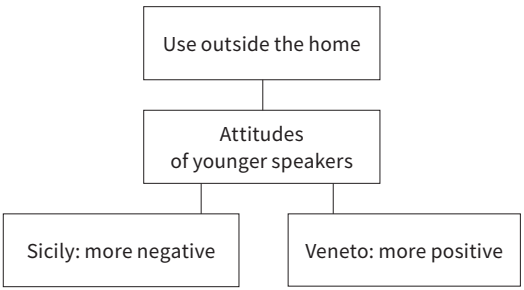

Figure 11 Comparing the relation between use and attitudes in Sicily and the Veneto

In conclusion, although on the surface both Sicilians and Venetans report mostly positive attitudes towards their dialects, at closer scrutiny, the interaction between attitudes, use and proficiency, and thus the perspectives for future maintenance of the respective languages, appear to be very different.

7 Conclusion

We investigated Sicilians' and Venetans' attitudes towards their dialects and how these interact with dialect use and proficiency. Both groups had mostly positive attitudes but differed in the interplay between attitudes, use and proficiency. While for Venetans more positive attitudes were connected to actual dialect use, for Sicilians more positive attitudes were found among those who do not use the dialect actively and who have lower dialect proficiencies. We interpreted these results as evidence that, in spite of the recent revalorisation of dialect, the stigma of dialect is still present in Sicily and that positive attitudes are limited to an expressive instead of a functional revitalisation of Sicilian. In Veneto, by contrast, dialect is still a vital means of communication. In the current situation of decreasing dialect speakers in Italy and beyond, we see this as an important implication for dialect maintenance: When positive attitudes are linked to the actual use of the dialect it has higher chances to survive, when positive attitudes are linked to 'expressive' dialect use, it will lose its role as the means of everyday communication and subsequently fade.

In this study, we have focussed on two regions where dialect is still considered to be very active. Future studies could expand the method of juxtaposing use, attitudes and proficiency to other varieties with different properties. The dialects spoken in the North-West differ from Sicilian and Venetan in showing a more advanced loss of vitality and a more dramatic decline in the number of speakers. We would predict a general lack of proficiencies, possibly going along with rather neutral attitudes. Neapolitan presents another extreme as it appears to be going through a process of revalorisation, as witnessed by TV series, social media, and youth culture with adolescents/young adults (e.g., rappers) as target audience. Thus, we expect expressive dialect use to figure prominently, even more than in Sicily, but not necessarily a high level of proficiency. Finally, a possible extension of this work is to include outsiders' attitudes towards dialects and see to what extent they are consistent with the self-perceived views.

In the appendix we report the questions and the respective scoring that we propose for future use. The questions and the respective scoring shall allow for a standardised and direct comparison between the attitudes towards different dialects.

Appendix: Proposed version of the attitudes questionnaire

The following questions result in a maximum score of 80. A higher score indicates more positive attitudes.

	Items All presented on a 1-5 Likert scale	**Scoring** All scored from 0 (=negative attitudes) to 4 (=positive attitudes)
Perceived status	In your opinion X is… a language/a dialect	0= dialect; 4= language
Perceived prestige	In your opinion, is Italian or X more prestigious?	0= dialect is less prestigious; 4= dialect is more prestigious
Language preference	Do you prefer Italian or X?	0= preference for Italian; 4= preference for dialect
Overall perception	How much do you like X?	0= not at all; 4= really
Perceived usefulness	How important is X for your communication?	0= not important at all; 4= really important
Identity	How important is X for your identity?	0= not important at all; 4= really important
	How attached are you to the region X is spoken in?	0= not attached; 4= strongly attached
Maintenance Awareness	It would be a pity if X would disappear	0= strongly disagree; 4= strongly agree
Perceived feelings	How strong do you perceive these feelings towards X? -pride, -sense of belonging, -dislike, -indifference	0= not at all; 4= really strong (for pride and sense of belonging) 0= really strong; 4= not at all (for dislike and indifference)
Social and socioeconomic traits	A person speaking X sounds… -not nice vs. nice -not trustworthy vs. trustworthy -not educated vs. educated -poor vs. rich	0= not nice/ trustworthy/ educated/ poor; 4= nice/ trustworthy/ educated/ rich
Transmission	If a child hears X… -there is a risk of confusion between Italian and X -there is a risk of worse school outcomes	0= strongly agree; 4= strongly disagree
Transmission	It is important that a child learns X… -in order to preserve the culture and identity X is associated with -in order to communicate with older relatives	0= strongly disagree; 4= strongly agree

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Students' Attitudes and Opinions in a Context of Bilingualism with a Minority Language
Italian and Sardinian Compared

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Abstract In this chapter, the results of an investigation on language attitudes towards Italian and Sardinian are presented. Attitudes are crucial in contexts of bilingualism or bilectalism, as they affect the possibilities of a minority language to survive. Students' attitudes in Sardinia were studied with a direct method, i.e., a written questionnaire: participants had to express their degree of agreement on a Likert scale with statements concerning Italian and Sardinian. Results show that Italian is seen as the most prestigious language. Students gave generally favourable opinions on Sardinian and its private and public use as well, but they acknowledged its little instrumental importance. Proficiency and frequent use of Sardinian proved to relate with positive attitudes towards that language. Furthermore, high school students turned out to be more interested in the benefits of the majority language than students in the early adolescence. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords Language attitudes. Language opinions. Direct method. Sardinian. Italian. Likert scale.

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1 Sociolinguistic Framework

Research on language attitudes often focused on contexts of bidialectalism, bilectalism (Rowe, Grohmann 2013) or bilingualism with local languages. Studying language attitudes in such contexts is particularly important. Language attitudes are well known to be a key factor in processes of language decline, language shift and, in the most extreme cases, language death.[1] Economic, social and political pressure may push speakers to perceive the local language negatively and assign more prestige to a more widely spoken language. A consequence of this is a gradual shrinkage in the functions and domains of use of the minority language, which in turn might lead to more negative attitudes towards it and the interruption of its intergenerational transmission (Sasse 1992; Wolfram 2002; Thomason 2015). At the same time though, attitudes are also a fundamental factor in processes of maintenance or revitalisation of endangered languages.[2] A mixture of political, symbolic and identity-related reasons, along with economic ones in some cases, might lead to an increase in the prestige of a minority language or to a renewed interest in it (Sasse 1992; Thomason 2015), which in turn can push people to use it again, to pass it on to new generations or even to learn it from scratch as an L2 (O'Rourke 2011; 2018). Moreover, language attitudes are crucial for a successful implementation of language policies that safeguard endangered languages: top-down interventions need to take into account the attitudes of society, although policy-makers often try to modify them (cf. Spolsky 2009; Garrett 2010; Kircher, Zipp 2022). In sum, the importance of attitudes for languages can be summarised by the following comparison:

> a positive attitude to healthy eating and exercise may increase life expectancy. In the life of a language, attitudes to that language appear to be important in language restoration, preservation, decay or death. (Baker 1992, 9)

For the reasons just described, the sociolinguistic situation of Sardinian is particularly suited to investigations on language attitudes. Sardinian is a romance language spoken on the island of Sardinia, Italy. In the vast majority of the island, Italian and Sardinian are spoken and co-exist in a condition of unbalanced bilingualism, with the former having a clearly prevailing role in essentially all domains of language use (Schjerve 2017; Marongiu 2019). This situation is

1 Cf. Baker 1992; Sasse 1992; Sallabank 2013; Kircher, Zipp 2022.

2 Cf. Baker 1992; Sasse 1992; Bradley 2002; Brenzinger et al. 2003; Sallabank 2013; Thomason 2015; Kircher, Zipp 2022.

part of a more general phenomenon found in Italy. Indeed, the relationship between Italian and any regional local language is characterised by a condition of *dilalia* (Berruto 1987), namely a functional overlap limited to informal contexts, as both codes are used in ordinary spoken conversation, with the national language being in many areas the most frequent means of communication in those contexts too (Istat 2017; Berruto 2018). Such a condition is the result of a decline in the use of the local languages in favour of a more generalised use of Italian that has taken place all over Italy since soon after World War II, although the impact and the rate of the Italianisation of speech communities exhibits regional differences (Berruto 2018). Within this general context, Sardinia went through a process of language shift in the second half of the twentieth century, with the local language not only overlooked in public domains, but also progressively replaced by Italian as the language of primary socialisation of children and in other private domains (Schjerve 2017; Mereu 2021). As can be said for many situations in other parts of Italy, this process can be regarded as both a cause and a consequence of negative attitudes towards the local language spread across speakers until a few decades ago (Nelde, Strubell, Williams 1996; Tufi 2013). Italian was seen as the language of social mobility, while the local language was considered as helpless or even damaging for such socio-economic progress (Nelde, Strubell, Williams 1996; Tufi 2013; Calaresu, Pisano 2017). In other terms, Sardinian was surrounded by generally unfavourable attitudes and it was often openly stigmatised, especially in school contexts.[3] Measures of language policy and planning were therefore regarded as necessary for the safeguarding of the local language. The Autonomous Region of Sardinia approved Act no. 26 in 1997 (Regione Autonoma della Sardegna 1997), which was subsequently replaced in 2018 by Act no 22 (BURAS 2018). Moreover, the Regional Administration occasionally released multi-year language planning documents to give guidelines for future uses of Sardinian (Regione Autonoma della Sardegna 2011; 2020). Despite some differences among these language policy and planning measures, it is not difficult to notice their similarities in terms of goals and objectives. First of all, there is an attempt to start a process that should lead to societal bilingualism, by making Sardinian a language used regularly in different domains of the public sphere (Lai 2018; Mura 2019; Mereu 2021). Moreover, these top-down initiatives aimed at improving the way Sardinian is perceived by the community, namely at the enhancement of its prestige (Mura 2019; Mereu 2021). The most important difference with other similar situations in Italy is the fact that Sardinian has been officially accorded the status of minority language

3 Nelde, Strubell, Williams 1996; Virdis 2003; Calaresu, Pisano 2017; Mongili 2017.

by the Italian Parliament, with the National Act no. 482 (Parlamento Italiano 1999). This Act has contributed to a growing (albeit still marginal) presence of Sardinian in public contexts from which it was traditionally excluded or very scarcely present, such as the web, administrative documents, mass media, toponymy and school (cf. Marra 2012; Mereu 2019; Mura, Santulli 2023).

In the new century, a more positive orientation towards the minority language seems to be spreading across the island, as Sardinian is increasingly seen as an important part of Sardinians' identity.[4] As Pinto (2013) and Mereu (2021) already noted, a growing favourable disposition towards the local language can also be inferred by participants' overestimation of their own competences in Sardinian observed in various sociolinguistic studies conducted in the last 20 years (Oppo 2007; Lavinio, Lanero 2008; Paulis, Pinto, Putzu 2013). Such a positive orientation towards Sardinian should be considered within a general renewed appreciation of local varieties in Italy (Berruto 2018) and, even more generally, in many parts of Western Europe (see Lasagabaster, Huguet 2007; Sallabank 2013). Nevertheless, as often happens when looking at attitudes at different levels of specificity (Baker 1992), while an abstract idea of Sardinian generally raises a widely shared positive mental disposition, its public use in certain contexts, for example as a skill in the job market or as a medium of instruction in schools and universities, is still very controversial (Valdes 2007; Brau 2010; Mura 2019). This is due to the prevailing role of Italian, and partially English, for such functions, and to the risk of going against individual rights if a relatively scarcely spoken local language is publicly used in the modern, global and multicultural society (Mura 2019).

In this chapter, I will present the results of part of a larger research project on students' language attitudes in Sardinia. Here, the focus will be put on the data emerged from a direct method (Garrett 2010), i.e., a written questionnaire. This type of methodology has already been adopted in studies conducted in Sardinia.[5] In this case, however, to collect attitudinal data, an adaptation of surveys that have been widely used internationally in contexts of bilingualism with minority languages – but, to the best of my knowledge, never in Sardinia – was chosen. Thanks to this tool, opinions on Sardinian will be directly compared with those on Italian, as the questions referring to Sardinian were the same (or very similar) as the questions referring to Italian (see Section 2). Furthermore, as opinions were asked on different aspects concerning language attitudes, participants' orientation towards both abstract ideas and specific uses

4 Valdes 2007; Brau 2010; Gargiulo 2014; Deiana 2016; Mura 2019.

5 Valdes 2007; Brau 2010; Gargiulo 2014; Deiana 2016; Mura 2019.

of languages will be examined. The data presented here will help researchers and policy-makers to understand whether the relatively positive attitudes towards Sardinian shown in the studies conducted over the last 20 years also concern the younger generations and whether there are differences within them according to sociodemographic and sociolinguistic profiles. Since similar versions of the questionnaire have been already adopted in numerous studies conducted in several European regions, the results presented here can also contribute to cross-context comparisons of attitudinal tendencies in situations of bilingualism with a minority language.

2 Methodology

2.1 Participants

303 participants, who were, at the time of the administration, school or university students, took part in the study. Students were recruited with the collaboration of schools' principals and professors.

Two educational institutions comprising primary and secondary schools were involved (henceforth *Istituto/i Comprensivo/i*), as well as two high schools and two universities. Half of the schools/universities are located in the southern half of the island, where Campidanese Sardinian is spoken (Blasco Ferrer 1984), while the other half are located in the northern half of the island, where Logudorese Sardinian is spoken (Blasco Ferrer 1984). The *Istituto Comprensivo* in the Campidanese area is located in a town with around 25,000 inhabitants (Iglesias), the *Istituto Comprensivo* in the Logudorese area is located in two towns with approximately 2,000 inhabitants (Irgoli and Galtellì). The two high schools in the Campidanese and Logudorese areas are located in two towns with respectively around 11,000 (Guspini) and 7,500 (Bosa) inhabitants. The two universities are located in the cities of Cagliari and Sassari. Efforts were made to balance the size of the towns where the schools involved are located. Due to the difficulties in finding schools that were willing to collaborate, especially during Covid times, it was not possible to do so for the two *Istituti Comprensivi*, while the goal was achieved for the high schools and the universities. However, in the high school of the Logudorese area, it was possible to also work with two classes of the first two years, whereas it was not possible to do so with the high school of the Campidanese area. More in general, it was difficult to balance the number of participants in the different age groups, although attempts were made in this sense.

In sum, of the 303 participants who took part in the study, 145 (47.85%) were female, and 158 (52.15%) were male. 122 (40.26%) were from the Campidanese-speaking area, 162 (53.47%) from the

Logudorese-speaking area, and 19 (6.27%) from alloglot areas where a non-Sardinian variety is spoken (Algherese and Sassarese areas, cf. Spiga 2007, 65). 89 participants (29.37%) belonged to the 9- to 12-year age group (students attending an *Istituto Comprensivo*), 24 participants (7.92%) to the 14- to 15-year age group (students attending one of the first two-years of high school), 146 participants (48.18%) to the 18- to 19-year age group (students attending the last year of high school), 44 participants (14.52%) had 20 years of age or more (students attending university).

2.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to collect attitudinal data is a free adaptation of two surveys conducted in Wales, Sharp et al. (1973), and Baker (1992). More specifically, the sections where participants were required to express their degree of agreement with given statements (such as "It is nice to hear Language X being spoken") were adapted. These sections of the questionnaires have been frequently used for studies conducted in contexts of bilingualism with minority languages. Sharp et al.' survey has been adapted for the Catalan situation by the Catalan Education Service (SEDEC 1983) and it has been recently used by several studies, primarily in Iberic contexts (e.g., Ianos et al. 2017; Ubalde, Alarcón, Lapresta 2017). Similarly, Baker' survey has been adapted and used in studies across Europe in bilectal contexts (e.g., Lasagabaster, Huguet 2007; Falomir 2014). The surveys have been mostly administered in school settings to students of different ages, as those involved in my study.

I created a set of 12 questions per language (see Appendix), by translating to Italian, and adapting some of the sentences present in Sharp et al. (1973) and Baker (1992) and their subsequent renditions. More precisely, I chose sentences that were able to elicit data on important attitudinal aspects already highlighted by Ianos et al. (2017): perceived aesthetic value and beauty of the languages, willingness to use and transmit them, their potential uses at school, their importance. For a more fine-grained analysis and in order to cover further elements that were likely salient in the Sardinian context, the sentences concerning languages' importance were divided into those concerning the instrumental importance and those concerning the integrative importance, following Gardner, Lambert (1972). The sentences dealing with the perceived importance of the two languages were taken from a different section of Baker's questionnaire, named "use, value and status" (Baker 1992, 55). Finally, sentences related to the connection between language and identity were also included; one of these sentences (see 'Identity (1)' in the Appendix) was taken from the survey administered in Sardinia by Valdes (2007).

In sum, 6 different topics were covered by the set of sentences: aesthetic value, use and transmission, use at school, instrumental importance, integrative importance, identity. Two questions for each topic were selected, for a total of 12 sentences per language. For a more reliable comparison, the statements referring to Italian and those referring to Sardinian were kept as similar to each other as possible. In some cases, the different sociolinguistic conditions of the two languages (e.g., concerning the use of them in the school context) made it impossible to use the same statement for both (see 'School (2)' in the Appendix).

Participants had to express their degree of agreement on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (= 'totally disagree') to 6 (= 'totally agree').[6] The sentences had different polarities to avoid participants from being constantly presented with the same viewpoint (e.g., compare 'Aesthetic value (1)' and 'Aesthetic value (2)' in the Appendix). Clearly, reverse scoring was applied for sentences with negative polarity.

Students were first asked to fill out a questionnaire which asked for demographic data (gender and age), information on their experiences of school activities/lectures carried out in Sardinian, and their general linguistic profile: more specifically, questions on past language habits, current language habits, and a self-evaluation of language proficiency contributed to generate a cumulative score and assign participants a level of bilingualism based on their self-reports. This section of the questionnaire was a translation and adaptation of parts of the survey used in the BALED project (2012-15).[7] In addition, a short picture-naming task was included: students were presented with a series of 20 images and required to write, in both Italian and Sardinian, the name of each depicted object. The images were taken from Snodgrass, Vanderwart (1980) and the level of difficulty in naming them in Sardinian was based on normative data on age of acquisition, familiarity and concept agreement preliminarily collected (Mura, Lebani 2022). This task made it possible to measure a separate score of participants' degree of bilingualism, which did not rely on their self-reports but was based on the proportion of accurate responses.[8]

6 A 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (= 'totally disagree') to 6 (= 'totally agree'), was chosen in order to be consistent with other attitudinal data eliciting tools used in the project (but not discussed in this chapter). Pilot testing was conducted with 7-point questionnaires: however, in the indirect methodology participants tended to excessively rely on the neutral point, so that it was removed to force participants to take a stance.

7 BALED Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: the development of linguistic and cognitive abilities in different types of bilinguals [MIS 377313]. P.I.: Prof. Ianthi Maria Tsimpli.

8 As the proportion of accurate responses in Italian was very often at ceiling (or nearly), it was decided to consider the proportion of accurate responses in Sardinian as a

The anonymity of the participants was ensured in all parts of the questionnaire. The survey was administered during regular school or academic time, with teachers/professors present in the classroom. As the data collection took place during Covid time in the spring of 2021, high school and university classes were conducted online via computer platforms. More specifically, the survey was administered through the software *Qualtrics*.[9] As for the *Istituti Comprensivi*, classes were in person, and thus, a paper version of the questionnaire was administered.

3 Results

Table 1 presents the mean,[10] standard deviation and median for the entire set of 12 statements on Italian and Sardinian. Since on a scale from 1 to 6 the midpoint is 3.5, both languages received evaluations that fall into the positive side of the spectrum. However, the favourable disposition towards Italian is generally stronger than that towards Sardinian, as the higher mean and median emerged from the statements on Italian suggest.

Table 1 Mean, standard deviation and median emerged from the whole set of 12 statements on Italian and Sardinian

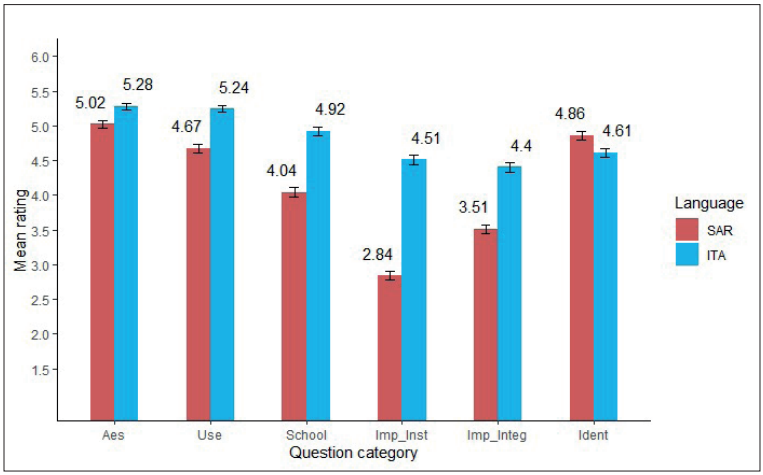
	Mean	(St. Dev.)	Median
Statements on Italian	4.82	(0.57)	5.10
Statements on Sardinian	4.16	(0.88)	4.59

Since participants had to express their opinion on 12 sentences concerning six different attitudinal components, a visual representation of the average evaluations received by each language in each component is reported **[graph 1]**. The only question category where Sardinian received more favourable evaluations than Italian was the one concerning the connection between language and identity. In all the other cases, the majority language (Italian) was rated higher than

measure of participants' degree of bilingualism.

9 https://www.qualtrics.com/.

10 The use of the mean and parametric statistics is not without controversy for data derived from Likert scales. Nonetheless, following recent studies that show the reliability of parametric measures even for Likert or Likert-type scales (especially when considering more items on aggregate and when the scale is made up of more than five points, Norman 2010; Brown 2011; Gibson, Piantadosi, Fedorenko 2011; Boone, Boone 2012; Kizach 2014; Harpe 2015), such measures were adopted in this work and their main results are reported in this chapter.



Graph 1 Mean evaluation received by Sardinian and Italian in each question category. Note. Aes = aesthetic value; Use = use and transmission; School = potential uses at school; Imp_Inst = instrumental importance; Imp_Integ = integrative importance; Ident = identity

the minority language (Sardinian). However, Sardinian obtained relatively positive evaluations on the statements about the perceived aesthetic value of the language, the willingness to use and transmit it, and – albeit to a lesser extent – its potential uses in the school context. In all those questions, the evaluations for Italian were almost at ceiling. The largest gap between the evaluations on Italian and the evaluations on Sardinian emerged from the statements referring to the importance of the languages. Positive evaluations emerged on average when those statements concerned Italian, whereas a mean evaluation very close to the midpoint of the scale resulted from the statements referring to the integrative importance of Sardinian, and a mean evaluation that clearly falls into the negative side of the rating scale resulted from the statements referring to its instrumental importance. Thus, the largest difference between the ratings received by Italian and Sardinian was observed when participants had to express their perceptions on the instrumental usefulness of the two languages.

Table 2 allows for a more fine-grained look of the results, as it reports the mean, median and mode, as well as the percentage of agreement, for each single statement. The percentage of agreement is the proportion of participants who responded with one of the three options of agreement (hence, the percentage of disagreement can be derived from it, namely the proportion of participants who selected one of the three options of disagreement).

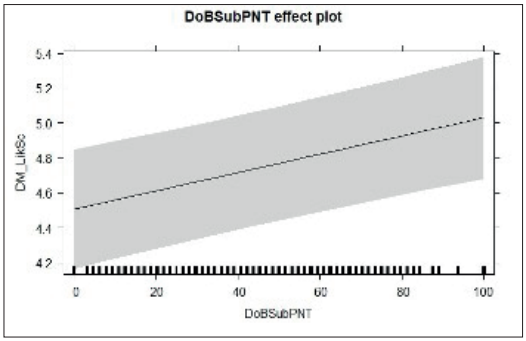
Table 2 Measures of central tendency and agreement percentage concerning each of the 12 statements on Italian and Sardinian

Statement	Mean		Median		Mode		Agreement percentage	
	Italian	Sardinian	Italian	Sardinian	Italian	Sardinian	Italian	Sardinian
Aes. 1	5.37	5.11	6	6	6	6	91.4	84.8
Aes. 2	5.17	4.95	5	5	6	6	92.7	85.8
Use 1	5.27	4.63	6	5	6	6	88.4	74.9
Use 2	5.17	4.73	6	5	6	6	86.5	83.8
School 1	5.30	4.63	6	5	6	6	88.7	77.4
School 2	4.50	3.47	5	4	6	1	71	51
Imp. Inst. 1	5.28	2.67	6	3	6	1	92	25.6
Imp. Inst. 2	3.73	2.97	4	3	5	1	56.3	37.3
Imp. Integ. 1	4.75	3.80	5	4	5	4	84	63.8
Imp. Integ. 2	4.05	3.21	4	3	6	2	64.3	39.2
Identity 1	5.03	5.17	5	6	6	6	88.6	91.3
Identity 2	4.16	4.54	4	5	5	6	67.6	79.7

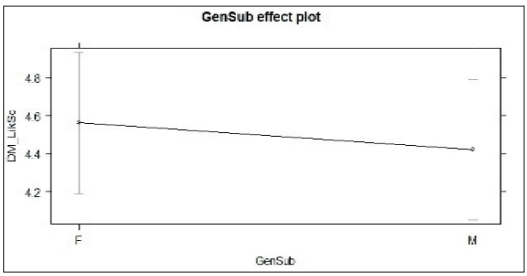
To understand how participants with different sociolinguistic profiles answered the questions, a mixed-effect linear model was run using the *R* package *lme4* (Bates et al. 2015). As the same participant responded to more than one question and the same question was responded to by more than one participant, the observations from the same participant and referring to the same question were not independent among one another. Thus, it was appropriate to put subjects and items as random intercepts of the model (cf. Winter 2020; Brown 2021). The language to which the statements referred was used as the random slope of the two random intercepts for two reasons: (I) the effect of the language to which the statements referred was most likely not the same for all participants and for all statements, (II) due to the theoretical importance of such a variable in this study.

As for the fixed effects, a stepwise backwards elimination procedure was carried out through the Likelihood Ratio Test (Barr et al. 2013; Winter 2020). Firstly, the relevance of the interaction between each participant-related variable and the language to which the statements referred was measured. If the interaction did not significantly improve the predictive power of the model, the relevance of the participant-related variable with no interaction was measured. All variables that did not significantly improve the model were excluded.

The final model retained the following fixed effects: subjects' degree of bilingualism measured through the picture-naming task (DoBSubPNT), subjects' gender (GenSub), the interaction between subjects' degree of bilingualism measured through self-reports and the language to which the Likert-scale statements referred (DoBSubSR * LikScLanguage), and the interaction between subjects' age and the language to which the Likert-scale statements referred (AgeSub * LikScLanguage).



Graph 2
Graph showing the effect of the degree of bilingualism measured through the picture-naming task on the evaluations.
Note. The y-axis shows a part of the six-point evaluation scale adopted in the direct method with Likert-scales (DM_LikSc); the x-axis shows the degree of bilingualism measured as the proportion of correct answers given in the picture-naming task

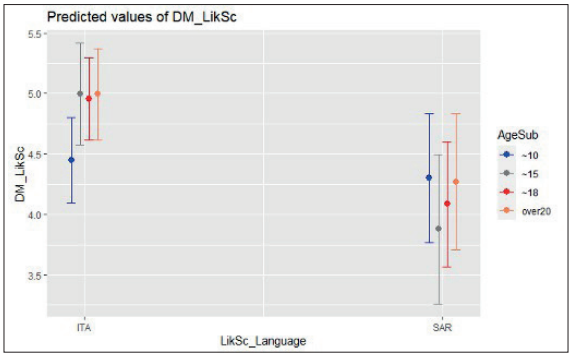


Graph 3
Graph showing the effect of the participants' gender on the evaluations.
Note. The y-axis shows a part of the six-point evaluation scale. On the x-axis:
F = female participants,
M = male participants

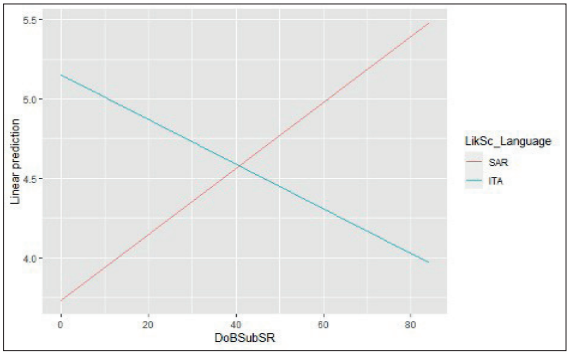
The effect of subjects' degree of bilingualism measured through the picture naming task was statistically significant with $p = 0.004$. It is possible to see that the better participants' performances in the picture naming task, the more positive their evaluations, regardless of the language to which the statements referred **[graph 2]**.

The effect of participants' gender – with no interaction with language – turned out to be statistically significant with $p = 0.018$. Hence, this variable was significant only at the 95% confidence level and not at the 99% level. Moreover, although the difference between male and female participants did not seem to be due to chance, such a difference was not large in absolute value **[graph 3]**. Female participants were slightly more generous in their evaluations than male participants, regardless of the language to which the statements referred.

As for the interactions, it was necessary to run post-hoc analyses to understand their actual effect on the evaluations given. Thus, I resorted to estimated marginal means and pairwise comparisons, measured with the R package *emmeans* (Lenth 2022). The younger age group tended to give less favourable opinions when the statements referred to Italian and more favourable opinions when the statements referred to Sardinian **[graph 4]**. The other three age groups gave very similar opinions when the statements referred to Italian, while the high school



Graph 4
Interaction between participants' age and language to which the statements referred. Note. The y-axis shows a part of the six-point evaluation scale. On the x-axis: ITA = statements referred to Italian, SAR = statements referred to Sardinian



Graph 5
Interaction between participants' self-reported degree of bilingualism and language to which the statements referred. Note. The y-axis shows a part of the six-point evaluation scale; the x-axis shows the degree of bilingualism based on participants' self-reports and measured as a percentage

students tended to give less favourable opinions than university students when the statements referred to Sardinian. Nonetheless, the pairwise comparisons of the estimated marginal means reveal that, as far as the Sardinian language was concerned, none of the comparisons between age groups was statistically significant. As for the Italian language, the comparison between students around 10 years of age and students around 18 years of age was the only one that reached the significance level: ITA~10 vs. ITA~18 → estimate = -0.3318; SE = 0.098; z ratio = -3.384; **p value = 0.0164**. This comparison is particularly important as it involves the two numerically largest age groups.

As the other interaction included a continuous variable (i.e., the degree of bilingualism measured through self-reports), in order to calculate its effect I resorted to the estimated marginal means of linear trends. The interaction turned out to have a statistically significant effect with $p < 0.001$, and **[graph 5]** clarifies the type of effect. The more participants declared to know and use Sardinian alongside Italian, the more their evaluations on Sardinian got positive (trend = +0.0208; SE = 0.00293) and their evaluations on Italian got negative (trend = -0.0141; SE = 0.00242).

4 Discussion

The most striking result is the difference between the responses on Sardinian given to the statements about its importance and those given to the statements about all the other topics. Therefore, it is possible to identify two macro-components in the answers, which might be labelled as 'general opinions' and 'perceived importance'. The fact that the questions on the 'perceived importance' of the languages constitute a sort of separate dimension is not entirely surprising. Indeed, they come from a separate section of Baker's questionnaire (1992) and call for an acknowledgment of the actual sociolinguistic situation rather than pure opinions. For this reason, Sharp et al. (1973) did not include these types of questions in their questionnaire, as they did not capture mere attitudes. However, the perception of instrumental and integrative importance of a language might be influenced by speakers' attitudes, and more importantly, it is likely to influence speakers' linguistic behaviours (Gardner, Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985; Gardner, MacIntyre 1991). In this respect, the results of this study show a worrying situation for Sardinian, which is not considered very useful by the younger generations and clearly less useful than the national majority language. The less than positive results obtained by the minority language in terms of integrative importance are somewhat surprising. In part, they can be explained by the fact that Italian is increasingly being used even in private and colloquial contexts. Furthermore, the overall results on Sardinian integrative importance derive from quite distant figures emerging from the two single statements related to this topic. The first statement claimed that Sardinian 'helps' in building and consolidating social relationships, while the second statement claimed that Sardinian 'is necessary' in this respect. As can be read in Table 2, the average score for the first question was 3.8, the median was 4, the most frequently selected value was 4 (= 'I partially agree'); moreover, 63.7% of participants selected an option of agreement with the statement **[tab. 2]**. For the second question, the average score was 3.21, the median was 3 and the most frequently selected value was 2 (= 'I disagree'); finally, only 39.2% of participants selected an option of agreement with the statement. In sum, Sardinian is deemed helpful but not necessary for social relationships. Regarding the statements on instrumental importance, the negative evaluations on Sardinian cannot be considered unexpected, given its sociolinguistic role and its function in today's society. Nevertheless, the large gap between Sardinian and Italian in terms of perceived instrumental importance might constitute an obstacle for the future vitality of the minority language. Therefore, an increase in Sardinian's instrumental usefulness is probably crucial, and policy-makers should take this factor into careful consideration. Attempts at increasing the utilitarian

importance of the minority language can also take advantage of the general positive orientation towards this language that seems to be widespread across speakers' communities on the island.

Indeed, very different results from the ones concerning languages' importance emerged from the other statements, those that elicited the 'general opinions' of participants. Students expressed overall positive evaluations on both languages. In this respect though, it should be borne in mind that a written questionnaire with Likert-scale statements constitutes a direct method of investigation of participants' language attitudes. Direct methods suffer from the well-known problems of the social desirability bias and acquiescence bias (Garrett 2010). Participants could have been influenced in their responses by their perceptions of what was socially appropriate to express and what the researcher wanted them to express. When assessing the results of this study, caution should be exercised due to these potential biases. Even though previous research was potentially affected by the same issue, the accumulation of evidence coming from previous studies[11] and from the present one seems to confirm Sardinians' general favourable disposition towards the island's local language. The strong identity value of Sardinian – even stronger than that of Italian – was confirmed by the results of this survey. Compared to other studies involving adults (e.g., Valdes 2007; Mura 2019), an important finding of this research is that the favourable disposition towards Sardinian seems to be generalised among the younger generations as well.

In this regard, since the study was carried out with students, it was especially interesting to understand their opinions on potential uses of the languages at school. The prevailing role of Italian in the educational context is by no means controversial or disputed by students. As for Sardinian, the overall results derive again from very different data emerged from the two single statements. The first school-related statement refers to the opportunity of teaching Sardinian in general, while the second refers to the opportunity of employing Sardinian as a medium of instruction. The first statement generated a much higher consensus, as more than 3 participants out of 4 selected an option of agreement and the most frequently selected value was 6 (= 'I completely agree'). The second statement engendered more controversial answers: the most frequently selected value was 1 (= 'I completely disagree'), but at the same time 51% of participants selected an option of agreement and 49% an option of disagreement. These results clearly suggest that the possibility of teaching Sardinian at school is very favourably seen, in line with previous research findings (Valdes 2007; Brau 2010; Mura 2019). The use of the minority language as

11 Oppo 2007; Valdes 2007; Lavinio, Lanero 2008; Brau 2010; Deiana 2016; Mura 2019.

a medium of instruction alongside Italian is, instead, very divisive. Hence, a structural introduction of Sardinian at school with such a function seems still hardly reachable, at least in the short term. However, compared to both Valdes (2007) and Brau (2010), where similar questions were asked, there was a more widespread consensus over the possibility of using Sardinian as a medium of instruction. Indeed, in those studies only less than 15% of participants declared to agree with such a possibility, while in this study one participant out of two expressed a favourable position. A trajectory of increasing agreement can be hypothesised in this respect, but further studies are needed to confirm this impression. Interestingly, the high school students proved to be less positively inclined towards the use of Sardinian as medium of instruction (mean score → ~15 y.o. = 2.91; ~18 y.o. = 3.10) compared to the university students (mean score → over 20 y.o. = 3.86) and especially compared to the primary/secondary school students (mean score → ~10 y.o. = 4.05).

This result is in line with more general findings concerning the attitudes expressed by the different age groups in this study. The younger students, those around 10 years of age, seem to be more fascinated by the minority language and considerably less fascinated by the national majority language than students who attend high school. Probably, factors such as those highlighted by Baker (1992) in accounting for a similar result in Wales, like the distance from working and parental age or the fact that children generally go to school in less urban contexts, contributed to make younger participants less sensitive to the socio-economic value of the national language and more affectively inclined towards the local language. On the contrary, high school students are likely to cognitive reflect on the socio-economic power of Italian and be more sceptical towards Sardinian (cf. Sharpe et al. 1973; Baker 1992; Ubalde, Alarcón, Lapresta 2017). The results concerning university students in this respect must be taken with much caution: adults are probably very much aware of the public debate around the valorisation of Sardinian, and this might have partially influenced their responses in a direct method like a questionnaire. Moreover, most of the university students involved in this study also attended courses on Sardinian literature and culture, which may have created a bias within participants aged 20 or older. In any case, the relatively low number of participants in this age group does not allow for in-depth considerations, much less generalisations.

The results concerning participants' gender suggest that Sardinian has nowadays overt prestige or at least is not subject to overt social stigma. Classic sociolinguistics showed that women tend to adhere more than men to the standard variety and tend to bestow more social stigma on sub-standard varieties (Labov 1990). On the contrary, in this study, both male and female students gave generally positive evaluations to the minority language, and female students were

even slightly more generous in their ratings. Thus, the traditional overt social stigma on the minority language seems to have largely disappeared, probably also because of the official provisions for the safeguard of the language taken by national and regional institutions in the last decades (see Section 1). Indeed, in contexts where there is strong institutional support for the local language, women have been found to have positive attitudes towards that language, often even more positive than men (Ubalde, Alarcón, Lapresta 2017; Price, Tamburelli 2020). By contrast, where institutional support is lacking, social stigma is more likely to occur, as shown by a recent study on Ligurian (Licata 2019), in which participants, especially women, proved to be negatively disposed towards the local variety.

The role of the degree of bilingualism in affecting the evaluations on languages is not entirely clear from the data. It seems that students who know and use both Sardinian and Italian tend to be more favourably oriented towards the local language. However, those who performed well in the picture-naming task tended to evaluate both languages better, while this was not the case when considering those who declared a high degree of bilingualism in the self-reports. This fact suggests that self-reports on language competence and use are at least partially made up of ideological and attitudinal content (cf. Pinto 2013). Those who declared to know and use Sardinian sided with Sardinian in the evaluative activity, also going against the language with which Sardinian is in contact and with which Sardinian was put in comparison in the activity, i.e., Italian. It is probably a mechanism engendered by feelings of language loyalty and language protection from socio-economically powerful neighbours (O'Laoire 2007). Nonetheless, the self-reports cannot be seen solely as disguised language attitudes and language ideologies, especially because they were very detailed in asking about participants' past and present language habits in different contexts and with different interlocutors. Therefore, the positive evaluations given to Sardinian by self-declared bilingual students also suggest that a strong background related to a local minority language and the habit of using it in different contexts often helps to have positive attitudes towards that language. This finding is not surprising, as it has been already observed in many previous studies and theoretical models, such as Gardner (1985), Baker (1992), Lasagabaster, Huguet (2007), Priestly, McKinnie, Hunter (2009), Kircher, Fox (2019), Li, Wei (2022). Clearly, it is possible to assume that favourable attitudes towards a minority language may in turn foster processes of language use, learning and consolidation. Attitudes – as Gardner (1985) and Garrett (2010) claim – can then be seen as both inputs and outputs of sociolinguistic processes.

5 Conclusions

In this study, students of different ages and located in different areas of Sardinia expressed their opinions on different aspects concerning the Italian and the Sardinian language. Italian confirmed its role as the most prestigious language, uncontroversially entitled to several public roles, for example in the school context, and thus instrumentally very important. Sardinian is seen as a language with a strong identity value, and the possibility of increasingly using this language in private and public domains generates a relatively high level of consensus, probably partially due to the public debate around its valorisation and the recent language policy and planning provisions taken by official actors. Nonetheless, students consider the local language not very useful in today's society, and this is likely affecting their actual language behaviours, keeping Sardinian in a condition of serious endangerment.

In sum, this study showed that general attitudes towards Sardinian seem to be rather positive, in line with previous research findings. However, such language attitudes often do not coincide with language behaviours, probably by virtue of the scarce instrumental importance of the language. Thus, future language policies might want to focus on measures that are potentially able to increase the integrative and utilitarian value of Sardinian, and that are consequently able to affect the actual language practices of the communities across the island.

The results of this study also suggest that, in contexts where the non-standard language has institutional support, overt social stigma is less likely to be attached to that language by both the male and female population. In line with the findings of previous studies conducted in similar contexts of bilingualism with a minority language, the positive orientation of the early adolescents towards the local language seem to decline in the mid- and late adolescence, as students tend to be increasingly more interested in the advantages offered by the national majority language. Finally, language background, use and ability confirm their crucial role in affecting speakers' language attitudes.

This study has some limitations, and its findings should be looked at with caution. First of all, the sample was unbalanced with respect to some sociolinguistic variables that were taken into consideration, particularly in terms of age. Age groups that are numerically more similar are certainly desirable in future research. A clearer division between participants from an urban context and those from a rural context can be interesting, as people with a rural provenance tend to preserve the local language more (Oppo 2007) and this might also affect their attitudes. In this study, the availability of students, teachers, and principals during the pandemic had to be taken into

account, and schools could not be perfectly divided in terms of their collocation in urban and rural contexts. Finally, the results presented in this chapter come from a direct method of investigating language attitudes. As other previous studies conducted in Sardinia with the same methodology, the results found here may have been conditioned by the social desirability and acquiescence bias. To investigate more private, latent irrational and less cognitively elaborated attitudes, an indirect method such as the matched-guise technique is beneficial. As a matter of fact, this kind of investigation was conducted as part of this research project but could not be described in this chapter.

Despite these limitations, the results presented here can contribute to sociolinguistic studies in Sardinia, and, more generally, to the knowledge of the determinants and dynamics involved when it comes to language attitudes in contexts of bilingualism with a minority language.

Appendix

Statements about Italian and Sardinian with which participants were required to express their degree of agreement on a 6-point Likert scale:

- Italian / Sardinian is an ugly language to hear → Aesthetic value (1)
- It is nice to hear Italian / Sardinian being spoken → Aesthetic value (2)
- I do not like speaking Italian / Sardinian → Use and transmission (1)
- I would like my children to speak Italian / Sardinian → Use and transmission (2)
- In Sardinia, Italian / Sardinian should be taught at school to all students → School (1)
- I would prefer that all subjects at school (apart from foreign languages) were taught in Italian / I would prefer that some subjects at school were taught in Sardinian→ School (2)
- In order to get a good job, it is important to know Italian / Sardinian well → Instrumental importance (1)
- To be able to earn a lot of money, it is not important to know Italian / Sardinian → Instrumental importance (2)
- In the village or town where I live, using Italian / Sardinian helps you to make friends → Integrative importance (1)
- Knowing how to speak Italian / Sardinian is not necessary to be fully integrated in the social life of the village or town where I live → Integrative importance (2)
- It is important to value the Italian / Sardinian language because it is part of our identity → Identity (1)
- Being Italians / Sardinians, we should strive to speak more Italian / Sardinian → Identity (2)

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Effects of National Language Policies on Local Varieties
Campanian and Sicilian Case Studies

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Abstract This study analyses the impact of institutional language policies on the status of two local varieties spoken in the area of Messina and in the province of Caserta, which are non-officially promoted in national laws concerning plurilingualism but specifically addressed in legislative measures at Regional level. In order to unveil the impact of language policy on speaker view of languages, this study offers a quantitative analysis, based on questionnaires and focusing on (a) speakers' judgments about their regional languages; (b) local varieties collocation in their repertoires; (c) correlation between specific communicative situations and local varieties; (d) differences in linguistic prestige assignment among demographic classes of informants.

Keywords Local varieties. Language policy. Multilingualism. Linguistic minorities. Sicilian local variety. Campanian local variety.

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1 Context of the Research: Some Remarks on Current Language Ideologies and Policies in Western Europe

Multilingualism – intended as "the presence of two or more languages in a community or society" (Council of Europe 2022, 5) –[1] is generally considered a vital tool for promoting democratic citizenship and tolerance (cf. European Conference on Plurilingualism 2005, *Preamble*) in super-diverse societies (cf. Vertovec 2007) and therefore actively promoted by supra-national entities both in the field of education and in policies on human rights.[2]

Over time, "the practice of alternately using two [or more] languages by the same person" (Weinreich 1979, 1) and by a certain community has been deeply investigated in several disciplines, whereas the appearance of an explicit political interest in plurilingualism and the definition of specific regulatory frameworks concerning linguistic plurality are relatively recent. Limited to Western Europe, these transformations occurred in particular with the birth of national States (cf. Siemund 2023, 25-7; for Italy, Toso 2008a) in the nineteenth century. Since then, a gradual shift from private to public consideration of language matters (cf. Croce, Mobilio 2016) occurred and, consequently, a strong correlation between political organisations and language uses emerged.

In the attempt to separate the "éléments internes et éléments externes de la langue", Saussure had already noted the fact that "la politique intèrieure des États" and "les rapports de la langue avec des institutions de toute sorte" (1964, 40-1) had a huge impact on the development of languages, implicitly anticipating the dynamic that Heinz Kloss in 1967 ultimately defined with the concept of *Ausbausprache* or "language by development" (Kloss 1967, 29). This 'development' was interpretable in a sociolinguistic sense (cf. Muljačić 1981, 87, fn. 7) as the result of interventions aiming at making a certain variety the High one (cf. Ferguson 1959) in a diglottic (or, better, dilalic in the case of Italy, cf. Berruto 1987; 1993) situation, i.e. the "standard tool of literary expression" (Kloss 1967, 29), not limited to the private domain (cf. also Kloss 1952). In current practices, this

1 Especially in policies designed by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, 'multilingualism' indicates the "coexistence of differing languages within communities and indeed within nation states" (Modiano 2023, 53) and it is generally intended as different from 'plurilingualism', used to refer to "the use of several languages by an individual" (European Conference on Plurilingualism 2005, *Preamble*). In Italian policies this distinction seems to be less common, and the term 'plurilingualism' prevails as indicating both conditions (cf. Marcato 2012, 12-13). In this paper, however, 'multilingualism' is preferred, in line with the uses attested in European documents.

2 In this respect, cf. among others De Varennes 2007; Romaine 2013a, 2013b; Skutnabb-Kangas 1998; Tamburelli 2014a; Tosi 2017.

"culture of standardization" (Silverstein 1999, 285) results – among other consequences – in the establishment of an alleged correspondence between "the (socio)linguist's 'languages' and the 'languages' recognised by European states" (cf. Tamburelli 2014b, 23). This approach ultimately produces an overlap between the standard variety and the juridical relevance of language uses, expressed in the category of officialdom, having solely juridical foundation (cf. Piergigli 2001, 21-2) and intended as an "arbitrary cut-off point along the *Ausbau* continuum" (Tamburelli 201b, 23). This discourse results in a logic of perpetual formal imbalance between language varieties, a situation that Tamburelli critically defined "*Ausbau*-centrism", responsible – according to the author – of continuing

> a situation where linguists call x-ish a language if and only if x-ish has sufficiently powerful socio-political backing to have achieved extensive *Ausbau*-isation and/or recognition. (Tamburelli 2014b, 23)

Looking at the current situation of Europe, many contradictions emerge about the scope assigned to multilingualism at the (supra) national level. The terminology used in official documents on the subject implicitly proposes a "descending hierarchy" (Extra 2011), starting with the official languages of member states, followed by regional minority languages across Europe and, lastly, immigrant minority languages, whose assimilation to the minority-model is however controversial (cf. Simoniello 2023; Ganfi-Simoniello 2021a; 2021b). No mention is done of those varieties spoken locally but having no official recognition,[3] thus confirming the identification made by Peled of "monolingual multilingualisms" (2012).

Another interesting point is the final objective pursued in these policies. Observing multilingualism and plurilingualism in the EU, Carli stated that

> l'obiettivo del plurilinguismo (istituzionale e societario) si trova ad essere programmaticamente funzionale alla pax linguistica e alla certezza del diritto, oltre che alla mobilità sociale all'interno del libero mercato e della "società della conoscenza e dell'informazione". (Carli 2004, § 1)

In other words, the consideration of multilingualism and multilingual competence is strictly related to the possibility, through them, of a larger individual development and democratic participation, together

3 Reference here is not, of course, limited to the varieties identifiable in the label 'regional or minority languages', but – as specified in next paragraph – to all the varieties spoken locally.

with maintaining a collective plurilingual and pluricultural identity in the EU (cf. Carli 2004). However, this approach contributes to perpetuate the vision mentioned above about the hierarchisation in terms of prestige, due to the fact that some varieties have a higher value in reaching the objectives listed by the author, while others are considered less useful.

One last consideration concerns the cultural value assigned to language varieties. Let us consider the case of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. The *Explanatory Report* accompanying the text explicitly states that "the charter's overriding purpose is cultural" and the aim of the document is the promotion of regional and minority languages "as a threatened aspect of Europe's cultural heritage" (both in *Explanatory Report*, 2). It means that language varieties which benefit from the measures contained in the Charter are primarily considered as cultural entities, whose recognition "must not be confused with recognition […] as an official language" (*Explanatory Report*, 9), i.e. those languages are hierarchised with respect to official varieties, with no detriment for them and the need to learn them (*Charter*, 1).

The perseveration of this language hierarchisation seems to be at the same time "both a consequence and a cause" (see Wells 2018, 244) of the status these other varieties ultimately have. This is especially true in the case of those varieties which can only access recognition through official statements, and not because of their factual existence (cf. Piergigli 2001, 152). This approach ultimately supports the consideration of multilingualism as a condition *de jure*, addressed with measures having the form of declarations, resolutions, laws, surveys (cf. Romaine 2013a, 117) with different constraints in their application (cf. Piergigli 2020). Nevertheless, it excludes the (larger and more complex) multilingualism existing *de facto*, not represented politically (cf. Wells 2018, 245) and thus essentially ignored or addressed inappropriately. Considering the coordinates briefly introduced until now, it seems possible to better understand the perplexity recently expressed by Telmon (2019) about the alleged irreversible decline of monolingualism (cf. De Mauro 2005). The author questions whether recent interest in plurilingualism really corresponds to a concrete evolution of the social representations of languages, or it is rather a politically correct discourse, in which the social complexity accompanying languages and diversity is dramatically simplified (cf. Telmon 2019, § 3). In this framework, there is a general tendency to overestimate

> [the] importance of 'top-down' policy measures in relation to language status or to suggest that legitimacy for a language can only be acquired through political authorities such as the state. Indeed […] there are limitations to what such external recognition can achieve. (Wells 2018, 246)

Given these premises, one can thus hypothesise two consequences:

a. the first is that official recognition in institutional measures and the mention in public debates are fundamental for local languages transmission and survival;
b. alternatively, one can expect that official recognition is neither indispensable nor sufficient for language maintenance for varieties spoken locally, recognising instead local speakers and their attitudes as the only subjects responsible for preserving and transmitting them.

This paper aims to propose an answer to this question by analysing the concrete situation of two local varieties having no official recognition. This contribution is articulated in two main parts. The first one – which constitutes the background of the research – contains some general indications about the Italian linguistic situation, specifically focusing on the neglected role of local varieties in the diachronic debate on language diversity in the Peninsula. A more specific focus on laws addressing Italian linguistic diversity is also proposed in order to individuate the main actors allowed to decide on institutional language use. In the second part, our data are exposed and commented.

1.1 Our Study: A Sociolinguistic Survey on Two Varieties

This work is a sociolinguistic research aiming at analysing the status of two local varieties spoken in the Italian provinces of Caserta and Messina, that do not benefit any kind of institutional provision at the national level, but are specifically addressed by regional authorities. The perspective of analysis adopted in our work is social and juridical, not philological (cf. Malfatti 2004, 249).

This paper is divided into two parts. The first one focuses on the juridical and sociolinguistic framework. In the second one, sociolinguistic data collected by the authors through questionnaires and interviews (cf. *infra*, § 2) are displayed and commented under the light of our theoretical premises, proposing some results describing local linguistic situation. The aim of the work is to measure:

a. the impact that policies actually have on local language uses with respect to the varieties considered here;
b. the prestige of local varieties, as perceived by speakers;
c. the awareness that speakers have about the existence and the extension of these measures and the implicit impact they have on language dynamics.

A brief terminological clarification is necessary before presenting the study. In the Italian literature, the definition of 'local varieties' or 'local languages' normally covers three different situations having in

common the geographical limitation of their uses: primary dialects, as defined by Coseriu (1981); regional varieties of Italian and, ultimately, minority languages (cf. Dal Negro 2008, 127-8). In this paper, the designation 'local varieties' is specifically used to refer to the primary dialects in the Italoromance group (cf. Coseriu 1981), constituting "autonomous linguistic systems [...] directly derived from Latin" (Dal Negro 2008, 127; cf. also Cerruti 2011).

1.2 Local Varieties, Minority Languages and New Minorities in Italy: The Neglected Multilingualism

The impressive work of Tullio De Mauro (1963; 2014) exploring the linguistic history of Italy in modern era critically reveals the diachronic descending trajectory of its historical multilingualism – in quantitative terms – and the progressive emergence of Italian as the language of the almost totality of people living in the Country. Italian co-exists in the Italian linguistic space (see De Mauro 1983) with Italian primary dialects mentioned above, the minority languages historically present within Italian boundaries and the languages spoken by foreign people permanently resident in the Country. The concept of *dilalia* (Berruto 1987; 1993) recognises the possible presence of local varieties in everyday linguistic uses:

> entrambe le varietà [lingua nazionale and dialetto] impiegate/impiegabili nella conversazione quotidiana e con uno spazio relativamente ampio di sovrapposizione (aspetto più propriamente sociolinguistico). (Berruto 1993, 5-6)

For the purpose of our study, it is worth noting two implicit assumptions of this description, both having a sociolinguistic matrix. The first is the obvious fact that local varieties have persisted over centuries (and especially in the last one, when the most extensive imposition of 'monolingualism-hegemony' has been attempted), as an effective code of everyday communication (i.e. not consciously intended as 'cultural objects' by speakers), despite the lack of positive institutional interest in them. The second is the parallel perseverance of the (circular) bias mentioned above about the alleged hierarchisation of existing varieties, resulting in the inaccessibility for local varieties to higher internal development as intended by Kloss.

On the first point, the issue to be solved concerns the reasons for monolingualism bias. In Italy, similarly to other European countries where the nation-state has constituted the dominant political model, with the establishment of a new political order – the Unification of Italian States, completed in 1871 with the birth of the Kingdom of Italy – 'languages' started overlapping symbolic functions previously held

by other social and identity markers (cf. Dall'Aquila, Iannàccaro 2004, 27), therefore transcending the boundaries of communication and literature to acquire a political value (cf. Palici di Suni 2002, 8). This political need resulted in a precise willingness of *reductio ad unum* perpetrated through specific actors such as schools and bureaucracy (cf. Toso 2008a, 16) against both primary dialects and other minority languages. It was at that time that the language/dialect dichotomy[4] became a permanent opposition between positive and negative characters: cultured, normalised, widely spread the first; not-prestigious, not-normalised and not-widespread (cf. Toso 2008a, 16) the second.

With the progressive affirmation of the fascist regime since 1922, a particularly pervasive attempt to affirm monolingualism was established, aiming at the uniformity of national language (cf. Pizzoli 2018, 70), with measures covering all areas of legal relevance of language use (cf. Croce, Mobilio 2016, 245). However, those efforts had temporary effects: after the defeat of fascism and the end of the World War II, Italy once again was at the centre of social and institutional transformations. In the early years of the Republic, Italy still retained traditional structure and customs (cf. De Mauro 2014, 19), especially noticeable in the persistence and the active use of many heterogeneous varieties across the Peninsula and, conversely, the scarce use of the national language (cf. De Mauro 2014, 19). In 1948, the Italian Constitution explicitly addressed the issues related to linguistic diversity, with art. 6 stating the that Italian Republic must protect with specific rules the linguistic minorities. However, no further specifications were provided about what should be considered under this term, at least until 1999, when the law n. 482 containing *Norme in materia di tutela delle minoranze linguistiche storiche* addressed a limited selection of varieties not belonging to the Italoromance group and historically present within Italian boundaries.

The 'neglected multilingualism' in our title refers therefore to all the varieties excluded from the institutional debate on the Italian linguistic diversity until now. Limited to the Italian situation, local varieties are generally well described in dialectological studies, but they are absent in debates and measures about language promotion. These attitudes seem to confirm the idea of a restrictive scope of multilingualism, depending on a top-down conception of language dynamics and a rigid hierarchisation based on factors as officialdom, language-related ideologies (cf. Patten 2001) and social utility of local language use.

4 It is worth noting, however, that the establishment of an explicit opposition between the Italian language and dialects in the meaning currently assigned to the term as a variety whose use is geographically limited is earlier than the Italian Unification, dating back to 1724 (cf. Di Caro 2022, 14).

In this paragraph, attention has been focused on the historical development of monolingual bias in Italy. In the next one, explicit measures adopted in Italy to manage linguistic diversity are analysed, stressing particularly the centralisation of powers in language matters.

1.3 Local Varieties and Minority Languages in Italian Language Policies: The National and the Local Level

According to art. 6 Cost., the Italian Republic is bounded to protect linguistic minorities by means of specific provisions. Some clarifications are indispensable for the correct interpretation of subsequent developments in legislative action and the total exclusion of Italian dialects from measures of explicit promotion. First remarks concern the determination of the subject responsible for such actions, as the text of the article does not give any precise indication on the exact division of powers, and it does not provide any justification for an automatic contraction of regional autonomy in favour of the State (cf. Panzeri 2009, 1014). The text of art. 6 recognises the Republic as the subject responsible for protecting linguistic groups identified as minorities. Ciaurro states that the Republic is to be understood, here, as all the entities – from municipalities to the State, according to art. 114 Cost. – which constitute it (cf. Senato della Repubblica 2010, 126). However, the issue of legislative power on linguistic matters becomes even more complex if we consider another programmatic provision of the Constitution. Indeed, art. 9 affirms the Republic's commitment to promote the development of culture (§ 1) and to protect the nation's historical and artistic heritage (§ 2). As stated by Piergigli, the meanings given to "the Republic" in the two cases cannot be automatically compared and overlapped (cf. 2001, 131-2, fn. 19): while in art. 6 "the Republic" is to be identified with the State as a system of government, in art. 9

> i compiti di tutela del patrimonio culturale devono ritenersi confermati in capo alle strutture ministeriali conferendosi alle autonomie territoriali, oltre alla collaborazione al momento conservativo, le funzioni di promozione e valorizzazione. (Ainis in Piergigli 2001, 133)

This remark is crucial: it is possible to affirm that, on the one side, when considering the possible recognition of linguistic rights – thus related to a concrete expansion of domains of uses – issues on local varieties are assumed to be a state-level matter. Instead, promotion of languages as cultural heritage is accessible to Regions, as will be clear from the analysis of regional laws concerning the varieties analysed in our study. Key indications confirming this dichotomy come

from the Constitutional Court in statements concerning the legitimacy of regional provisions on the recognition and promotion of local varieties. The content of art. 6 has been in fact repeatedly recalled within the statutes of the Regions with ordinary and special autonomy, as well as in municipal and provincial statutes (cf. Piergigli 2001, 140; cf. also Tani 2006). However, especially in the case of ordinary Regions, these references were usually limited to a provision of safeguard of the cultural heritage of historical minorities present in the Region (cf. Panzeri 2009, 982, fn. 12) and therefore not specifically addressed to the protection of linguistic minorities in a broader sense. Emblematic in this regard is judgment no. 32 of 1960, which reserves to the State the exclusive legislative power in the field of language policy, on the grounds of the need for unity and equality (cf. Panzeri 2009, 983). Nevertheless, in recent years there has been a larger adoption of measures in the form of regional laws with the aim to promote local varieties. However, those statements have been received critically, as in the emblematic cases of Piedmont[5] and Lombardy.[6] As clearly emerging from the judgment given by the Constitutional Court in the case of the Piedmontese language (sentence of the Italian Constitutional Court no. 170, 13 May 2010),[7] in the case of ordinary Regions legislators are not allowed to extent the promotional treatment preview by art. 6 to local varieties (cf. Delledonne 2010, 718-19). It is therefore interesting to note that, when local varieties enter in statements of recognition, the label chosen is 'language', in order to implicitly suppose an equalisation with the official language, even in those domains – such as administration, education, culture – in which only the latter is accepted. One last remark concerns the fact that caution openings to regional provisions about local languages focus on the cultural value of these ones, and thus they are not interpretable as the recognition of a status.

About the content of these measures, as noted by Dal Negro

> The maintenance and, in some cases, the revival of local languages in Italy today is part of a more general trend towards regionalization that encompasses political localism, the commoditization of regional products (such as food, wine, landscape). (Dal Negro 2008, 127)

5 See, for example, the website devoted to the Piedmontese language: https://piemunteis.it/.

6 To this regard, see for example the debate accompanying the (critical) intervention of Accademia della Crusca on the regional law recognising the existence of a Lombard language: https://accademiadellacrusca.it/it/contenuti/la-salvaguardia-della-lingua-lombarda-in-una-legge-regionale/7402.

7 Accessible at the following webpage: https://www.cortecostituzionale.it/actionSchedaPronuncia.do?anno=2010&numero=170.

These aspects are not purely linguistic, as they produce effects on the current possibility to reverse the loss of local varieties by extending their domains of use. The observations proposed in the next paragraph of on/about? The measures established in Campania and Sicily confirms this vision.

1.4 Case studies: Campanian and Sicilian Regional Measures Promoting Local Varieties as Part of the Immaterial Cultural Heritage of the Territory

Varieties observed in our study have been the object of two regional measures, i.e. Campanian regional law no. 14 of 8 July 2019,[8] titled *Salvaguardia e valorizzazione del patrimonio linguistico napoletano* and Sicilian regional law no. 9 of 31 May 2011 (hereinafter cited as *Delibera*),[9] containing *Norme sulla promozione, valorizzazione ed insegnamento della storia, della letteratura e del patrimonio linguistico siciliano nella scuola*. A general remark has to be made about these titles: both refer to the cultural value of local varieties, equalised to other cultural goods such as music, literature and history. This is not unexpected, if we consider the narrow space of action resulting from the already mentioned Constitutional Court's clarifications about the regional powers on language matters. Therefore, the main objective – and the only one possible – pursued in both cases is to spread the knowledge of the cultural value of local varieties and, more generally, of local culture and not to promote local varieties.

Campanian law explicitly mentions two UNESCO's acts. Art. 1, § 1 of Campanian law refers to art. 5[10] of UNESCO's "Universal

8 Accessible at the following webpage: http://regione.campania.it/normativa/userFile/documents/attachments/1843_14_2019Storico.pdf.

9 The text of the law is accessible at the following webpage: https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/regioni/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2011-08-06&atto.codiceRedazionale=011R0350#:~:text=LEGGE%2031%20maggio%202011%2C%20n,9&text=La%20Regione%20promuove%20la%20valorizzazione,di%20ogn. The denomination *Delibera* in the text refers instead to the following group of documents, whose page numbering is used in our text: http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/pls/portal/docs/148922740.PDF.

10 The article contains the following statements: "Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, which are universal, indivisible and interdependent. The flourishing of creative diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and cultural Rights. All persons should therefore be able to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons should be entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".

Declaration on Cultural Diversity" on cultural rights. Art. 2, § 1 refers instead to UNESCO's "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage", affirming the Region's commitment to support the protection and the enhancement of the Neapolitan linguistic heritage, the related literary production, as well as all forms of artistic, musical and cultural expressions (cf. art. 2). The same paragraph also states the kind of initiatives to be implemented: a) historical and linguistic research activities; b) organisation of seminars and conferences; c) production and publication of literary, theatrical and musical works, with particular attention to their texts; d) literary and musical competitions and prizes; e) initiatives addressing schools and students. The text seems, therefore, to follow the contents of art. 2, § 3 of the UNESCO's Convention, where a definition of 'safeguard' – as intended in the document – is provided:

> 'safeguarding' means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

Further specifications on the kind of measures to be adopted are provided by art. 3, § 3, which lists the duties of the Comitato scientifico per la salvaguardia e la valorizzazione del patrimonio linguistico napoletano, that can be grouped in three main areas: the scientific study of Neapolitan linguistic heritage; the promotion of specific safeguard projects and the valorisation of Neapolitan ethnic-linguistic heritage; the promotion of initiatives, coordinated with school, on the subject contained in the law.

Similar structure is detectable in the Sicilian law. Also in this case, the Region is the authority responsible for adopting the measures concerning local varieties. However, Sicilian law presents the same limitations mentioned before, which are even narrower here. In fact, while a general consideration of the cultural value of the language and local culture was assumed in Campania referring to the 'Neapolitan heritage', Sicilian measures specifically addressed schools and education. The law promulgated in 2011 provided general indications, which have been better explained in 2018 with the introduction of the Guidelines actuating the norm.[11] As in the previous case – even if no mention of international measures is made – the focus is on the

11 Cf. Deliberation of Sicilian Region n. 376, 2018-10-12 available at the following page: `http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/pls/portal/docs/148922740.PDF`. Cf. also fn. 21 above.

research to be developed in the field of philology and linguistics, and then it is applied to educational curricula. Two aspects in particular deserve to be dealt with: the 'reassurances' about its non-opposition to national projection and the reference to activities promoting the awareness of (young) speakers about the functional domains of use. These aspects are particularly interesting because they reproduce, on a smaller scale, the debate that followed the approval of the national law and that persists in the background of the previously mentioned decision of the Constitutional Court.

It is possible to question the fact that these measures can be integrally considered as language policies, if we assume that they are not able to intervene on the status and the function of the languages mentioned by the Regional laws, nor in any of their parts this point is present as an explicit claim. Particularly, the mention of the primacy of national identity, together with the metalinguistic observation about the domains of use adequate for each variety (cf. Deliberation 376/2018, 11)[12] – standard Italian in the H pole is a silent presence here – confirm the fact that these measures perpetuate the *status quo*, whose change is not even among the declared aims of the provisions, which explicitly look at the past.

2 Data Analysis: An Overview

This study is based on a data collection carried out by the authors from June to August 2022 in the province of Caserta (Campania), in the municipality of Sessa Aurunca, and in Messina (Sicily). These places have been chosen because of the authors' origins, and the possibility to easily access local communities for recording spontaneous speech data.

The survey has been made by employing two instruments, designed for observing both explicit declarations of speakers about their language uses and the actual uses in informal situations: a questionnaire, submitted to a limited number of people through Google Forms, and recordings of spontaneous conversations and interviews directed by the authors.

The questionnaire consisted of 53 questions, 32 of which were compulsory and 21 were optional. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts:

1. Demographic features (questions 1-1.5), concerning gender, age range, education level, profession and linguistic history

12 Original text: "[…] attivare la distinzione tra le varietà diatopiche di lingua nella competenza comunicativa dello studente e la conseguente applicazione funzionale di dialetto, italiano regionale e lingua (neo-)standard nelle diverse situazioni comunicative. […]" (Delibera, 11).

of participants (e.g. if he/she had emigrated in other Italian Regions or elsewhere);
2. Domains of use (questions 2-2.18.1), designed to get participants' self-judgments on their own competence in Italian and in the local variety, their language habits in specific contexts of use (public and private domains), the access and the actual use of cultural works in local varieties;
3. The prestige recognised to local varieties and the awareness about the role of institutions in enhancing local varieties and traditions (questions 3.1-3.20).

In the case of recordings, instead, the aim was to compare the actual language use with data collected in questionnaires, in order to verify the reliability of explicit answers. People involved in the survey have been informed about privacy policies, the anonymous treatment of their data and the non-commercial purpose of the survey. Data have been fully anonymised before publishing in this contribution.

We chose to previously select the participants engaged in the questionnaires – the quantitative part of the research – in order to control the provenience of individuals collected in the sample. For qualitative research, instead, spontaneous conversations were recorded in familiar and friendship networks, asking the permission for using their linguistic productions for research purposes.[13] It is worth noticing that since the number of informants included in our sample is quite limited – 23 for the area observed in Campania and 60 for Sicily – results herein proposed cannot be generalised for local languages uses in Southern Italy, and they should rather be considered as a pilot study deserving further expansions and comparisons with other areas having the same features.

With respect to the research hypothesis introduced above (cf. § 1), this section of the investigation aimed at collecting data suitable to

a. indicate the collocation of national and local varieties in the individual repertoires;
b. shed light on the correlations between conversational domains and the use of national or local varieties;
c. reveal the speakers' judgments about the variety they speak locally;
d. detect the occurrence and the conditions for code mixing and shifting phenomena;
e. identify the differences in the linguistic prestige[14] recognised to local varieties throughout various demographic classes.

13 Only a few informants included in the sessions also answered the questionnaries.

14 On the relevance of the linguistic prestige recognised to local varieties, cf. Toso 2008b; Turchetta 2008.

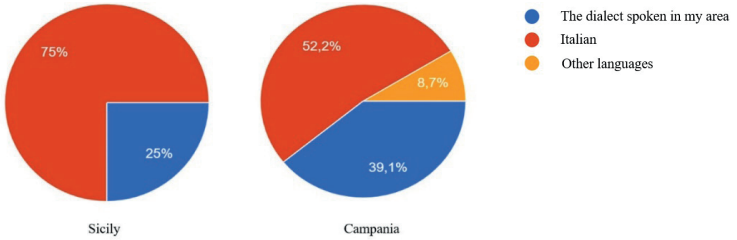
2.1 Quantitative Analysis

The first issue investigated in the questionnaire is the active and passive proficiency of participants in local varieties (question 2.1). Participants have been requested to specify whether they can speak or understand dialects, with three possible answers: (a) they do not have any proficiency in the local variety; (b) they can understand the local variety; (c) they can understand and speak the local variety. All Campanian participants claim active and passive proficiency, while 15% of Sicilian declare only passive competence, versus 85% claiming active and passive competence in the local dialect. Thus, passive competence can be considered as a regular feature of the Sicilian and Campanian speakers of our investigation and active competence is, still, a common characteristic. However, although proficiency in local languages is significative, Italian seems to be the preferred linguistic choice. When questioned about language uses in everyday conversations (question 2.5), Italian language seems to be the unmarked choice **[graph 1]**.

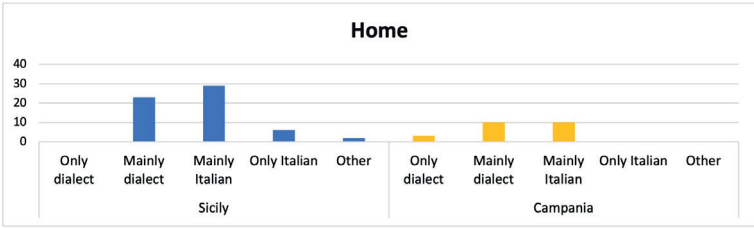
Nevertheless, the inquiry reveals that language preference may vary according to communicative situation (question 2.6). In fact, in informal contexts local varieties can prevail over the Italian ones. More often Campanian speakers use dialect at home, communicating with members of family and friends (3 informants declared that they only use the dialect and 10 of them mainly use the dialect, against 10 people who claimed to use mainly Italian). Italian is a more common option for Sicilian, as highlighted by the fact that 29 informants primarily speak Italian and 23 mainly use the dialect. It is noteworthy that both groups' answers clearly show that the local varieties are used for home communication, since informants who would rather select only Italian for home communication are marginal in the Sicilian group and not represented in the Campanian group **[graph 2]**.

Our inquiry reveals an opposite orientation towards linguistic choices characterising other domains. In more formal and codified social interactions, participants tend to prefer the use of Italian over local languages. This is the case of the work environment (question 2.8 and 2.10), where Italian seems to be the unmarked choice. For both the investigated groups, the prevalence of Italian is quite regular in conversation with employers; even though some uses of the dialect can be documented, they never exceed Italian. In the interactions with colleagues, the use of local varieties is lightly more robust, since there are informants (8 Sicilians and 3 Campanians) who claimed to use mainly dialect in these communicative contexts. Collected data about work domain are shown in Graph 3 **[graph 3]**.

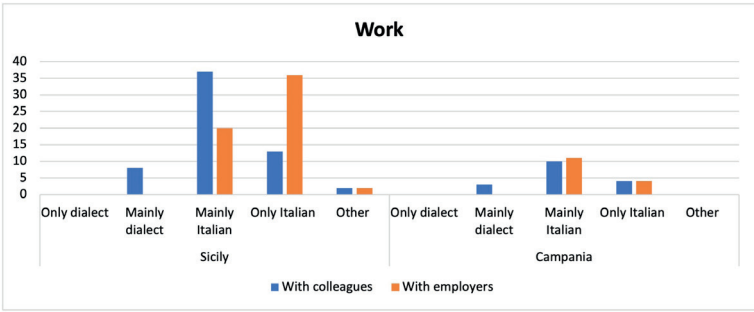
Data concerning linguistic preference in the school domain (questions 2.11-2.12) echo the results observed for the work environment. More common collected answers entail the prevalence of Italian,



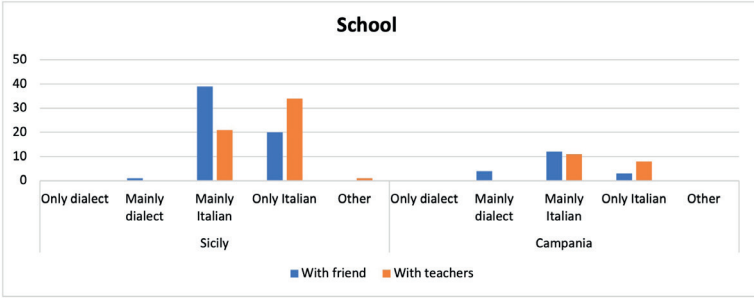
Graph 1 Which language do you normally speak?



Graph 2 At home, which language do you speak the most?



Graph 3 At work, which language do you speak the most with your colleagues? And with your employers?



Graph 4 At school, which language do you speak the most with your friends? And with your teachers?

since it is preferred for the conversations with friends and with professors in both groups. Also in this case, Italian is the main choice for the conversations with peers (i.e. friends), even if some utterances in local language can also appear. Conversations with upper hierarchically-ranked speakers (i.e. professors) a clear preference towards Italian uses only involve in the Sicilian sample, while Campanian participants declare the absolute recourse to the national variety, even if not so clear-cut. Comprehensive data about linguistic preference in school are shown in Graph 4 **[graph 4]**.

In the work and school domains, indeed, local varieties are very limited or even absent in both the investigated areas: participants never report to use only the dialect to communicate in these contexts, even when they interact with peers (i.e. colleagues or friends). Several reasons can be mentioned to explain the lack of local languages in conversations in work and school environments. Among them, cultural and official characteristics of the national variety are irrefutable causes for the marginalisation of dialects in more formal domains of interaction. Cultural prestige of national languages plays, of course, a central role in school communication, since the national education system traditionally focuses on Italian teaching and does not involve any interest towards local varieties (cf. De Mauro 2014; Pizzoli 2018; Toso 2008a; 2008b). The official status of Italian, that can motivate its predominance in the work domain, is overtly enforced by the constatation that all sources of institutional communication (local or national) always use the official language. The status recognised to standard Italian in national policies seems to produce important effects on the tendencies highlighted by our inquiry of quantitative data. Polarisation of the extremes of repertoires – local varieties for informal situations and national one for more formal contexts – can be viewed as an effect of the assignation of officiality and elaboration traits to Italian, consequently confining dialects to the familiar sphere.

2.2 Qualitative Analysis

Within this section we aim to refine the representation of local varieties, beyond self-declared and self-perceived evidence collected through questionaries. The first part of qualitative analysis focuses on contact phenomena related to national and local varieties, while the second part is devoted to implicit judgment about local languages, highlighting relations linking domains of usage and specific varieties.[15]

15 Recordings have been transcribed using standard orthography, as our interest was in switch phenomena and not in the phonetic analysis. Italics is used when the

Spontaneous conversations show evidence of a solid interaction between varieties. Thus, several instances of inter-clausal code switching (i.e. language changes that occur among two different clauses) and intra-clausal code switching (i.e. language changes occurring within the same clause) occur. In these cases, alternations of codes among two different clauses are characterised by functional awareness, since these occurrences are associated to precise values (cf. Alfonzetti 1992). In the following examples each instance of code switching is distinguished according to its function.[16]

2.2.1 Reporting Direct Speech

Speakers of both investigated varieties shift between local and national languages to signal a passage to the direct speech, as shown below:[17]

(1) *Ci fici na vesta a me niputi e dissi* nonna, stasera metto il tuo vestito!
'I made a vest for my granddaughter and she said: "grandmother, tonight I'll wear your vest!"'

(2) *E pecché ha ritto* noi diamo la preferenza ai pazienti già che sta- che stiamo trattando. Poi, quelli nuovi li mettiamo in interrogativo perché i posti non ci sono più.
'because she said: "we give priority to patients who are already being treated. Thus, we put the new ones on hold, because the doctor has no more availability".'

In both Sicilian (1) and Campanian (2) examples the main clauses are uttered in local varieties, while for subordinate clauses, reporting speeches of other individuals, speakers use Italian. It is worth noticing that the choice of Italian in reported speech reflects the realistic linguistic preferences of speakers to whom clauses are attributed. In (1) the utterer of the direct speech is a baby living in Northern Italy and lacking competence of the local language, and in (2) the utterer is an Italian speaking medical doctor, working in a hospital out of the investigated area.

local variety is used. Data have been anonymised by deleting all the informants' details which would have allowed their identification.

16 Functions identified above should not be considered as an exhaustive list of values characterising code switching in Southern Italy. Sentences discussed in this paragraph exemplify phenomena of contact among local and national varieties in investigated areas, but other investigations, involving larger data sample, are needed to fully describe functional underpinnings of code switching in contemporary Sicilian and Campanian.

17 In the examples, switches to local variety are highlighted by italic.

2.2.2 Irony and Sarcasm

Intra-clause code switching can code a peculiar attitude of speakers towards the content of the sentences, indicating ironic or sarcastic interpretations. In the Sicilian example (3), the Italian phrase is a climax listing some of the most important factors of the Italian law system, while the Sicilian clause contains the speaker's complaint about the corruption in the administration of laws in Sicily.

(3) Ma quale diritto, leggi, avvocati?! *A missina u processu u manovrinu finu a cassazioni.*
'But what jurisprudence, what laws, lawyers?! In Missina a trial is conditioned until it reaches the Court of Cassation.'

Therefore, the use of Italian in the first sentence is correlated with an ironic interpretation of its content. In the following, the Campanian example (4) shows an analogous function:

(4) *ma pecché n- se so trasferiti* definitivamente lontano da qui, *no lo so*
'Because they moved far from here definitively, I don't know.'

The shift into Italian in the phrase *definitivamente lontano da qui*, expressing a wish of the agents, marks a sarcastic reading of the sentences, since the speaker does not share the same opinion of other participants about the opportunity for those people to leave.

2.2.3 Topic Alignment

In both investigated areas informants use inter-clausal code switching to align languages of utterance with the topics of interaction. In (5), a Sicilian speaker shifts into Italian in the adverbial (final) clauses to align the content of the utterance with the chosen language.

(5) *Non avi arruvatu nienti! Ora videmu si fannu u governu e decidunu qualcosa picchì* di tutto parlano fuorché di 'ste cose.
'Nothing has arrived. Now we'll see if they'll make a new government and decide something, since they talk about everything but these matters.'

Consequently, since the National government is explicitly mentioned (*u governu*) in the speech, and the official variety used for political and administrative communication is Italian, the switch to this language adapts the variety to the topic of discussion.

An analogous function of the inter-clausal code switching can be seen in the following example from the Campanian corpus:

(6) *[…] chissà si stanno a passà addò simmo passati nui, a chigli là che ce simmo iuti a vere nui, perché que-* in Sardegna ce ne stanno tre o quattro più importanti e poi gli altri so' tutti così
'Who knows if they are doing the same route we did, visiting the same ones we visited because th- in Sardinia there are three or four important nuraghi, and then the others are all the same.'

The speaker recalls a trip to Sardinia. When the informant mentions the geographic area, a switch to Italian takes place, since the homophone *Sardegna* could trig a switch to Italian.[18] Thus, the function of topic alignment for code switching, herein discussed, can be explained with the strong relation linking specific varieties of repertoire with domains of usage.

2.2.4 Emphasizing

Inter-clausal and intra-clausal code switching can be used to indicate an emphatic reading of utterances. In the next example in Sicilian the speaker shifts into Italian remarking the meaning already expressed in the Sicilian sentence. The phrase *insipido completamente* does not add any new meaning, but emphasises the value codified by the previous sequence:

(7) *Russu paria bellu ma poi… sapuri nenti…* insipido completamente!
'[The watermelon] seemed red and good but then… no flavour … totally flavourless!'

The analysis of contact phenomena proves the existence of a strong interaction between local and national varieties for the investigated areas. Thus, speakers can select the variety according to the situation, but they are also able to switch the language to realise peculiar functional values.

2.3 Prestige of Local and National Varieties

The last section of the questionnaire directly addressed the issue of the prestige recognised to the varieties spoken locally. Various aspects of the issue were included: intergenerational transmission (questions 3.1, 3.10-3.13), institutional presence and social sanction in education (3.2-3.3), assessments on quantitative and qualitative presence of local varieties in everyday situations (3.5, 3.8-3.9, 3.14, 3.17-3.20); concrete

18 On the relevance of homophones in triggering code-switching, cf. Grosjean 2018.

and desired institutional support (3.15-3.16); evaluation on the functional distribution and adequacy of local language use (3.4, 3.6-3.7). Questions referring to the same aspects were not grouped together in the same section, in order to avoid the influence of previous declarations, in the attempt to obtain more reliable and spontaneous data.

Concerning the first point, most participants (16 out of 23 for Campania; 43 out of 60 for Sicily) affirm to have acquired the local variety at home. Among those who have children, the majority (8 out of 12 for Campania; 25 out of 42 for Sicily) affirms to have spoken local varieties with them during childhood; however in question 3.12, related to current habits in daily interactions, the trend is reversed, since in both cases most speakers affirm to not use dialects with their children. A possible explanation for this may be the emergence of mixed couples.[19] In this context local varieties are not mutually understood and parents prefer using Italian language with their children, as testified by answers such as "I prefer to talk to him/her in Italian so that he/she knows that I consider standard Italian the one he/she must perceive as mother tongue".[20] Moreover, it is worth noticing the consideration of the minor 'utility' or 'functionality' of local varieties when compared to other languages and especially English, and the perception of a social stigma towards its use out of the Region, a tendency emerging especially in the Sicilian sample.

In education, as we can expect, the situation is unbalanced in favour of Italian: in the questions detecting the awareness about the presence/absence of local varieties and traditions among topics treated at school, most informants of both varieties gave negative answers, and almost the totality (18 out of 23) affirms that using dialect is not allowed at school. The Sicilian sample, again, is particularly interesting in this sense, since the regional law commented above specifically addresses education as the field in which the spreading of local culture is expected. Further studies on this point are thus desirable, in order to better evaluate the current effects of the measure and how school curricula actually integrated the contents of the mentioned laws.

The third subgroup of questions, concerning quantitative and qualitative presence of local varieties in daily life, is the most interesting for a consideration of their state of (perceived) vitality. Question 3.5 concerned the perception about the 'quantity' of dialectal/Italian uses in daily life, having as reference point the uses by previous generations, among which we hypothesise that dialect was the main language, due to the limited spread of the Italian language until recent decades. In both samples the majority affirms that, in their

19 Concerning local people and people coming from other Italian Regions or even from other countries.

20 Here and in following cases, Italian answers are cited with our translations.

perception, uses have decreased, and this negative assessment is confirmed in question 3.8 on the 'quality' of the variety spoken (Do you think that your dialect is the same as your grandparents?), where the answers clearly state that the variety spoken currently is not the same one used in the past, with differences detected especially in lexicon and pronunciation (question 3.9). However, when questioned about the personal perception about a possible 'disappearance' of dialect, speakers' opinions are conflicting. Two tendencies are detectable: on the one side – prevailing in Campania – speakers consider their variety still viable, but its use is decreased with respect to the past. On the other side, a strong perception of an ongoing 'transformation' exists – especially in lexicon, as already noted in question 3.9 – accompanied by the collateral disappearance of the ancient forms, generally attributed to the growing spread of standard Italian and the related disappearance of the culture to which those varieties referred to.

Despite self-declarations, however, spontaneous recordings show a more complicated situation, in which the definition of what speakers mean by 'local variety' is complicated by the fact that no conversation is entirely accomplished in Italian or in the local variety alone. These aspects have already been treated in the previous paragraphs. Here, their mention is necessary to highlight the inconsistencies detectable among what participants declare and what they actually do in current daily uses. As said before, even when people are convinced to use dialect, they concretely use a mix of both dialect and Italian. As a result, we might assume that the state of health and transmission of local varieties could be worse than it seems from self-declarations. In spontaneous conversations the occurrence of dialect as the only language of the utterances decreases also depending on the age, although young people in questionnaires declare to speak dialects, and this can be reasonably considered a sign of decline of local varieties. On the other side, however, speakers seem to have at least a clear perception of the formal/informal specialisation of each variety, also collocating this 'hybrid-form' in the low domain, showing a clear awareness in distinguishing respective functional domains.

This tendency is instead not observed when old people are interviewed, as shown in the next examples: in these cases, the local variety is used in the whole sentence and Italian is only limited to the first parts of the utterance and repeats those elements which have been previously introduced in Italian by the interlocutor:

(8) Interviewer: […] che lavoro facevate?
'What job did you do?'
Speaker 1, old: *cuntadini. Tutta robba re campagna. Appriess' a- appriess' a- a le pecore. A li ma- a ri porci* [ridono]. *Ammo lavorata a terra+*

'We were farmers. All duties related to the fields. Breeding ships, pigs (laughs) We worked the soil.'
Speaker 2, adult: sì però dìl- dì- da- la tua famiglia, dici che cosa faceva la tua famiglia, i- tuo papà+
'Yes, but tell her about your family, tell her what your family did, your father+'
Speaker 1, old: eh mio papà *ìa a spaccà e prete.*
'My father went breaking rocks.'

In the section referring to the institutional support, participants were asked if they thought that institutions should do more to encourage the preservation of dialects. Also here, answers from both samples follow two main lines. The majority believes that institutions should do more to enhance local varieties. However, the speakers' interest seems to be oriented towards a convinced consideration of languages as cultural goods to be preserved, and not as current instruments for communicating and expressing identity. Among the participants claiming for more institutional interventions, reference is especially made to "studies on dialect and on local traditions" (thus, a cultural, historical or scientific interest), to cultural associations and schools as promoters of languages (therefore, local institution at regional and supra-regional level are not considered at all as playing a role in this matters) and, more generally, to the fact that "dialects are a heritage". On the other hand, other answers explicitly opposed dialect to standard Italian, confirming the tendencies emerged in other sections. Local varieties are therefore considered as a cultural heritage, whose promotion is desirable as far as it does not contrast with the primacy of Italian. In this sense, the answer present in the Sicilian sample is emblematic, since it affirms the importance of cultural events to promote local varieties, but simultaneously judges negatively the case of Sardinian language, whose knowledge is required – in the knowledge of the participant – as a requisite in public competitions. This opinion shows that an expansion of the local variety's functional domains is not desirable, this kind of policies are not recognised as related to an enlargement of local languages uses.

3 Conclusions

Blommaert observes that the political process specifically develops through exchanges involving politics, policy-makers, academic and non-academic institutions, media, in the form of public debates (cf. Blommaert 1999, 10). When language issues are addressed, those debates also contribute to define the way language varieties are perceived in the 'social arena' regardless of their intrinsic value, constituting instead the basis on which "they can be motivated

and legitimated" and thus becoming the "locus of 'ideology (re)production'" (both in Blommaert 1999, 10), keeping the *status quo* (cf. Tamburelli 2014, 23). Data presented in our study confirm this vision: local varieties are still attested in informal domains, but they face attrition phenomena promoted by the presence of Italian and decrease of transmission. These dynamics are influenced by the perception of the local value of these varieties, an approach confirmed and perpetuated also in the regional measures that – although exploiting the only possible space for action resulting by the restrictive national policy toward local varieties – adopt the approach which considers languages as cultural heritage.

As far as the impact of policies on local language is concerned, this study confirms that local varieties, lacking official recognition, are still present in several communicative domains of the investigated areas. If sociolinguistic features of local languages herein investigated are compared with national historical minorities fostered by national laws, a similar scenario will emerge (cf. Dal Negro 2008). Thus, language policies can really promote local varieties transmission, when they overlap with prestige and values speakers recognise to their own languages. A last remark on the comparison between these two scenarios concerns problems of domain restriction of local languages. Without any official promotion, speakers are led to keep them confined to informal situations and to prevent their extension into domains fully dominated by Italian.

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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How is the Usage of the Swiss Variety of Italian Perceived in the Educational Context?
First Outcomes of the Project *Repertorio Lessicale dei Regionalismi d'Uso Scolastico della Svizzera Italiana*

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Abstract RepSi (acronym standing for *Repertorio lessicale dei regionalismi d'uso scolastico della Svizzera italiana*) is a project that aims at collecting and analysing up-to-date data about the perception and the usage of the Swiss variety of Italian (ISIt) in the educational context in the Italian-speaking Regions of Switzerland, namely Ticino and Graubünden. This contribution is divided in two main sections: the first one intends to explain how the project RepSi has been developed and which milestones have already been reached during the first year of work; the second one presents a selection of words (explained both in their meaning and in their use) and some further developments related to school teaching and perception of this regional variety of language.

Keywords Swiss variety of Italian. Italian language varieties. Educational context. Italian linguistics. Sociolinguistics.

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1 The 'Repertorio dei regionalismi d'uso scolastico della Svizzera italiana' Project

Covering a two-year period of research (September 2021-August 2023), the 'Repertorio dei regionalismi d'uso scolastico della Svizzera italiana' (RepSi) project aims at collecting and analysing up-to-date data about the perception and the usage of the Swiss variety of Italian (ISIt) in the educational context – mainly primary and secondary schools in the Italian-speaking Regions of Switzerland, namely Ticino and Graubünden. Given the geographical location of Southern Switzerland and its closeness to the Italian border (and therefore the influence both the Italian language and the Italian culture have on the Swiss territory), the study is most certainly relevant to the context it has been designed for.

Considering the multilingual dimension of Southern Switzerland and the absence of such studies in the educational context, it is interesting to see how the Italian language and culture influence the perception of the Swiss variety of Italian. In fact, the development of RepSi is based on an observable need for such studies involving language use and perception in the educational environment. Because of its multi-disciplinary application, two complementary institutions are involved in the project: the Osservatorio Linguistico della Svizzera Italiana (OLSI) and the Department of Education and Learning of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (DFA SUPSI). While the first focuses more on the description of the language variety on a sociolinguistic level, the latter reflects on the role of Swiss variety of Italian inside the classrooms and in general in the school environment.

To provide a reasoned description and a theoretical reflection on Helvetisms in the educational context, a glossary of lexical and syntactic items has been designed and is now being worked on. For each entry a certain number of features are described, such as the word's historical background and origin, its equivalent in 'Italiano d'Italia' ('Italian of Italy' according to the definition of Moretti 2011), its spread within the Italian-speaking Regions of Switzerland, its variants, some fun facts (if present) and a few examples of use taken either from the educational context or from other real-life situations such as newspapers or Swiss-Italian literature (no example of use has been made up by the researchers).[1]

Among the objectives of the project there is also the analysis of the perception and the usage of ISIt in the educational context. To

1 The examples of student writing are taken from the DFA-TIscrivo corpus, collected as part of Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) projects 'TiScrivo' and 'TiScrivo 2.0', which includes 1,735 texts (`https://dfa-blog.supsi.ch/tiscrivo/corpus/`).

do this it is important to collect and analyse up-to-date data and finally to create some non-prescriptive guidelines that can be used by schoolteachers for their in-class projects on the variety of Italian spoken in Switzerland or on language use in general.

2 Languages and Language Influence in Switzerland

Switzerland is divided into four language macro-areas: the largest is the German-speaking area, followed by the French-speaking area, the Italian-speaking area and the Romansh-speaking area. All four languages are recognised at a federal level as national languages, although only the first three are official languages in all domains. At a cantonal level, each of the 26 cantons establishes its own official language(s). Most cantons are monolingual: the official language of Ticino is Italian, the language of Geneva, Vaud, Neuchâtel and Jura is French, while all the other monolingual cantons have German as their official language. Three cantons are bilingual (German and French), namely Berne, Fribourg and Valais, while only one is trilingual (German, Italian and Romansh): Graubünden.

According to statistical surveys, about 8.5% of the Swiss population declare Italian as their main language (more than one answer is possible). This percentage roughly corresponds to 590,000 speakers, who are, surprisingly, spread over the whole of Switzerland, with more than half of them residing outside the so-called 'Italian-speaking Switzerland' (Janner, Casoni, Bruno 2019).

The territory referred to as 'Italian-speaking Switzerland' does not coincide with a political-administrative area: it includes the whole of Canton Ticino and four valleys in Canton Graubünden. The physical peculiarity of this 'Italian-speaking territory' also lies in its fragmentation: while two of the Italian-speaking valleys of Graubünden are contiguous to the territory of Ticino (Mesolcina and Calanca), the other two (Valposchiavo and Bregaglia) are geographically separated from the other Italian-speaking area as well as from each other **[fig. 1]**. This results in three non-adjacent zones of Italophony in Switzerland.

This traditionally Italian-speaking territory has belonged to Switzerland, with different statuses, for about 500 years as far as Ticino is concerned and for about 200 years as far as Graubünden is concerned; from the beginning of the nineteenth century, both Ticino and Graubünden became cantons of the Swiss Confederation. In those areas, a Lombard variety of Italian is spoken, presenting regional linguistic, similarly to the many other regional varieties found throughout Italy, which derive from the meeting of the standard language with the dialect substratum that characterised and linguistically dominated the whole Italian area until the beginning of the twentieth century.

Figure 1 - Geographical distribution of the languages of Switzerland (2000); Swiss Federal Statistical Office, www. bfs.admin.ch

In addition to these features, which typify this variety as one of the regional varieties of Italian in use, there are, however, several characteristics that distinguish Italian of Italian-speaking Switzerland ('italiano della Svizzera italiana', henceforth ISIt) from other diatopic varieties of Italian. These are, especially, the consequences of the constant contact with the other two predominant national languages, German and French, as well as of the need to designate different political, social and administrative realities which do not always overlap with those of Italy. Alongside these factors of variation, one can also mention the tendency of Italian-speaking Switzerland, as a peripheral and politically detached Italian-speaking region, to retain archaic linguistic traits for a longer time.

Due to the heterogeneity of their origins, the various characteristic features are not uniformly perceived by the speech community. When the variation is due to the contact between Italian and the pre-existing dialectal substratum, for example, the differences are to be considered not only as geographically, but also, for the most part, diaphasically marked. This entails the tendency of these features to disappear in more controlled and formal discourse, similarly to the more markedly regional features of all varieties of Italian.

2.1 The Regional Variety of Italian Spoken in Switzerland

Alongside these diaphasically marked traits of ISIt, we can also observe, however, an important band of variation which, although diatopically marked, presents no diaphasic connotation. This second type of linguistic features appears in all kinds of production, in speech and writing, in formal as well as in informal texts, in the media, in political discourse and in administrative texts. This set of geographic variants is not always perceived as such by speakers, precisely because of their widespread presence in contexts that indirectly endorse their belonging to the linguistic norm. As opposed to the variants based on the dialectal substratum, the variants of this second type are often borrowings or calques from other national languages or terms and expressions linked to legal, regulatory, administrative or commercial language and archaisms. The link between the nature of their origin and their being less marked than terms of dialectal origin, is thus easily understandable.

In particular, as far as phonological features are concerned, generally Northern features (Baranzini, Casoni 2020) are the alternation between [s] and [z], which systematically includes the voiced variant in all intervocalic contexts, the affricate realisation ([ts]) of the voiceless [s] in some words or, on the contrary, the voiced realisation of the voiceless affricate (cf. Moretti 2011), the tendency to consonant degemination, the degree of openness of the vowels *e* and *o*, and the important presence of free allophones of /r/ other than the standard realisation.

More characteristic of ISIt are the unvoicing of some final consonants, the greater phonetic adherence to the original form of foreign words, the palatal pronunciation of [n]+[j] and [l]+[j], the reduction of intervocalic [v] and the tendency to spell an acronym according to the German alphabet (Baranzini, Casoni 2020).

Morphosyntactic peculiarities mostly concern differences in government, a few cases of different word order, particularly with regard to the position of some adverbs, the systematic presence of the article with personal proper nouns and kinship terms, some alternations in the grammatical gender of nouns and the tendency to form nouns through abbreviations and generalisations of brand names.

Socio-pragmatic features are also limited, mainly involving the T-V distinction in public communication and the prevalence in ISIt of feminine forms of function and profession terms.

On the lexical level, as mentioned, the differences are particularly numerous. There are variants due to the different factors of influence mentioned above, i.e. the contact with the local dialects, the contact with French and German, the development of a specific lexicon for the Swiss social and administrative reality and the maintenance of some archaisms. These variants can be categorised

as follows (Petralli 1990): 'absolute ISItisms' are those expressions that do not find a correspondence in 'Italiano d'Italia' either at the level of signifier or signified (e.g. *modina*, *stake*, Pandolfi 2010); 'Semantic ISItisms' are terms used in Switzerland with an additional meaning or used in Switzerland while in Italy they are replaced by another term to express the same meaning (*azione*, *special offer* – in Italian of Italy *offerta speciale*); The third category is that of 'lexical ISItisms', namely expressions that differ in signifier but are associated with the same meaning (*zwieback* or *zibac*, *rusk* – in Italian of Italy *fetta biscottata*).

The differences at lexical level affect, predictably, mainly lexical words. There are, however, also some cases of variation of functional words, such as the prepositional phrase *a dipendenza di* ('depending on' – in Italian of Italy *a seconda di*), which is particularly widespread.

2.2 Italian as a Pluricentric Language

The idea that the Italian of Italian-speaking Switzerland should be considered as a separate standard variety of Italian was first introduced in Pandolfi (2010) and was later addressed in Berruto (2011), Hajek (2012), Pandolfi (2017), Moretti, Pandolfi (2019) and Baranzini, Janner (2020). Nowadays, the scientific literature fully considers Italian as a pluricentric language. Michael Clyne's criteria for defining a pluricentric language (Clyne 1992) are indeed applicable to the case of Italian-speaking Switzerland: a national border separates the two Italian-speaking areas in Europe, i.e. Italy and neighbouring Switzerland, and Italian is an official language in Switzerland. Moreover, the Swiss variety can be associated with the identity of the language community concerned (see among others Bianconi 2016). These observations obviously presuppose a significant (internal) difference between the two varieties, which we tried to briefly illustrate above, on which the very recognition of the Swiss variety as such depends.

Clyne (1992) already observed how the relationship between the different national varieties is often asymmetrical, resulting in the dominance of one or the other variety. Based on his criteria and on Muhr (2012)'s later discussion, the descriptions by authors like Berruto (2011), Hajek (2012) and Pandolfi (2017) characterise the Italian of the Italian part of Switzerland (ISIt) as a clearly non-dominant variety. First of all, the asymmetry between the number of speakers and the territory of diffusion of the two varieties is particularly noticeable (a brief comparison between the population living in Italian-speaking Switzerland and that living in Italy shows a ratio of 1:164, cf. Baranzini, Ricci 2023), and the political power linked to the language community is also limited. The Italian-speaking part of Switzerland

is thus, in Ammon (1989)'s terms, a 'semi-centre' – or even a 'rudimentary centre', cf. Pandolfi (2016) – having no influence on the Italian norm, and often identifying its own linguistic traits as 'deviant' or 'dialectal'. Furthermore, we can observe an almost total absence of linguistic institutions, academies, and reference works – such as dictionaries or manuals – explicitly codifying the norm.

Nonetheless, the widespread presence of the variety features in all contexts of even controlled language production, by speakers of all diastratic provenances, unequivocally demonstrates an indirect standard-setting power.

3 ISIt-isms in the Educational Context: A Selection of Headwords

In the next sections of the paper, we present a representative selection of ISIt-isms regarding school terminology collected during the project, each item being accompanied of actual uses attested in the Swiss-Italian context. With reference to the studies on and repertoires of the variety of Italian in Italian Switzerland (Bianconi 1980, Pandolfi 2016, Petralli 1990, Savoia, Vitale 2008), all the data was collected considering the following criteria: the semantic areas of the entries, the uses attested in the largest corpus of school Italian in Italian Switzerland (DFA-TIscrivo corpus) and the opinions of a selected group of teachers interviewed during the project. Each word is analysed according to the following criteria: its meaning – mainly regarding the differences between ISIt and 'Italiano d'Italia' –; its spread and usage in the Italian-speaking Region of Switzerland; its origins and the possible influence of the other national languages.

3.1 *Mappetta*

The ISIt-ism *mappetta*, 'plastic folder', can be translated as *cartellina trasparente*, 'transparent folder' (usually made of plastic), or just *cartellina*, 'folder' (usually indicating folders made of cardboard with two elastic bands around the corners), in 'Italiano d'Italia'. The word is very common in the Swiss-Italian educational context as it designates an object that pupils use almost every day at school. In 'Italiano d'Italia', however, 'mappetta' does not constitute an independent lexical entry – it only corresponds to the diminutive of *mappa*, 'map'.[2]

2 Even though in some Italian regions the diminutives of 'mappa' are very well known and used (cf. Civitillo 2019), none of these meanings come close to those of 'mappetta'

Most likely the Swiss Italian word *mappetta* originates from the German entry *die Mappe*, 'folder' or 'binder', or from its diminutive form *das Mäppchen*, 'little folder' or 'case'. According to the classification of Moretti (2011), *mappetta* must be considered a lexical ISIt-ism, a lexeme for which in 'Italiano d'Italia' it is possible to find a signified but not the same signifier as in ISIt – other examples of lexical ISIt-isms include *trattanda*, 'bullet point to be talked about during a meeting', and *ramina*, 'iron fence used to separate borders', specifically used to define the border between Switzerland and Italy:

(1) Un giorno quando mi sono svegliata, sono andata a fare la colazione. Dopo aver preparato la mappetta con i compiti sono partita da casa per andare a scuola (3rd grade).[3]
One day I woke up and had breakfast. After preparing my homework folder, I left home to go to school.

(2) L'ufficio di Zali è un semplice tavolo, una comune sedia, il computer e qualche mappetta di fogli essenziali per l'attività di quel giorno (*Corriere del Ticino*, 25 giugno 2018).
Zali's office is a simple table, a common chair, a computer and a few folders which are essential for that day's activity.

Both examples are original written occurrences of the word *mappetta*: (1) is extracted from a corpus of texts collected in the educational environment (cf. Cignetti, Demartini, Fornara 2016), while (2) is taken from a local newspaper (*Corriere del Ticino*).

3.2 *Bocciare*

The ISIt-ism *bocciare*, 'to fail' ('to reject' or 'to be rejected'), can be considered among one of the most interesting examples on the morphosyntactic level. In 'Italiano d'Italia' the term can be used in the transitive form, such as in (3), or in the passive form, such as in (4):

(3) La maestra ha bocciato Mario.
The teacher failed Mario (in his exam).

(4) Mario è stato bocciato dalla maestra.
Lit. *Mario was failed by the teacher.

attested in ISIt.

3 https://dfa-blog.supsi.ch/tiscrivo/corpus/.

However, in ISIt *bocciare* can also mean 'to fail' in a construction where the referent of the subject is rejected and not the referent of the object. The term can be used both transitively, as shown in (6) (but with a different argument structure from 'Italiano d'Italia'), and intransitively, as shown in (5):

(5) "Perché ha bocciato l'esame?"
"Perché non ha studiato abbastanza." (www.cptbellinzona.ti.ch).
"Why did he fail his exam?"
"Because he did not study enough."

(6) Lo sport che pratico è ginnastica ritmica: consiste nell'imparare dei test e poi esibirsi davanti alle giurate, le quali, alla fine della giornata, ti dicono se lo si ha superato oppure bocciato (4th grade).[4]
My sport is rhythmic gymnastics: we must learn some exercises for each test and then perform them in front of a panel of judges who, at the end of the day, tell us if we have passed or failed.

(7) Esami di guida: uno su due boccia. Dai dati 2015 della Sezione della circolazione emerge che quasi un allievo su due ha bocciato gli esami di guida pratici (www.ticinonews.ch).

Driving tests: one out of two fails. From the data of the Traffic Section from 2015 it emerges that almost one in two students failed the practical driving exam.

This morphosyntactic feature of ISIt is very common both in the spoken and in the written variety and the awareness of its usage seems to be very low; this is demonstrated by the occurrence of both forms in (7), where the first one is in the intransitive form (ISIt), whereas the second one shows the same structure of (6), which is not acceptable in 'Italiano d'Italia'.

3.3 *Foglio a brutta*

Foglio a brutta, 'first draft paper', is a typical example of a polyrhematic construction (idiom) that can be found in ISIt. The idiom is used in ISIt both in the spoken and in the written variety to indicate the first draft of a school text – used mainly in a test or in an exam. On the opposite, *foglio a bella* means the final draft. The corresponding expressions in 'Italiano d'Italia' are *foglio di brutta* and *foglio di bella*.

4 https://dfa-blog.supsi.ch/tiscrivo/corpus/; https://dfa-blog.supsi.ch/tiscrivo/corpus/.

(8) A gruppi leggete attentamente il Patto federale. Create una mappa mentale con le informazioni più importanti. Scrivete su un foglio a brutta un riassunto del patto (materiale didattico).
In groups read the Federal Charter carefully. Create a mind map with the most important information. Write a first draft of a summary of the Charter.

(9) Riportate dalla carta velina sul foglio a bella copia la forma dell'insetto (materiale didattico).
Copy the shape of the insect from the tissue paper onto the fair copy.

This construction is more likely a case of 'prepositional exchange', which is a well-known phenomenon in ISIt.[5] As documented by Moretti (2011), cases of prepositional exchange between di and a ('of' and 'at') are already found in a certain number of idiomatic expressions in ISIt; examples of these idioms include: *obbligato di mantenere*, 'forced to keep' (which in 'Italiano d'Italia' is *obbligato a mantenere*); *preoccupato a fare*, 'worried to do' (*preoccupato di fare* in 'Italiano d'Italia'); *capace a fare*, 'able to do' (*capace di fare* in 'Italiano d'Italia'). Further examples, also mentioned in Bianconi (1980) and Berruto (1980) include the prepositional exchange between *in* and *su* ('in' and 'on') – which produces idioms such as *confidare sulla premura*, 'rely on' (*confidare nella premura* in 'Italiano d'Italia') –, the exchange of *in* and *sotto* ('in' and 'under') – *mettere sotto discussione*, 'to question' (*mettere in discussione* in 'Italiano d'Italia') –, and the exchange of *di* and *da* ('of' and 'from') – *pause da dieci minuti*, 'ten-minute breaks' (*pause di dieci minuti* in 'Italiano d'Italia').

3.4 Some Other Examples of ISIt-isms

As a brief illustration of the variety of uses of ISIt-isms, a list of entries belonging to broader contexts of everyday use is proposed below, accompanied by their translation into 'Italiano d'Italia'. Please note that not all these entries belong to the semantic area of school, but their presence in a glossary with didactical and educational purposes is relevant precisely because of their high use frequency. Being frequently used in many contexts and well known by both adults and young people, these words are consequently also present in the language spoken or written at school.

- *autocollante* (*adesivo* in 'It. d'It.') = sticker;
- *azione* (*offerta speciale* in 'It. d'It.') = special offer;

5 This prepositional exchange is not due to a calquing or a literal translation from any of the other Swiss national languages – the corresponding expressions are the German 'der Entwurf' and the French 'le brouillon' or 'l'ébauche'.

- *bilux* (*lampeggiante* in 'It. d'It.') = flashing light;
- *blitz* (*verifica a sorpresa* in 'It. d'It.') = pop quiz;
- *bucalettere* (*cassetta per la posta* in 'It. d'It.') = mailbox;
- *capanna* (*rifugio alpino* in 'It. d'It.') = mountain hut;
- *carta grigia* (*licenza di circolazione* in 'It. d'It.') = vehicle ID card;
- *classatore* / *classeur* (*raccoglitore*/*faldone* in 'It. d'It.') = binder / file;
- *cornetto* (*fagiolino* in 'It. d'It.') = green bean;
- *garage* (*concessionario* in 'It. d'It.') = car dealer;
- *gipfel* (*cornetto* in 'It. d'It.') = croissant;
- *licenza di condurre* (*patente di guida* in 'It. d'It.') = driver's license;
- *monitore* (*istruttore* in 'It. d'It.') = instructor;
- *natel* (*cellulare*' in 'It. d'It.') = cell phone;
- *nota* (*voto* (*scolastico*) in 'It. d'It.') = grade';
- *plenum* (*assemblea dei docenti*' in 'It. d'It.') = plenary session;
- *radar* (*autovelox* in 'It. d'It.') = speed camera;
- r*olladen* (*tapparelle* in 'It. d'It.') = roller shutters;
- *'sore* / *'soressa* (*professore* / *professoressa* in 'It. d'It.') = school-teacher (male and female);
- *stabilo* (*evidenziatore* in 'It. d'It.') = highlighter;
- *tipp-ex* (*bianchetto* in 'It. d'It.') = white out;
- *trottinette* (*monopattino* in 'It. d'It.') = scooter;
- *vignetta* (*bollino autostradale* in 'It. d'It.') = highway sticker.

4 Conclusions

Based on the collection of items such as those exemplified in this paper, the following phases of the project will be oriented towards developing a theoretical reflection on the use of regionalisms in the classroom and towards suggesting teaching activities involving meta-reflection. In a first step, guidelines will be developed for teachers in Italian-speaking Switzerland for a more targeted and conscious treatment of the regionalisms in use in the school context. This will later enable the development of teaching materials supporting metalinguistic reflection on the regional variety. A further aim is to construct language maps which are not restricted only to Italian language areas, but also extended to other Swiss national languages as well as other European languages, thus involving students of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in reflections on language variation.

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Multilingual Literacy and Metalinguistic Reflection in Primary School

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Abstract This paper addresses the issue of multilingual classrooms in a context such as South Tyrol (Italy), characterised by both endogenous and exogenous multilingualism, the latter stemming from pupils with international backgrounds. The paper discusses the results of a research study conducted in highly multilingual primary school classrooms, inspired by the concept of 'Éveil aux langues', with the goal of fostering metalinguistic awareness.

Keywords Primary school. Multilingualism. Éveil aux langues. Metalinguistic awareness. Morphological manipulation.

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1 Introduction

This contribution[1] addresses the issue of plurilingual repertoires and multilingual classrooms by gathering data from two intertwined projects: VALI and IKSU.[2] Both projects draw inspiration from the 'Éveil aux langues' approach of FREPA/CARAP (Candelier et al. 2012) and the 'Noi e le nostre lingue' project (Andorno, Sordella 2018; 2020; Andorno 2020).

The paper outlines pedagogical activities in three primary school classes in the Province of Bolzano, Italy, and discusses how the use of all languages in the classroom, from school to home language(s), encourages learners to reflect on similarities and differences between languages at various linguistic levels, specifically at the lexical and morphological ones.

We begin by describing the research context, analysing the features of the school systems in South Tyrol. Subsequently, we provide an overview of the project along with the theoretical framework that guided the data collection. Finally, we analyse the metalinguistic reflections of pupils, presented both orally and in written form. We focus in detail on the results of the final task, examining both the lexical recognition exercise and the activities related to morphological reflection.

2 The Context

The context of the research is the multilingual classrooms in a region like South Tyrol, Italy, historically characterised by endogenous multilingualism (De Mauro 1980; Vedovelli 2014). The languages – Italian, German, (Ladin), as well as both Italian and South Tyrolean dialects – are present with varying percentages in different districts of the Province of Bolzano (ASTAT 2012) [fig. 1]. Furthermore, the school structure is divided into three departments (German, Italian, and Ladin) **[fig. 1]**.

In two of them, either German or Italian serves as the primary school language, with the other taught as a second language. In the third department, the Ladin one, German and Italian are taught for an equal number of hours, while Ladin is present for two hours per week.

1 The research presented here was collaboratively conducted between the two authors. As for the drafting of this paper, Cecilia Varcasia is responsible for sections 4 and 5, and Emanuela Atz for sections 1, 2 and 3. The introduction and conclusions were collaboratively written.

2 VALI: Valuing the competencies in the linguistic repertoire of the child for language learning. A learning path for primary school in South Tyrol. IKSU: Ein inklusives Konzept für Sprache(n)förderung im Unterland (An inclusive outline for language(s) promotion and support in Bassa Atesina/Unterland).

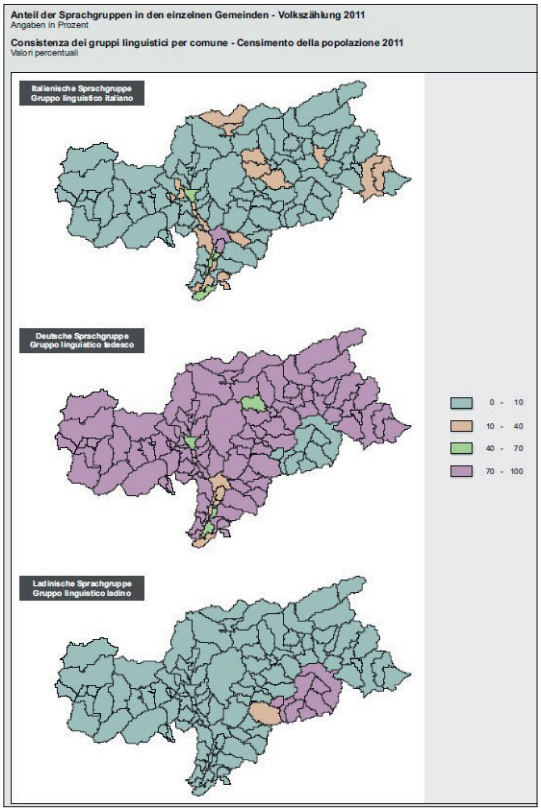


Figure 1
Percentage of the different language groups (German, Italian and Ladin) in the individual municipalities.
© ASTAT 2012

As a whole, the system currently accommodates pupils from international backgrounds with their own complex linguistic repertoires (Varcasia 2022; Ciccolone, Dal Negro 2021). However, the percentages of pupils with international family histories (ASTAT 2023) vary from town to town. The German and Italian school departments in South Tyrol are characterised in certain areas, such as the urban districts of Bolzano and Merano or the border districts of Alta Val d'Isarco and Bassa Atesina, by highly multilingual groups and classrooms, mainly in kindergarden and primary school (ASTAT 2022 **[figs 2-3]**).

The challenges faced by an educational system divided into separate departments are simultaneously common in the three sectors, yet they differ in their combination and complexity. In school, pupils are part of an educational structure that introduces specific patterns of linguistic interaction, which may or may not align with the communicative experiences and practices of the society in which they are integrated (Hélot 2014). To promote interactive practices observed outside the educational context, the pedagogical approach should

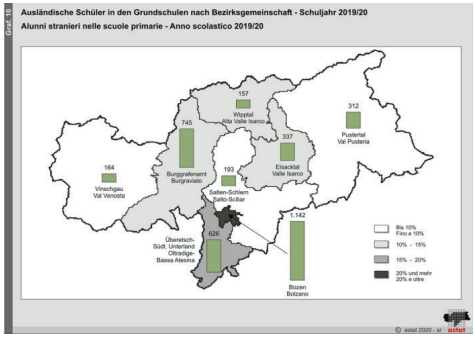


Figure 2
The numbers and percentage of migrant children in kindergarden in school year 2019/2020.
© ASTAT 2020

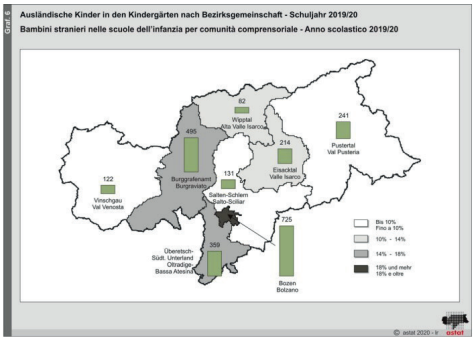


Figure 3
The numbers and percentage of migrant children in primary school in school year 2019/2020.
© ASTAT 202

strive to move away from the lingering monolingual principle (Howatt 1984, 289) or habitus (Gogolin 1997) still present in the school system in South Tyrol.

The initial step should involve challenging the "two solitudes assumptions in bilingual education", as suggested by Cummins (2008). This can be achieved by enhancing linguistic competences in the first language (L1) as a prerequisite for improving competencies in other languages. The promotion of plurilingualism and the first languages involves the use of both school languages (German and Italian), local dialects, and other languages – the learners' L1s – in the class, irrespective of the type of school (Italian/German). This approach creates communicative situations for emergent plurilinguals. To foster language learning in diverse and rich learning contexts, semiotics should be at the centre of all subject areas (Dendrinos 2018, 26). Semiotics should serve as a fundamental and central component across various disciplines to underscore its significance in understanding communication, meaning-making, and the ways in which signs and symbols operate in different languages. The semiotic lens focuses on the underlying structures and processes that facilitate the construction and interpretation of meaning.

Figure 4 The multilingual linguistic repertoires (in the German school) © VALI project 2022

3 The Project

The project started in the school year 2021-22 and was carried out in two primary schools in Bassa Atesina, the district south of Bolzano: an Italian-speaking school and a German-speaking school. Two classes in the second year of the Italian-speaking school were involved (31 pupils), while in the German-speaking school, a third-year class (15 pupils) participated in the project. The pupils were between 7 and 9 years old. The research included such young learners, as supported by Lo Duca (2004), who posits that they already possess implicit knowledge of the languages they speak. Lo Duca draws on previous studies in cognition, such as that by Bialystok, who assumes that "we know more than we can tell" (1988, 33), referring to the implicit knowledge in the first language (L1) of children. We also believe that, given the plurilingual repertoires of the observed pupils, they could have implicit knowledge of all the languages in their repertoires. Additionally, these pupils attending school have already been exposed, to some extent, to explicit grammatical reflection in the school languages they are learning, namely Italian and German. The activities took place in spring 2022 and were conducted over several sessions. The research began with a sociolinguistic questionnaire and linguistic silhouettes (Busch 2015, Gogolin and Neumann 1991) to highlight the diverse linguistic repertoires present in the classroom **[fig. 4]**.

Based on the gathered data about the languages of the groups,[3] activities were designed as follows: one session (two hours) introduced the topic with the storytelling of a book in an invented language (Ellis 2016), and six additional sessions (two hours each) were conducted with plurilingual storytelling. For the latter, the book *La Geometria del Faraone* by Anna Cerasoli (2019) was divided into six sequences and narrated in six different languages. The story was told using the school languages in both systems, such as Italian and German, as well as some of the pupils' home languages, namely Arabic and Punjabi/Hindi. Additionally, other languages that nobody knew, such as Romanian and Albanian, were also included in the storytelling. The choice of the latter played a role of decentralisation (Candelier et al. 2012) from the beginning, starting with Romanian as the first sequence, and concluding with Albanian as the final segment. This approach ensured that all pupils were exposed to 'new' languages throughout the sessions. By incorporating both school and home languages in the classroom, the students were encouraged to reflect on the similarities and differences between the languages at various linguistic levels, particularly at the lexical and morphological levels.

The aim of the project was to foster learners' metalinguistic awareness,[4] recognising that "the interaction between teachers, pupils and the community is never neutral" (Cummins 2021, 72). In this regard, the activities prepared in the classes aimed to stimulate cross-linguistic reflection (Torregrossa, Eisenbeiß, Bongartz 2023, 3). The collaborative reflection contributed to the development of a process that engaged pupils in "learning about language rather than changing their language" (Hudson 2007, 228).

In particular, the paper focuses on the results of the final task conducted in the three different primary school classes. Two weeks after the storytelling sessions, a task was administered by presenting two short stories in two new languages for children: a rhyme in Ladin accompanied by a picture, and a cartoon in Dutch displayed along with Dutch subtitles.

3 Italian, German, Italo-romance dialect, South-Tyrolean dialect (Ger), English, Arabic, Bengalese, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Turkish and Portuguese.

4 Metalinguistic awareness encompasses knowledge about the way languages work, including their similarities and differences (metalinguistic analysis). It also involves the skills to manipulate or rearrange elements of language and play with them (metalinguistic control) (Svalberg 2007). Researchers commonly conceptualise metalinguistic awareness as explicit knowledge about language (Roehr-Brackin 2018, 2). Furthermore, metalinguistic awareness has been defined in terms of attentional focus, as the term implies an active concentration on the domain of knowledge that describes the explicit properties of language (Bialystok 2001, 127).

Figure 5. The lexical recognition task in Ladin © VALI project 2022

4 The Final Task

The final task comprised two parts. The first part featured a brief text in Ladin titled *L'orchestra di tiers*, narrated by a native speaker, our colleague Ruth Videsott, and complemented by a picture depicting the characters from the story.[5] Following the text reading, students were asked to match some lexical items representing key elements in the story with their respective pictures. Additionally, they were required to complete a multiple-choice exercise where they had to identify the correct determiner for the provided lexical items. Figure 5 illustrates the lexical-matching task **[fig. 5]**.

The second part of the final task involved a short cartoon in Dutch titled *De grootste schat*, which was presented along with Dutch subtitles. Following the cartoon viewing, students were required to undertake another matching exercise involving lexical items. Additionally, they participated in a second activity where they had to transform plural words from a provided list into their singular forms. Figure 6 illustrates the task related to the manipulation of morphology **[fig. 6]**.

5 The text of the rhyme and the supporting picture are provided in the Appendix.

3. Come si dirà se è UNO di questi animali?
Osserva gli esempi e prova a scrivere il singolare di questi nomi di animali.

	UNO	TANTI
	schaap	schapen
	adelaar	adelaars
		paarden
		varkens
		hanen
		konijnen
		ezels
		honden

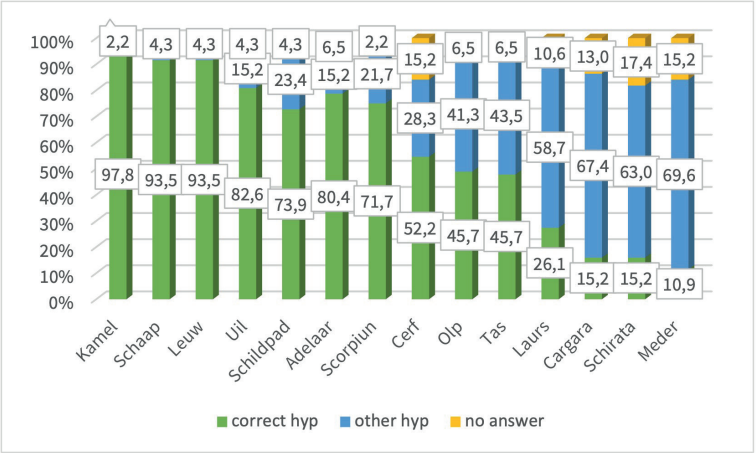
4. Cosa ho osservato?

Figure 6
Manipulation of morphology in Dutch: from plural to singular of nouns.
© VALI project 2022

The entire activity was video-recorded, and after each task, pupils were individually interviewed to gather their metalinguistic reflections. The languages selected for the final task continued the project's theme, involving two languages unfamiliar to all pupils in the three observed classrooms. The choice of these languages aimed to maintain equal typological distance from at least the two languages of instruction, namely German and Italian. Consequently, Ladin, being a Romance language spoken in the region, could benefit pupils more proficient in Italian, while Dutch could offer a similar advantage for those more skilled in German. Both texts featured animals as the main characters, aligning with the theme of animals encountered in the story of *La Geometria del Faraone* narrated in previous sessions.

5 Results

Firstly, we analyse what pupils did in terms of lexical recognition, i.e., their comprehension of individual lexical items through the provided picture/name matching exercise and in the activities involving the manipulation of noun morphology. This includes a focus on the use of articles in Ladin and singular/plural forms in Dutch. Furthermore, we examine the metalinguistic reflections of pupils, both oral and written, aiming to highlight the level of metalinguistic awareness that pupils at this age (7-9) can demonstrate and the potential implications this may have for learning.



Graph 1 Lexical recognition in Dutch and Ladin

5.1 Lexical Matching

Graph 1 offers a comprehensive overview of the outcomes from the lexical matching exercise in the final task. It illustrates the diverse responses given in the two languages presented. The names of animals are arranged from left to right based on the accurate responses provided by pupils. The graph depicts the proportion of correct hypotheses, instances where pupils proposed an alternative hypothesis, and occasions where they left an empty space. The responses in the graph are also organised (from left to right) beginning with the names in Dutch and progressing to those in Ladin **[graph 1]**.

The graph illustrates that, regardless of the type of school attended and, consequently, regardless of linguistic background, pupils found it easier to comprehend the lexical items in Dutch compared to identifying the meaning of the Ladin names for animals. Specifically, for Dutch, pupils matched all items correctly, ranging from 98% to 78%. In contrast, for Ladin, the proportion of correct matches decreased significantly, ranging between 75% and 11%. In this case, pupils faced greater difficulty in determining the possible meanings of different words, indicating challenges in finding similarities with words from the Italian dialect spoken by some pupils (*schirata*/*sghiràt*, 'squirrel'; *laurs*/*ors*, 'bear'), from Italian (*scorpiun*/*scorpione*, 'scorpion'; *tas*/*tasso*, 'badger'; *cerf*/*cervo*, 'deer'; *olp*/*volpe*, 'fox'; *laurs*/*orso*, 'bear') and from German (*meder*/*Marder*, 'marten'). Despite the challenging task, pupils generally preferred attempting to provide an answer rather than leaving an empty space.

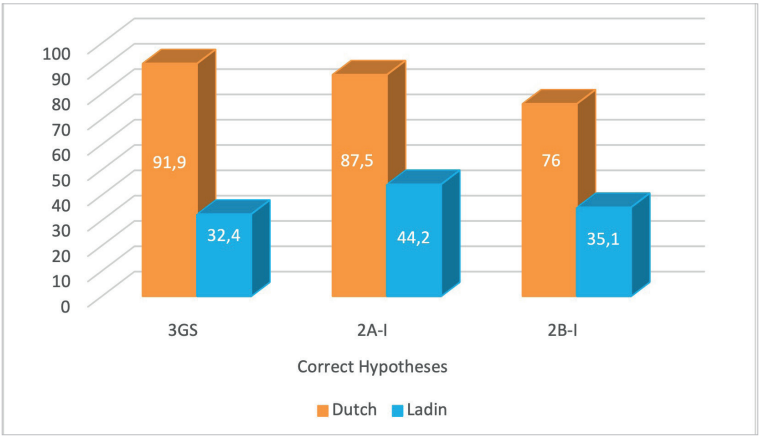
If we focus on the three classes observed, we can notice that these results are consistently shared among the three classes **[graph 2]** which illustrates the proportion of correct hypotheses in both Dutch and Ladin for each class. All three groups exhibit high lexical matching with the Dutch names, ranging between 92% in the German school and 87.5% and 76% in the two classes of the Italian school department. This outcome suggests that Dutch played a facilitating role for all students, partly due to the delivery method – i.e., the cartoon – and partly because all pupils appear to share a common linguistic repertoire, wherein their knowledge of German aids them in identifying Dutch words. If we consider the results of the Ladin task we can observe that, in this case, the picture used to support the text in the unknown language did not have the same highly supportive effect. This is attributed to the non-correspondence of the picture to the text, and the way it was presented to pupils, with less reference to the picture.

Observing the metalinguistic reflections provided by the pupils, we can discern that they employed two types of strategies in approaching the text in Dutch. The first strategy, as shown in example 1, involved finding similarities with German. Knowing German enabled them to make accurate hypotheses about the similarities between this language and Dutch. The second strategy, explicitly mentioned in the pupils' reflections, is a learning strategy. They were able to select the correct matches by watching the video and noting the repetition of different lexical items, as illustrated by the pupil in example 2.

Example 1
P41: il tedesco è simile a questa lingua e tutte queste parole sono simili al tedesco.
'German is similar to this language and all these words are similar to German.'

Example 2
P22: ho visto il video, quindi, sono riuscito a mettere i nomi al posto giusto.
'I watched the video, and I was able to put the words at the right place.'

On the other hand, Ladin consistently posed a challenge for all pupils, regardless of the school system attended. They achieved only 32.4% correct hypotheses in the German class, and respectively 44.2% and 35.1% in the two Italian classes. This indicates that, despite the selected words being theoretically recognizable by children as similar to words in Italian, the Italian dialect, and German, they were unable to make these connections. This difficulty significantly impacted their comprehension of the text. This is reinforced by the range of alternative hypotheses made by the children when encountering Ladin words, especially the more challenging ones such as *meder*, the word for 'marten', and *cargara*, the word



Graph 2 Lexical recognition in Dutch and Ladin: groups

for 'ant', both of which had 75% of alternative hypotheses from the pupils. In both cases, it is apparent that pupils were confused about the two nouns.

meder, 'marten': bear (9), squirrel (8), badger (5), fox (3), deer (3)
cargara, 'ant': marten (6), deer (6), squirrel (5), scorpion (4), fox (3), bear (3), badger (3)

This confusion is further evident in the diverse choices they made, indicating that they could not identify any common clues leading them closer to the meaning of the words with limited options. The various hypotheses (5 for *meder*/ 'marten'; 7 for *cargara*/ 'ant' out of a total of 8 possibilities) also highlight the presence of multiple linguistic backgrounds in these classes, as illustrated in example 3 below:

Example 3
P7: in punjabi klingt *olp* wie einchorchen. *Cargara* klingt wie fuchs.
'In Punjabi olp sounds like squirrel. Cargara sounds like fox.'

This pupil provides the reasons why she chose different matches, revealing that, unable to identify similarities with other known languages, she turned to her heritage language, Punjabi, where the words *olp* and *cargara* sound respectively like 'fox', ਲੂੰਬੜੀ *Lūbaṛī* and 'squirrel', ਗਿਲਹਰੀ *Gilaharī*. These choices, and more importantly, the metalinguistic comments provided by the pupil, represent valuable data for teachers in school, offering evidence of potential false friends for the pupil. Alongside divergent strategies, successful similarities outlined by pupils can also be identified, confirming our initial

hypotheses that this unknown language is similar to both Italian and the Trentino dialect, as illustrated in examples 4 and 5.

Example 4
P37: L'italiano è simile a questa lingua, il ladino quindi c'erano delle parole simili e io ho collegato le parole che erano simili all'italiano.
'Italian is similar to this language, Ladin, so there were such words and I connected the words that were similar to Italian.'

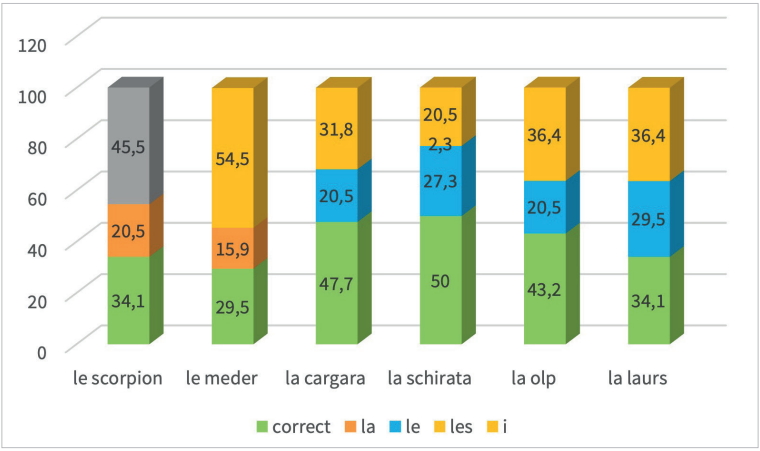
Example 5
P21: *Tas* è simile alla lingua del dialetto trentino tipo *tas*, *olp*, *scorpiun*.
'Tas is similar to the language of the Trentino dialect like tas, olp, scorpiun.'

These metalinguistic comments bring some evidence of how faced with an unknown language pupils enact positive strategies that helped them successfully fulfill the task.

5.2 Morphological Choices: Deciding which Article in Ladin

The task of choosing which definite article should accompany six of the animal names mentioned in the story was generally challenging for the pupils. Graph 3 illustrates the proportion of correct answers in relation to the other options available in the multiple-choice item. The purpose of examining what pupils did and their correct hypotheses is solely to identify the difficulty of the task itself. In the context of the present study, the focus is on understanding the reasoning behind the answers provided, which can reveal and enhance metalinguistic competence in the school languages (Italian and German) **[graph 3]**.

The graph indicates that even when confronted with the system of definite articles in Ladin, which is very similar to the Italian system, pupils still grappled with the underlying meaning of some words. The graph underscores the general difficulty children faced in identifying the correct definite article, ranging between 50% and 29.5%. If we focus on the three most challenging words for the pupils to identify, namely *la schirata* / 'the squirrel', *la cargara* / 'the ant' and *le meder* / 'the marten' we observe that for the first two words, children seemed to encounter less difficulty in matching the correct article, achieving 50% and 47.7% correct hypotheses, respectively. *Le meder* posed a greater challenge, with only 29.5% of pupils providing the correct answer, while the majority (54.3%) were misled and chose *les* as the correct determiner for *meder*. One possible reason why pupils may have chosen *les* instead of *le* could be attributed to both the unusual ending of the word, different from the way words in Italian end, and the opaque meaning of the word. The distinct word endings are a common feature shared with other names used in the rhyme, such as



Graph 3 The definite article in Ladin: pupils' choices – All

scorpion, olp, laurs. Interestingly, despite these words being similar to their Italian counterparts (*scorpion*/*scorpione*/ 'scorpion', *olp*/*volpe*/ 'fox', *laurs*/*orso*/ 'bear'), this similarity did not significantly aid pupils in deciding the correct definite article. Pupils themselves invoked the similarity with Italian in their reflections on this part of the task:

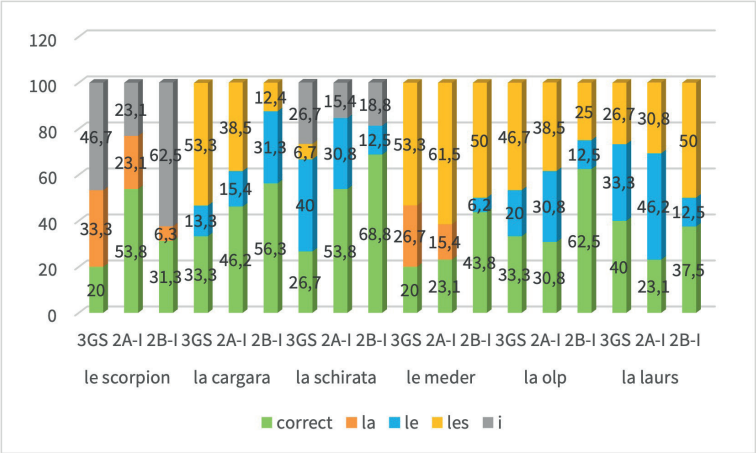
Example 6
P14: ich habe beobachtet das ein Par Wörter wie Deutsch und Italienisch kliengen
'I observed that some words sound like German and Italian'

Example 7
P37: ho guardato gli articoli in italiano poi ho provato a scriverli in quella lingua
'I looked at the articles in Italian and then I tried to write them in that language (Ladin)'

So, in both school systems, pupils observed similarities of some words with Italian, but also with German, such as for *scorpion*/*Skorpion*. As P37 outlines in example 7, they declare to have matched the article system in Italian with the unknown language. P37 is one of those pupils who matched correctly four items out of six but found difficulty in identifying the correct article for the words *meder* and *laurs*, as did many of his peers.

When asked to manipulate the morphology of an unknown language, pupils faced the task by often applying the rules of the languages they knew. For example, P33 in example 8 manipulated the morphology according to the similar prosody of the language.

Example 8
P33: ho scelto per le lettere che suonavano bene
'I chose the letters that sounded good'



Graph 4 Definite article in Ladin: comparison of groups

Graph 4 shows the responses given by pupils in each group for each of the lexical items they had to pair with the definite article. The graph illustrates that pupils in the German school encountered more difficulties in identifying the articles to match, making them the group that faced the most challenges with distractors and formulated alternative hypotheses. Conversely, one of the two Italian classes, 2B, achieved higher percentages of correct hypotheses, reaching up to 68.8% for the word *schirata* – 'squirrel'. This particular word serves as the dividing factor among the three classes: pupils in 2A in the Italian school achieved 53.8% correct matchings, while pupils in the German school (GS) only matched the correct article in 26.7% of cases and instead preferred to match *le* (40%), the masculine singular article **[graph 4]**.

The graph also indicates differences in the hypotheses made for each lexical item. For scorpion, the most commonly chosen alternative hypothesis is the article *i*, used by 46.7% of pupils in the German school and 62.5% of pupils in the Italian school (2B). Another word where pupils were presented with the definite plural article *i* as a distractor is the word *schirata* – 'squirrel', selected with equal frequency in the three classes but less frequently (between 15% and 27%).

If we observe the other hypotheses for the use of the feminine article *la* for *cargara*, we can notice that 53.3% of pupils in the German school opted for *les*, and identified *la*, the correct option, in 33.3% of the cases. Both Italian school classes, on the other hand, show a growing proportion of correct identification of the feminine article, at 46.2% and 56.3% respectively. When considering alternatives to *la*, these pupils are divided between the other two alternatives given *le* or *les*, with 31.3% in 2B, and 38.5% in 2A.

The most challenging word *le meder* – 'the marten' appears to have been more difficult for the pupils attending the German school (20% or correct answers) and for those in the 2A in the Italian school (23%), whereas almost half of the pupils in the other 2nd class (43.8%) actually identified the correct article. The most chosen option to match this word has been the plural article *les*, respectively chosen by 53.3% in the German school, and 61.5% and 50% in the two classes of the Italian school.

La olp is another word that, similarly to *la cargara*, *la schirata*, *le meder*, was more easily identified with the correct article by pupils of 2A in the Italian school, with 62.5% of the pupils. In the other two classes, half of the pupils were able to match the correct article (33.3% in the German school, and 30.8% 2B of the Italian school). Again the most chosen alternative here was the plural article *les*.

Eventually, when they encountered *la laurs*, those who were more challenged this time were pupils in 2A, who identified the correct article in 23% of the cases, compared to the pupils in the German school who identified it 40% of the time, and those in 2B of the Italian school who were able to match it 37.5%. This last word divided pupils in the German school, who alternatively chose the other two possible articles, *le* and *les* (33.3% and 26.7%).

To sum up, the discussion of these results suggests that, despite the students mentioning the similarity of the chosen keywords in both Italian and German, the task of correctly matching determiners based on their knowledge of both languages may have been too challenging for them. They seem to have identified some similarities between the two languages, but these similarities could not be consistently found for all the proposed words.

5.3 Morphological Choices: Deciding for Singular Forms in Dutch

The manipulation of the morphology of Dutch required the pupils to decide how to form the singular forms of the names of animals quoted in the text, starting from the plural forms. Overall, the responses given by the pupils include six different morphemes for the formation of the singular: the correct form, explicitly shown at the basis of each column in the graph, and different morphemes such as *-e*, *-an*, *-en*, *-er*, *-in*, and empty or translation solutions.

What is extremely interesting here is that pupils, regardless of the class they attended and the word they were focusing on, found the same strategies to apply to the formation of the singular form, and most of the time, they used these strategies for all lexical items in the list.

Table 1 Pupils hypotheses in Dutch

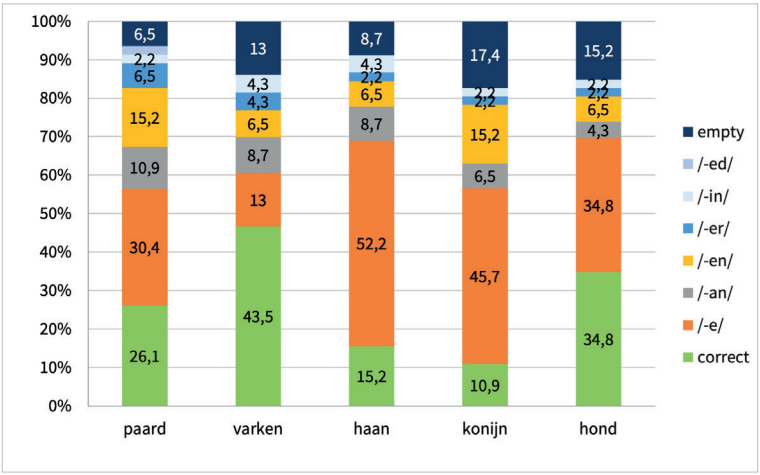
Dutch pl.	schapen	adelaars	paarden	varkens	hanen	konijnen	ezels	honden
Dutch sg.	schap	adelaar	paard	varken	haan	konijn	ezel	hond
Transl.	sheep/-	eagle/-s	horse/-s	pig/-s	rooster/-s	rabbit/-s	donkey/-s	dog/-s
P40			paarde*	varke*	hane*	konijne*	ezel	hond
P32			paardan*	varkans*	hanan*	konijnan*	ezals*	hondan*

The examples in the table demonstrate the systematic approach of pupils in identifying possible morphemes to form singular forms. They started with two examples, one featuring a regular name and one with an irregular form: *schap*/*schapen* for 'sheep/sheep' and *adelaar*/*adelaars* for 'eagle/eagles'. Apparently, the difference between regular and irregular forms went unnoticed by pupils who consistently applied the rule they decided upon, as shown by P40 **[table 1]**. This involved cutting out the last letter in the plural and using the morpheme -e to form the singular of *paarden* → *paarde**, *varkens* → *varke**, *haan* → *hane**, *konijnen* → *konijne**, *ezels* → *ezel*, and *honden* → *hond*. A similar systematic approach is evident in the other example provided by P32, who consistently decided to insert an /a/ to form the singular of the names. Thus, *paarden* (horses) becomes *paardan** (vs. *paard*, 'horse'), *varkens* → *varkans**, *haanen* → *hanan**, *konijnen* → *konijan**, *ezels* → *ezals**, *honden* → *hondan**. Graph 5 illustrates the choices made by all the children in manipulating the morphology of Dutch names. The word *ezel*/ 'donkey' was excluded from Graph 5 and 6 because it was the easiest word for pupils to transform, achieving a correct manipulation rate of 65.2%. Additionally, it differed in terms of strategies used to form the singular compared to the other words **[graph 5]**.

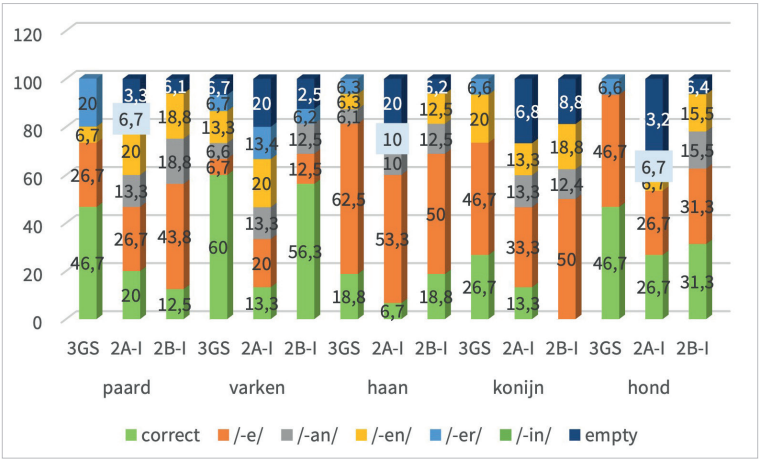
If we consider the overall picture, it becomes evident that the majority of pupils, for all lexical items, exceeded 55%, either using the correct singular form or by adding /-e/. More precisely, pupils constantly left the final /-e/, cutting out the final letters to form the singular. The operation of removing something to transform from plural to singular is noteworthy. Pupils are aware that, typically, to form the plural of a word, they need to add something, and in performing the reverse procedure, they demonstrated an understanding of how grammar operates in the languages they are learning, be it Italian or German. The graph also indicates that pupils found the task less challenging, given the proportion of correct answers and the uniform strategy of ending with /-e/.

Some differences in the behaviour of pupils can be observed when we focus on the responses provided, dividing the three groups: the Italian school classes, 2nd year (2A and 2B) and the German school class, 3rd year (3GS) **[graph 6]**.

The initial overall data suggests that pupils in the German school seem to have identified the correct form more frequently than their counterparts in the Italian school system. This is evident for the words



Graph 5 Manipulating the morphology of Dutch – All



Graph 6 Manipulating the morphology of Dutch – comparison of groups

varken (60%), *paard* (46.7%), *hond* (46.7%), *konijn* (26.7%), *haan* (18.8%) and *ezel* (86.7%). It confirms that pupils attending the German school compare the Dutch words with the German ones and recognise the closeness of these two languages, aiding them in both matching the meaning and manipulating the morphology of the unknown language.

The two classes of the Italian school exhibit a similar behaviour in which the most common strategy used by them, though not leading to correctness in the target language, involves ending with /-e/ for all lexical items they need to transform. This approach is closer to the ending

in Italian, i.e., with a vowel. The ending with /-e/ has been identified as the most common strategy used by kids, regardless of the school system. Another strategy (ranging between 6.7% to 20%) employed by almost all groups of pupils is the ending with /en/. For some words, this means they didn't report any change between the plural and singular forms, such as in the case of *paarden* and *honden*, for others, it involved some reduction, as seen with *varkens* and *konijnen*. Differences in the behaviours of the two school groups can be found in the transformation into the singular using the morpheme /-er/, as seen in *varcer*, *haner*, *konijner*, *ezer*, *holder*, used by some pupils (6.7% to 20%). These differences are especially interesting in the German school class as they reveal metacognitive competence in the language of the school, i.e., German, being applied to the unknown language here. Some other pupils in the Italian school classes formed the singular by adding a /-in/ morpheme, such as *pardin*, *varkins*, *hanin*, *hondin*, and, based on this modification, they also formed *ezils* for *ezel* – 'donkey'. Finally pupils in the Italian schools were those who sometimes decided to leave a blank space or opt for a translation in either Italian or German (up to 26.7% for *konijn* and 40% for *hond*, the last two words to transform), whereas in the German school this rarely happened and only for the irregular name proposed, i.e., *varkens* – 'pig' (6.7%).

Finally, when we examine the observations that pupils produced after the task, we can see that pupils in the German school highlight the similarity of this language with German. On the one hand, they mention that this language is very similar to German, as expressed by P2 in example 9, who writes, *ich habe beobachtet das das fast Deutsch ist* ('I noticed that that is almost like German'), stating that this language was easy and the similarity with German lies in similar words. Other types of reflections also inform us and confirm what we have just observed in the strategies used to form the singular of the names proposed, as shown in examples 10 to 12.

Example 9
P2: ich habe beobachtet das das fast Deutsch ist
'I noticed that that is almost like German'

Example 10
P5: *nur 's' und 'en' wek tun.*
'only cut "s" and "en"'

Example 11
P19: togliamo ultima lettera e diventa singolare.
'we remove the last letter and it becomes singular.'

Example 12
P37: ho osservato che alla fine del plurale c'è sempre en oppure s e nell'esempio hanno tolto en o s
'I observed that at the end of plurals there is always en or s and in the example they cut en or s.'

Figure 7 The picture used to support the narration of the rhyme in Ladin © Taplin 2012

These comments confirm that often pupils formed the singular by cutting out one or two letters, /en/ or /s/ for the pupils in the German school and the last letter, meaning /n/, for the pupils in the Italian school.

Summing up, the results obtained from the manipulation of Dutch noun morphology indicate that, in this case, young learners found it easier to identify similarities with German. Modifying the morphology proved to be a task that they could accomplish more easily, and pupils employed systematic strategies to transform plurals into singular forms.

6 Conclusions

Results show that kids at that age, regardless of the school system they attend, share a common linguistic repertoire that plays a facilitating role in some instances and a hindering role in some others. For example, the results indicated that Dutch comprehension was commonly supported by the German competencies of the children, whereas Ladin was only partially facilitated by Italian and Italian dialect competencies. The individual linguistic repertoires of emergent plurilinguals, although not explicitly used in the activity, played a scaffolding role in reconstructing the morphology of the unknown new languages. All pupils approached the task by using their own linguistic repertoires and recalled different learning strategies they had been using in the curricular activities, as seen in the Dutch morphological

task where they applied grammatical rules for singular and plural forms. This suggests that structured work in the curricular activities, which fosters home languages, can enhance school languages as well. The common strategies made explicit by the pupils reflect both high levels of metalinguistic and metacognition awareness at a young age (7-9 years), as demonstrated in the Dutch manipulation of plural and singular, as shown in example 12. It also highlights the competence of pupils in dealing with unknown languages: learners apply to them the grammatical rules of the individual linguistic repertoires, as observed in the Ladin morphological choice of *schirata*/ 'squirrel'. Such structured activity in class suggests that skills in the school languages are reinforced, which aligns with previous research indicating that emergent bilinguals' literacy skills benefit from including their home language(s) during classroom activities (Cummins 2019). Lastly, this structured work also can help teachers think about pupils' oral and written productions, reflecting with them on the learning process, as Auerbach suggests: "[T]he issue isn't whether to leverage students' primary linguistic resources, but how" (2016, 937).

Appendix

The input text used in Ladin (Ruth Videsott)

L'orchestra di tiers

Le bachët é tla man dl dirighënt.
I tiers ciara tles notes y mët man da soné.
Mo an n'alda degun sonn.
Ci spavënt:
Le scorpiun ti á taié ia les cordes dla vidora al meder.
La schirata á ciaugné ti bachëc di tambüri.
Ales posaunes ti él tomé jö la ciampana y la cargara é rovada sotite.
Le cerf á juté ega tles trombëtes.
Al clarinet dl tas ti mancel le bochin.
La olp ti á arobé l'archët dl cuntrabas ala laurs.
Dal gran spavënt toma ia le dirighënt y le conzert é rové.

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Language Attitudes and Bi(dia)lectal Competence
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Attitudes from Above
How Ausbau-Centric Approaches Hinder the Maintenance of Linguistic Diversity and Why We Must Rediscover the Role of Structural Relations

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Abstract Modern linguistics tends to perpetuate an Ausbau bias by reserving the term 'language' for highly standardised varieties while classifying other varieties as 'dialects' and often leading to language contestation. This paper outlines some properties of the Ausbau bias, discussing its negative effects across ostensibly dissimilar communities. We will see how the Ausbau bias has attitudinal consequences, feeding a vicious circle of contestation and endangerment. The paper concludes with some suggestions on how contestation can be mitigated by moving away from the 'Ausbau-centric' tendency that views languages as mainly socio-political objects.

Keywords Attitudes. Ausbau. Contested languages. Language contestation. Linguistic diversity.

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1 Introduction

An internet search for a map of the 'languages of Europe' is likely to return rather conflicting results. The case of Italy is a prime example. Documents from the European Parliament website[1] report a range of languages that is closely matched to the twelve languages officially recognised by the Italian government (Law 482/99); while wikitongues.org contains information on all thirty-two languages of Italy as listed in the UNESCO Atlas of Languages in Danger (Moseley 2010), a net difference of twenty languages. The picture is further confused by Wikiversity.org,[2] which reports nine languages in a mishmash of some of the languages recognised by the Italian government (e.g. Franco-Provençal and Sardinian) and others that are listed in the UNESCO Atlas but lack official recognition (e.g. Lombard and Sicilian).

While to some degree this confusion could be attributed to the usual inaccuracies that plague the internet, or even to linguists' failure to aptly popularise the subjects of their discipline, I believe there is a fundamentally conceptual problem at its basis. In fact, moving away from the internet and looking at published texts in linguistics won't necessarily help: the European map in Pereltsvaig's *Languages of the World* (2020, 28) shows two languages for Italy (Italian and Sardinian, the latter being the only one reported out of the twelve languages recognised by Italian law); Extra and Gorter (2001), on the other hand, are quite faithful to governmental decrees and give a mention to most of the twelve languages of Italy that enjoy official recognition; while the work of Coluzzi (2008; 2009) and Coluzzi et al. (2018) distinguishes between Italy's 'minority languages' (i.e. those recognised by law) and 'regional languages', namely those languages that officials as well as the mainstream insist on calling 'dialects' but which are not dialects of any language.[3]

The fundamental issue is to do with the definition of 'language'. Some authors, typically those who tend to (unwittingly?) align with governmental decisions, take a socio-political view of 'language', while others – who approximately align with the UNESCO Atlas – follow what we could call 'purely linguistic' criteria, namely criteria involving concepts such as linguistic distance and intelligibility, regardless of the socio-political success that the language at issue may have had. The problem arises when the former tendency to put

1 See for example https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-Briefing-589794-Regional-minority-languages-EU-FINAL.pdf.

2 https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/World_Languages/Europe.

3 Except of Latin, which seems to me a rather pedantic truism, if not a thinly veiled ideological urge to avoid the term 'language' at all costs.

socio-political considerations at the centre of 'languageness' becomes the norm, as has been happening over the last five decades. Note that I am not claiming that socio-political considerations are always a bad idea, on the contrary. It makes perfect sense for sociolinguistic classifications to be heavily influenced by socio-policy. The issue arises when more generic classifications – and even classifications that purport to be non-sociolinguistic in nature, as is the case for texts on genealogy (e.g. Posner 1996) or language acquisition (e.g. Siegel 2010) – also end up being based on socio-policy. Why would a list of the languages of Europe – as opposed to a list of the 'official' languages of Europe or the 'politically recognised' languages of Europe – be compiled on the basis of socio-political criteria? The answer to this question is intertwined with the phenomenon of Ausbau-centrism (Tamburelli 2014; 2021a), namely the mainstream practice of ranking Ausbau characteristics (i.e. socio-political functions and regulatory officialdom) over Abstand ones (i.e. structural/linguistic distance and, by extension, intelligibility) across all sub-disciplines in Linguistics, including those that are not sociolinguistic in nature.[4]

Ausbau-centrism as a phenomenon is rooted in the wider concept of language attitudes, and specifically within the cognitive component of language attitudes, as it combines an established set of thoughts, beliefs, ideas and behaviours (e.g. Baker 1992; Garrett 2010; Oppenheim 1982) about what constitutes a language. This last point is quite central, as it may be what sets Ausbau-centrism apart from more familiar cases of language attitudes: it does not necessarily concern attitudes towards 'a' language; rather, it is the manifestation of a set of attitudes towards languageness itself.

Looking at its defining traits, Ausbau-centrism is effectively a series of formal implementations of the infamous saying that is usually attributed to Max Weinreich: "a language is a dialect with an army and a navy".[5] Several formalisations have been proposed which effectively attempt to transform the saying into a formal model, perhaps most notably by Auer (2005) and Muljačić (1997), who developed complex apparatuses that place highly politically successful varieties on top as 'languages' while keeping all other non-militarised varieties lower down as different types of 'dialects'. What is hardly ever discussed, however, is that Weinreich himself argued against the idea of delegating language classification to armies and navies, and that he had foreseen the damage that such stance could do. According to Maxwell (2018, 265), Weinreich disputed the message behind the saying, pointing out that it merely equates to stating that "the

4 The terms 'Abstand' and 'Ausbau' were originally introduced by Kloss (1967).

5 It appears that, although Max Weinreich may have been the first to publish the saying, he was not the coiner. See Maxwell 2018 for a history.

stronger is the more righteous" (1945, 13, cited in Maxwell 2018, 265) and that following its spirit would force Yiddish – which has no army and no navy – to be forever trapped "with the dialects with poor relations". In a sense, we might say that Weinreich had identified Yiddish as a contested language, with sociolinguistic absolutism at the core of the contestation.

Unfortunately, not much has changed since 1945: more and more complex apparatuses have been built in order to strengthen the view that languageness is all about ideology and power (e.g. Blommaert 2005) or – even more bizarrely – that languages are all 'made up' (Makoni, Pennycook 2005). This trend has created a limbo for any varieties that are sufficiently structurally distant from related languages to be considered separate languages on the basis of structural linguistic properties (e.g. Lewis, Simons, Fennig 2014), but that at the same time do not boast a sufficient amount of sociolinguistic achievements to be considered 'languages' on Ausbau-centric grounds. This is the limbo of language contestation, and its members are the contested languages (Tamburelli, Tosco 2021).

2 The Cost of Language Contestation

Language contestation is not just the result of an academic disagreement; it has repercussions on languages and, by extension, on language communities. Weinreich had anticipated that equating languages with objects of power is equivalent to accepting that "the strongest is the more righteous" (1945, 13, cited in Maxwell 2018, 265), a rather prophetic prediction. However, what we see today as a consequence of several decades of Ausbau-centrism is more along the lines of: the strongest is the more right worthy. With dominant academic discourse shaping lay perception (e.g. Foster, Sharp 2002), sociolinguistic criteria have morphed from descriptive to defining, in what appears to be a successful example of the denying the antecedent fallacy: if a language is a dialect with an army, then a dialect without an army can't be a language. This leads to the "Ausbau circle" (Tamburelli 2021a), a vicious circle where only varieties that already enjoy political recognition are granted (further) socio-political support, since – as the Ausbau-centric axiom goes – only varieties with some degree of socio-political power can be called 'languages', and therefore only speakers of socio-politically powerful varieties can readily access linguistic rights, as those rights are to be granted to speakers of 'languages' (see Tamburelli 2021a; 2021b for detailed discussions). In Tamburelli (2021a) I have shown how this has repeatedly hindered the emancipation of the endangered languages of Italy, which the *status quo* treats as anything but 'languages' on the basis of their sociolinguistic subordination to Tuscan Italian.

This, in turn, perpetuates negative attitudes towards the languages of Italy (see for example the work of Coluzzi 2008), which are not only perceived as being associated with 'lower' social domains, but also presumed as incapable of expanding from those domains.

Importantly, the damage done by Ausbau-centrism is far from limited to the languages of Italy. The same range of Ausbau-centric objections has been used to block the emancipation of Asturian (Wells 2011), Kurdish (Hassanpour, Sheyholislami, Skutnabb-Kangas 2012), Latgalian (Marten 2012) as well as creole languages (e.g. Brown-Blake 2008; Frank 2007) and sign languages (e.g. Fischer 2008) among many other of the world's languages. Seeing as emancipation, and specifically the broadening of domains of use, is a crucial ingredient in the maintenance of linguistic vitality (e.g. Simons, Lewis 2013), it is clear that Ausbau-centric views of language are at the heart of language shift and of the loss of linguistic diversity. But the price we are paying for Ausbau-centrism does not stop at linguistic diversity.

2.1 The Ausbau-Centric 'Mother Tongue': Overlooking the Educational Needs of Multilinguals

South Tyrol[6] (in the north-east of Italy) is officially recognised by the Italian state as a 'bilingual community', with German and Italian as two co-official languages (e.g. Glück, Leonardi, Riehl 2019). However, linguistically speaking, the Germanic variety spoken in South Tyrol belongs to Bavarian (ISO 639-3 bar) rather than German (ISO 639-3 deu). In typical Ausbau-centric fashion, however, the local variety is regularly referred to as a 'dialect', and duly denied any official recognition. Therefore, the Germanic 'language' recognised as co-official is not one of South-Tyroleans' mother-tongues, but the Ausbau language genealogically closest to it, namely German. This distinction is made on the basis of sociolinguistic considerations, without giving any weight to any potential linguistic distance between the variety that is recognised as the purported 'mother tongue' and that which is actually acquired and spoken by the local population. This leads to a bizarre situation of strict Fergusonian diglossia (Ferguson 1959), whereby Germanic-speaking South Tyroleans have the right to education in their mother-tongue (e.g. Vettori, Wisniewski, Abel 2012), except that the language fulfilling the role of mother-tongue is mostly learned through education, while their actual mother-tongue affords them hardly any rights at all. This situation

6 Official name: *Provincia autonoma di Bolzano – Alto Adige / Autonome Provinz Bozen – Südtirol*.

exemplifies a major failure of Ausbau-centrism, with South-Tyrolean children being educated in a language they struggle to understand, while their own language is excluded from the educational system on the basis that it is 'not a language' due to its sociolinguistic profile. Leonardi and Tamburelli (2021) showed the impact that this Ausbau-centric practice has on South-Tyrolean children. Using the TROG-D (Test for the Reception of Grammar, Fox 2013), they examined the receptive German language skills of German and South-Tyrolean pre-schoolers, and found that the two groups differed significantly, with the German-speaking children outperforming their South-Tyrolean counterparts. This, together with the result that intelligibility between South-Tyrolean Bavarian and German as measured by a sentence recognition task is at 58.3%, shows at least two things. First, it is grossly inaccurate to claim that South-Tyroleans are fulfilling the right to education in their 'mother tongue', comparable to claiming that a Spanish speaker who is sent to a Portuguese-speaking school is educated in their mother tongue.[7] Second, the Ausbau-centric practice of identifying languages on the basis of sociolinguistic criteria masks a complex linguistic situation and thus leads to a failure to meet the educational needs of multilinguals, with South-Tyrolean children not receiving the same level of education as those for whom the language of education is indeed their mother tongue. Note that this situation would not arise if languages were identified on the basis of structural linguistic criteria such as intelligibility or linguistic distance, as any such criteria would likely lead to the recognition that South-Tyrolean and German are not one and the same language (e.g. Egger 1979 on lexical and morphosyntactic differences between the two varieties). Therefore, the South-Tyrolean example highlights one particular case where relying on structural/linguistic (i.e. Abstand) criteria would lead not only to a more accurate language classification, but also to a more apt implementation of a community's right to education in their 'mother tongue'.

2.2 Language Selection: What 'Language'?

A report by the organisation Translators Without Borders (TWB 2017) highlighted the widespread communication issues that regularly arose within aid camps during the Southern European refugee crisis. One specific issue came as a consequence of the seemingly sensible decision to employ Arabic-speaking interpreters, on the basis that the refugees were from Arabic-speaking countries. Leaving

7 A study by Jensen (1989) puts the intelligibility of Spanish and Portuguese at a comparable 58.1%.

aside the issue of minority language speakers (most notably Kurdish, see TWB 2017), the main cause of breakdowns in communication lies in the Ausbau-centric stance that Arabic is 'one' language. Unsurprisingly, TWB (2017) have reported on serious and recurring communication issues between speakers of purportedly the 'same' language. The varied levels of intelligibility across so-called Arabic 'dialects' are well-known, as is the fact that Arabic varieties are only called 'dialects' on a sociolinguistic (i.e. Ausbau) grounds, seeing as their linguistic distance can be considerable, and that structural-linguistic classifications subdivide Arabic varieties into separate languages, as evident from the fact that there are more than a dozen ISO 639-3 codes associated with them. But such is the hold of Ausbau-centrism that the structural-linguistic classifications do not tend to be known or even considered to be relevant outside of a small circle of linguists, and therefore the Ausbau-centric stance of '*the* Arabic language' is what percolates up into the related disciplines, subsequently leading to the severe breakdown of communication reported by TWB (2017). When we consider the fact that refugees find themselves in extremely vulnerable psychological states (e.g. Carswell, Blackburn, Barker 2011), the impact of an Ausbau-centric approach to language identification becomes even more severe. As part of a linguistic analysis of the TWB report and its implications, Glackin (2022) measured the intelligibility of three Arabic varieties (Gulf Arabic, Egyptian, and Modern Standard Arabic) to Saudi-speaking listeners. The measurements were carried out with participants under stress in order to simulate a situation where listeners' cognitive resources are reduced by the circumstances in which they find themselves, as is the case for refugees in a crisis situation. Stress responses were induced by manipulating cognitive load as the stressor under experimental conditions designed to measure sentential intelligibility as well as understanding of grammatical contrasts. Glackin's findings showed that accuracy of response as well as the ability to react quickly to instructions (a crucial component in crisis situations) were dependent on the variety of the speaker, with Egyptian eliciting significantly lower intelligibility rates than Gulf Arabic. Once again, we see that the Ausbau-centric stance of 'language by socio-politics' can and does lead to negative downstream consequences which, in the case of a refugee crisis, can be disastrous.

> This case is a particularly poignant example of why there is a need for linguists to rediscover 'linguistic' approaches to language classification (on this point, see also Dixon 1997) and possibly reduce some of the confusion that has been spreading as a result of Ausbau-centric linguistics.

3 Standardisation Routes for Language Maintenance: What 'Language'?

So far, we have only seen cases where the Ausbau-centric approach fails, but a question remains: is there evidence that a linguistic (i.e. Abstand) approach provides more successful solutions?

One area where taking a linguistic approach has been shown to be superior is in the standardisation process for minority languages. Vari and Tamburelli (2023) compared two linguistic communities which followed two different routes to standardisation: the speech communities of the *Belgische Eifel* in Belgium and the *Éislek* in Luxembourg, where Moselle Franconian varieties are spoken. In both communities, the introduction of a standard was identified as an important step for the maintenance of the local Moselle Franconian varieties. This is in line with the literature on language maintenance, which puts the improvement of language attitudes at the forefront of language maintenance efforts (e.g. UNESCO 2003), and considers the provision of a standard for the local varieties as an important step in bringing about more positive attitudes (e.g. Fishman 2001; Lewis, Simons 2010).

The general idea is that standardisation widens a language's domains of use (e.g. by allowing it to be introduced in formal contexts) as well as raise its status (e.g. by associating it with higher register domains). However, standardisation can be achieved in at least two ways. On the one hand, a community may choose to associate their variety with an already existing, highly regarded standard from a related language community. This standard may even be relatively distant from and/or only partly intelligible with the community language, as we saw for example in the case of South Tyrol. On the other hand, a community may opt for the development of an own standard, using one of its vernaculars as the basis for standardisation and thus more likely to end up with a very closely related and highly intelligible standard. The question that Vari and Tamburelli (2023) ask is whether both processes are viable routes to improving attitudes: is standardisation always good for the minority language, regardless of the chosen standard? To address this question, they compare implicit attitudes between standard and vernacular across the Moselle Franconian communities of the *Belgische Eifel* in Belgium and the *Éislek* in Luxembourg. These communities were chosen because they represent two different standardisation processes of essentially the same vernaculars. In Belgium, the *Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft* (of which the Eifel is part) adopted German as the standard for its Moselle Franconian varieties. Conversely, Luxembourg followed a different route, developing its own standard – namely Luxemburgish (ISO 639-3 ltz) – on the basis of the local Moselle Franconian vernaculars (Stell 2006). Results showed that implicit attitudes towards

Moselle Franconian vernaculars were considerably more positive in Luxembourg than in neighbouring Belgium, suggesting that choosing a standard on the basis of linguistic proximity (Abstand) rather than on pre-existing prestige (Ausbau) is more likely to lead to the desired outcome. Choosing German as the standard seems to have brought about more positive attitudes towards German itself, rather than towards the Moselle Franconian varieties whose vitality was meant to be improved.

Once again, it turns out that the Ausbau-centric practice of defining 'same language' on the basis of sociolinguistic achievements leads to a negative outcome. However, in this case we also see how using linguistic (i.e. Abstand) criteria, and specifically the criterion of linguistic proximity as a guide is likely a more fruitful approach to improving attitudes towards a minority language.

4 Conclusions

In this paper I have argued that an 'Ausbau bias' is strongly active within Linguistics, which has led to the widespread practice of Ausbau-centrism. This practice is rife in all areas of linguistics, and its bias permeates through linguistic communities, shaping attitudes and leading to a range of negative consequences. It perpetuates negative attitudes by equating 'language' with 'Ausbau language', which in turn feeds language endangerment via a vicious circle of contestation and endangerment: only 'languages' can access linguistic rights, and only Ausbau languages are 'real' languages. Seeing as Ausbau languages are – virtually by definition – also the languages that enjoy higher degrees of socio-political backing, Ausbau-centric practices are actively involved in the preservation of the *status quo*: only the sociolinguistically powerful can be sociolinguistically powerful. Hence, Ausbau-centric practices tend to conceal multilingualism as well as linguistic diversity, since only speakers of multiple Ausbau languages tend to be identified as multilingual. Further, Ausbau-centric practices also lead to failure to meet the educational needs of multilinguals (as in South Tyrol), are at the basis of communicative obstacles in high-risk situations (as in the case of the Southern European refugee crisis) and weaken the potential impact of standardisation processes in minority language situations.

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