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A word is born: The meaning of Abilismo

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A Venezia,
fragile nostalgia,
impossibile spiegarti.

Abstract

The word Abilismo (Ableism) has entered the vocabulary of the Italian language only a few years ago. To better understand its meaning and diffusion, it is good to start with similar linguistic elements already known. The formation of the lexicon involves many processes which will not be dealt with here. The aim of this dissertation is to investigate how the term Ableism is born. Starting from other words ending with suffix -ismo   (-ism), we will see whether Ableism can be considered a derivative with the same semantic characteristics as the other -isms that generally designate specific meanings. As a matter of fact, the meaning of the term is transparent since it is a function of the parts that composed it, but it could also be ambiguous since the suffix -ism can be interpreted in various ways. Eleven cluster have been created to designate he differ meanings of -isms and then the word frequency of each word il calculated. This is useful for the selection of various stimuli to propose to the participants of this experiment. Finally, through the intuitions of meaning expressed in the questionnaire, it is possible to observe if the word Ableism is known or used by speakers and to which cluster it belongs.

Key words: *Abilismo, Ableism, Neologisms, -isms, Word Frequency*

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Introduction

The main contribution of this thesis has been to study how a new word enters the lexicon of speakers. The word at the centre of the research is Ableism, which can have an opaque meaning due to its morphological characteristics. The word was therefore included in a list of words ending in -ism that can be considered similar due to the presence of the same ending. The words ending in -ism, in fact, can be traced back to certain semantic groups and the aim of this study was precisely to try to understand which of these groups (clusters) Abilismo could belong to. To do this, the research was divided into two parts. First, lexicographic research was carried out starting from two Italian language dictionaries (De Mauro and Sabatini-Coletti) to collect all the -isms. From the list of lemmas, the frequency of each word was calculated on the basis of which stimuli were chosen to construct a questionnaire. Indeed, the linguistic competence of the native speakers facilitates the analysis of the characteristics or features of words. Through this survey, participants were asked to express opinions of agreement or disagreement to attribute each word to specific clusters. The collected results allowed to put Abilism in one of the clusters previously constructed through the definitions of -isms.

The interest in the subject of this master's thesis can be seen from different perspectives. First, the birth of the lexicon and its evolution allow us to trace the evolution of the standard Italian language of our time. Since language is a dynamic process, the formation of words can also be justified as an evolution of the language that progresses in parallel with social and cultural changes. Moreover, the

lessicographic part may be of particular interest for researchers and lexicographers specialised in the history of Italian lexicography, as there is not much literature on the fear of -isms. A third point of interest for the present study is linked here, namely the lack of analysis of the word Abilismo as a neologism of the Italian language. The term derives from the English ableism and begins to spread in the United Kingdom at the end of the 1980s; in Italy, however, it has only recently begun to spread. Ableism is discrimination against people who have a disability, whether physical or mental. This thesis is divided into three chapters. The structure of the various sections is explained in detail below. To fully understand the topic from a linguistic point of view, the first chapter is dedicated to the neology of the Italian lexicon with particular attention to the suffixation process. It then moves on to the morphological and formal description of the suffix -ism and finally to the definition of abilismo. The word is defined using examples of usage and studying its diffusion.

The second chapter explains the part of lexicographic research carried out on dictionaries. It starts with a description of the dictionaries used and then goes on to explain the individual clusters into which the researched words were divided. Then, it is explained how word frequencies are calculated by searching for them in two corpora and calculating the Zipf index. This scale makes it possible to understand whether a word can be considered a low-frequency word or a high-frequency word. At the end of this chapter, a time plot is presented with the diachronic analysis of the words from the date of first occurrence. Finally, the third chapter presents the construction of the questionnaire that was submitted to the participants. In fact, the Zipf index of words was used for the selection of 10 stimuli for the experiment that asked native speakers to express a judgment on the belonging of words to three specific clusters: Doctrines, Attitudes and Conditions. The answers are then analysed, and the data collected will

allow the creation of clusters, on the basis of the existing ones, which will attribute to abilismo the belonging to a cluster for semantic characteristics closer to some words than to others. In conclusion, we can therefore say that Abilismo belongs to the group of -isms denoting attitudes, tendencies, collective or individual characters.

Chapter One

"A language that never changes

could only be spoken in a cemetery"

(Lázaro Carreter, 1992)

Abilismo and the suffix -ismo

1.1. Neology and the Suffix -ismo

Languages, as the materialization of the human need to communicate, are a vital evolution of their speakers. As Adamo and Della Valle (2017: 23) states:

"If we think of a language as a living organism, the image of a society in its history and its continuous becoming, the new words that are formed daily are the vital breath of the language. The lexicon is the most immediate representation of the patrimony of knowledge, memories, and expectations that characterize the history of a society and its culture through the linguistic expression."

The quality of communication goes hand in hand with the quality of the terminology used: good terminology, for example, makes it possible to avoid misunderstandings and to express complex concepts more clearly. Inappropriate terminology has a negative impact on communication, making it opaque or unclear. One example is the word at the heart of this work, the meaning of Abilismo can appear ambiguous due to its the suffix -ism that can denote specific semantic groups.

It follows, then, that the lexicon of a language can be a symbol of the progress and knowledge of the community that speaks it and evolves hand in hand with society and its achievements.

For example, among the neologisms that have had more success recently we find "apericena" which was born from the fusion of "aperitif" and "dinner" to indicate an innovative way to consume out of home the meal of the evening without sitting at the table of a real restaurant.

This conception of language as an available system, capable of adapting and transforming itself to new situations, has its greatest exponent in neology. Neology can be defined as the "process of forming new lexical units" (Zingarelli, 2014); a more complete definition and characterization is given below.

1.1.1. Characterization

As we mention above, modern linguistics considers neologism (from the Greek néos 'new' and lògos 'word') as the protagonist of linguistic evolution.

According to the Collins Dictionary, neologism is a frequently used term used over the past 50 years; indeed, since 1948, the frequency of use of the word has increased dramatically. Here is the definition:

"A neologism is a new word or expression in a language, or a new meaning for an existing word or expression".

The Merriam-Webster dictionary underlines the difference between linguistic meaning and psychological use, namely, the pathological use of invented words to which an arbitrary or symbolic meaning is given.

"Neologism:

1 a new word, usage, or expression // technological neologisms

2 psychologies: a new word that is coined especially by a person affected with schizophrenia and is meaningless except to the coiner and is typically a combination of two existing words or a shortening or distortion of an existing word."

Given these definitions, it follows that a neologism can refer to a new word or a new meaning, i.e., the result of formal neology or semantic neology. Although it is not always clear how to precisely determine what is new and what is not; the main feature characterising a neologism is its novelty. Therefore, not all lexical creations are neologisms per se. Among other reasons, they establish requirements other than a novelty to consider a new word (or meaning) as a neologism. This is due to the difficulty of marking the limit to consider something as unique and, even, to the impossibility of documenting the birth of a word with certainty.

Traditionally, three main criteria have been used to recognize a neologism: chronological, lexicographic, and psychological (relating to the perception of neologicity).

The chronological criterion is the most frequently used, although it is not fully defined and restricted. How is it possible to determine whether we are dealing with a new form or a new use?

As Alarcos claims: *"Neologism is the result of an entelechy of synchrony and, therefore, the quality of neologism is transitory in the history of the language."* (Alarcos, 1992). Therefore, any word has been a neologism at some point; the neologism is the result of synchrony, and the quality of neologism is transitory in the history of the language.

The lexicographical criterion is the most used because it is the most systematic and objective, but it suffers from certain inconsistencies. This criterion refers to the practice of using a dictionary as a reference for new words. The first criticism that could be adduced would be that a dictionary is an incomplete work by definition, since a lexicographical repertory that reflects the current state of a living language is never finished. It is therefore important to clarify that a lexical neologism is not the same as a lexicographical neologism, nor is a lexicographical neologism the same as a lexical neologism. A new word is not the same as a new entry in a dictionary. Thus, the choice of a dictionary as a corpus for exclusion is a decision is a decision that lacks objectivity. If we use the Treccani Dictionary as a reference, we will obtain as a result huge list of neologisms. And this is so because this work does not conform to current Italian since it includes many outdated or obsolete words. Thus, the determination of a single dictionary as a reference irremediably marks and directs the analysis.

However, this is not the only difficulty deriving from the restrictions of a dictionary; one should also recall the difficulty of finding certain types of words such as, for example, borrowings from other languages, terminological units and lexical creations referring to passing realities. For example, those referring to fields such as the scientific-technical or the judicial. In the judicial system, there are some creations that cannot be identified as belonging to the press, but are, like other technical terms, vulgarizations of terminological units.

A possible solution is to consider that the dictionary is finite and that the rules of word formation are not, although they are predictable.

Finally, the psychological criterion consists of the ability of speakers to perceive an element as strange, new, foreign. As Quemada points out, "*The neologicity of a denomination is also difficult to evaluate, because it is most often based on a feeling of newness that is minimally relative and which can be attributed, if we do not pay attention to it, to terms that are ignored or taken out of use*" (Quemada, 2006). This is perhaps the most subjective criterion since each speaker is different and does not have the same training, language level, feeling, or sensitivity to novelty as another. It is true that typographically one can find mechanisms (italics, bold, quotation marks, etc.) to mark creations as strange or novel but this is neither obligatory nor systematic. Moreover, these resources cannot be detected in the spoken language. On the other hand, Quemada (2006) limits the period of neological perception by a speaker to a period of between 2 to 15 years, although it should be noted that certain neologisms take several years longer to be introduced into the daily life of Italian speakers, such as croissants.

To sum up, any new element in the language can be considered a neologism and, if it is in the lexical domain, it will be a new lexeme or a new meaning of an existing lexeme. Some authors narrow the definition of neologism by suggesting that such a new creation needs a certain degree of diffusion in use. For this reason, neologisms have usually been defined with an exclusive scale. It is not a neologism if it is documented. It is not a neologism if it appears in dictionaries. It is a neologism if it presents instability in the signifier or the meaning.

1.1.2. Types of Neologisms

Dardano identifies two types of neologism: lexical neologism and semantic neologism. A lexical neologism is a new word obtained through processes and mechanisms already present within the language. They can also be called combinatorial neologisms since they come from the combination of elements of the language. One of the most common means of forming new words is that of prefixation and suffixation. It must be said that the common speaker, having a basic word and having the competence of the mechanisms of language, can understand and create a whole series of combinatorial neologisms. For instance, the verb "lottizzare" is formed with the word "lotto" and the suffix "-izzare".

On the other hand, semantic neologisms do not involve creating a new word, but they introduce a new meaning for an already existing term. The form of the word remains identical, it is only the meaning that changes. Of course, since they are a unit of meaning and cannot be considered a concrete form, semantic neologisms are more difficult to identify. For example, in the 19th century, the verb "finalizzare" meant "to conclude" but now it is mainly used with a new meaning such as "have a purpose."

In addition, the borrowings are words taken from a foreign language. It can be left in its original form (bar or film) or integrated into Italian phonology and morphology. For example, treno comes from English train. Sometimes two variants of a word are used, namely the adapted one and the original one, e.g., roast beef and rosbif.

Among the different neologisms, we also find stylistic neologisms: *"neologisms used in an expressive and stylistic function by journalists in particular contexts"* (Aprile, 2005). In addition to these, the ever-growing set of denominative neologisms serve to

name a new referent, thus filling lexical gaps. This phenomenon is particularly flourishing in our age of technological development, which entails, among other things, the duty to give a name to new inventions and discoveries.

In short, neology is a lexico-genetic process intrinsic to the language as a human product, and for this reason, it is used to adapt to evolution. The main aim of neology is to name something new, a new referent, and, sometimes, give the discourse a more stylistic character.

1.1.3. Suffixation

Suffixation is the most productive process in the Italian language and the panorama of Romance languages. As De Mauro points out, *"La grande massa dei derivati italiani è costituita da derivati con suffissi"[1] (*De Mauro, 2005).

In the most frequent case, terms are composed of two elements: on the one hand, the classifier element, which refers to the class of objects to which the concept to be named belongs and on the other, the qualifying element, which contains the characteristics of the concept to be named. The classifier is the suffix, as in the case of zupp-iera (soup bowl): the class of objects to which it belongs is that of tools, and of "containers suitable for preserving or serving food to which the respective basic names refer" designated by the classifier element -iera (as in biscottiera, saliera). The qualifying element serves to express the distinctive characteristics of the concept. For example, the distinguishing feature in "zuppiera" is the "soup" content of the object, not its function, which it shares instead with other similar objects. The choice of the

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[1] The great mass of Italian derivatives is made up of derivatives with suffixes.

feature to be expressed determines the motivation of the term and therefore its transparency.

In this work, the focus is on one specific suffix, namely the suffix -ismo.

1.2.   The suffix -ismo: morphology and formal characteristics

The suffix -ismo (*-ism*) derives from Latin -ismus or the Greek ισμός, and it means "classification" or "categorization." It is very productive in both classical Italian and standard Italian. It can be added to nominal or adjectival bases and forms nouns as a result of suffixation. There are five bases to which -ismo can be added in Italian: nouns (alcolismo), adjectives (parallelismo), locution (menefreghismo), a proper name (marxismo), or a Latin or Greek root (egoismo). Morphologically, we can say that some nouns in -ism are derived from morphologically simple adjectives (e.g., *purismo, realismo*) or from morphologically complex adjectives (e.g., *allocentrismo, collettivismo)*. But others are derived from simple nominal bases (e.g., *giornalismo, simbolismo* etc.). Proper (personal) names constitute a special category among nominal bases (e.g., *Buddismo, Darwinismo* etc.). Many -ism nouns are based on morphologically complex nominal bases (*bilinguismo*). Added to this, derivational bases constitute compound-like entities (*anglosassonismo*) and prefixed forms (*antifascismo*).

Treccani (2003) defines the suffix -ism in the following way:

"-ismo [dal lat. -ismus, gr. -ισμός]. – Suffisso di molti vocaboli astratti, taluni derivati dal greco (dove hanno origine verbale) e i più formati posteriormente (tratti in genere

da sostantivi o aggettivi), per indicare dottrine e movimenti religiosi, sociali, filosofici,

letterarî, artistici (per es.: manicheismo, islamismo, socialismo, empirismo, realismo,

impressionismo, ecc.), atteggiamenti, tendenze, caratteri collettivi o individuali

(eroismo, radicalismo, patriottismo, dispotismo, ottimismo, scetticismo, fanatismo),

comportamenti o azioni (disfattismo, ostruzionismo), condizioni o qualità, e anche

difetti morali o fisici e abitudini nocive (egoismo, mutismo, strabismo, daltonismo,

alcolismo), talora condizioni di cose (parallelismo, magnetismo), attività sportive

(ciclismo, podismo, discesismo, connessi questi con i sostantivi in -ista come ciclista,

ecc.). Con sign. concreto, serve a denotare peculiarità o caratteri di linguaggio e di

stile (arcaismo, grecismo, latinismo, forestierismo, tecnicismo, alcuni derivati da nomi

di persona, come dantismo, petrarchismo); o, ancora più concretamente, a indicare

sistemi e congegni (meccanismo, organismo). In pochi casi, il suffisso è stato sostituito

definitivamente o di preferenza da -ésimo (come in cristianesimo, urbanesimo,

protestantesimo, carduccianesimo). Il largo uso che negli ultimi decennî si è fatto di

questo suffisso, soprattutto nella formazione di sostantivi riferentisi a tendenze

letterarie e artistiche (futurismo, cubismo, astrattismo, ermetismo), ha suscitato

qualche reazione ironica, tendente a criticare non tanto il suffisso in sé quanto la

coniazione a volte arbitraria del sostantivo, e degli aggettivi in -istico che ne derivano".[2]

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[2] " -ism [from lat. -ismus, gr. -ισμός]. - The suffix of many abstract words, some derived from Greek (where they have a verbal origin) and others formed later (generally taken from nouns or adjectives), to indicate religious, social, philosophical, literary, artistic doctrines and movements (e.g. Manichaeism, Islam, socialism, empiricism, realism, impressionism, etc.), attitudes, tendencies, collective or individual characters (heroism, radicalism, patriotism, despoticism, optimism, etc.).), attitudes, tendencies, collective or individual characters (heroism, radicalism, patriotism, despotism, optimism, skepticism, fanaticism), behaviors or actions (defeatism, obstructionism), conditions or qualities, and even moral or physical defects and harmful habits (selfishness, mutism, squinting, colorblindness, alcoholism), sometimes conditions of things (parallelism, magnetism), sporting activities (cycling, running, downhill skiing, connected these with nouns in -ista as cyclist, etc.).). With concrete meaning, it serves to denote peculiarities or characters of language and style (archaism, Greekism, Latinism, foreignerism, technicality, some derived from person names, such as Danteanism, Petrarchism); or, even more concretely, to indicate systems and devices (mechanism, organism). In a few cases, the suffix has been replaced definitively or preferably by -ésimo (as in Christianism, urbanism, Protestantism, Carduccianism). The wide use that has been made of this suffix in the last ten years, especially in the formation of nouns referring to literary and artistic trends (futurism, cubism, abstractionism, hermeticism), has provoked someironic reactions, tending to criticize not so much the suffix itself as the sometimes-arbitrary coinage of the noun, and of the adjectives in -istico that derive from it".

This definition argues that words ending with -ismo generally belong to specific semantic groups such as doctrines, attitudes or actions, conditions of things of qualities. The most common meaning of nouns with the suffix -ism is to designate a particular doctrine or ideology.

Similarly, Land and Beniers (1992) apply the meaning of doctrine, ideology to -ism: *"the most usual semantic context of -ism refers to formations designating political and cultural movements.* They also point out that the derivatives in -ism designating doctrines belong to the educated lexicon: *"-ism is, above all, the suffix of ideologies, doctrines and scientific systems.*" One more aspect to consider si that most of the words that make up this semantic group are transparent. However, some of them can be morphologically opaque, so it is not easy to deduce the meaning of some words such as integrísimo, urbanismo, creazionismo. The term at the heart of this research (Abilismo) is also among the terms with an opaque meaning since the suffix -ism can be interpreted differently. Abilismo has a transparent meaning as a function of its parts but can be ambiguous precisely because of the suffix -ism.

Another semantic value that can be attributed to them, again according to the Treccani definition given above, is behaviour or sporting actions and activities (*alpinismo*, *ostruzionismo*). Then again, it can denote physical and moral qualities or conditions (*alcolismo, mutismo*). Finally, with more concrete meaning, it can characterize systems and devices (*meccanismo, organismo*). It may be interesting to note that the suffix has been sometimes replaced by -ésimo (*cristianesimo, urbanismo*).

Furthermore, in the field of attitudes, it is important to note the negative value that -ism attached to nouns (*perfezionismo, dirigismo, vittimismo*). This negative connotation may have originated in the sphere of the social-political lexicon and

generalized to the rest of the spheres as forms of individual behaviour within the social-political context. According to Franco Bergoglio (2007), the French Revolution gave rise to the modern use of -ism. It was born with the end of absolutism and the birth of the motto: liberté, egalité, fraternité. These revolutionary slogans were the cornerstones of modern political thought. At the beginning of the 19th century, the ideals of 1789 became opposing ideologies: liberalism, socialism, and communism. The most important philosophical systems of the 19th century were also translated into discipleships through isms: Marxism, Hegelism, idealism. So, the 19th century was the mother of the contraposition between -isms.

As Cesare De Michelis (1998) writes: *"Liberalism, socialism and communism, conservatism and, together with these, the blends of the many unstable components of totalitarianism in our century, even the most familiar concepts or definitions [...] of democracy: the phenomenon of 'modern' ideologies has spread everywhere since the early decades of the twentieth century".* There are yet no in-depth studies on the negative connotation of isms in the Italian language.

The different meanings explained above have been the basis for this work's semantic characterization of the -ism terms. The dataset used for this research collects the following semantic characterizations (clusters) for the ism derivatives in the meaning field.

	Clusters	Examples
1	Dottrine e movimenti religiosi, sociali, filosofici	Manicheismo, islamismo, socialismo, empirismo

2	Atteggiamenti, tendenze, caratteri collettivi o individuali	Eroismo, radicalismo, patriottismo, dispotismo, ottimismo, scetticismo
3	Comportamenti o azioni	Disfattismo, ostruzionismo
4	Condizioni o qualità e anche difetti morali o fisici e abitudini nocive	Egoismo, mutismo, strabismo, alcolismo
5	Condizioni di cose	Parallelismo, magnetismo
6	Attività sportive	Ciclismo, podismo
7	Peculiarità o caratteri di linguaggio e di stile	Arcaismo, grecismo, latinismo
8	Derivati di nomi di persona	Dantismo, petrarchismo
9	Sistemi e congegni	Meccanismo, organismo
10	Sostituito definitivamente o di preferenza da -ésimo	Cristianesimo, urbanesimo, protestantesimo
11	Tendenze letterarie e artistiche	Futurismo, cubismo, astrattismo, emetismo

Tab. 1: List of clusters used for the -isms

A final point is the difference between abstract and concrete. As pointed out in the Treccani definition, clusters 1-6 are considered abstract. Clusters 7-11 are defined with concrete meanings.

1.3.   Abilismo: Definition and Diffusion

This chapter describes the word "Abilismo" in everyday Italian literary language. It presents a brief explanation of the following lexicographic analysis of the major Italian terms ending with the suffix -ismo. Indeed, this term has recently gained some attention, and its linguistic research has been possible to focus on the use of the -isms.

1.3.1. Definition

The term Abilismo refers to discrimination, prejudice, or marginalization against disabled people. The word is a borrowing from the American English "Abilismo" composed by "able" and the suffix -ism. According to Merriam-Webster, it was first attested in 1981 and formed by "able", the stem of "disable, disabled", and "-ism." It is also used as a synonym of "disablism" in British English, but it depends on the context because it could highlight a different meaning.

The English word "Abilismo" was coined in the 1980s in Disability Studies, the scientific discipline developed mainly in the United States and in northern Europe around the 1970s. This field deals with disability as an individual medical phenomenon and in a multidisciplinary perspective such as social, political, historical, and cultural. This study area starts from a social model of disability, which has been analysed as a "*product of complex social structures and processes, rather than a simple and inevitable result of individual and biological difference*" (A. D. Marra, 2009).

Regarding the concept of Abilismo, scholars often resort to the definition of Fiona Kumari Campbell, researcher, and theorist of Disability Studies.

"A network of beliefs processes and practices that produces a particular kind of self and body (the body standard) that is projected as the perfect, speciestypical and therefore essential and fully human. Disability then is cast as a diminished state of being human" (F.K. Campbell, 2001).

At the beginning of the 2000s, the field of Disability Studies came to Italy, and the first occurrences can be found in some texts.

The concept of Abilismo is closely linked to other issues such as inclusion, activism, and social rights. Usually, Abilismo refers to different types of behaviour, not necessarily voluntary.

With regards to the Italian language, according to Accademia della Crusca, it was first attested in 2006.

"Oliver conclude auspicando che "dopo la lettura di questo libro, l'abilismo possa essere posto in coda alla lista poiché la disabilità merita di essere oggetto dell'analisi sociologica e della demistificazione esattamente come gli altri 'ismi'[3] (Valtellina, 2006).

However, its affirmation year is stated to be 2020, so that it could be considered a very new word. Details regarding the diffusion of the Italian term are described below (see the section 1.3.2. "Diffusion").

There are many blogs and websites on the subject, both interested in the theme or associations aimed at informing and raising awareness. One of the most popular is

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[3] "Oliver concludes by hoping that "after reading this book, ableism can be placed at the end of the list because disability deserves to be the subject of sociological analysis and demystification just as much as other 'isms'".

"Witty Wheels" by Elena e Maria Chiara Pasolini, trainers and bloggers about social justice applied to disability. They create online content such as articles or videos to analyse the oppression surrounding disabled people. Abilismo is what they precisely call this structural oppression that they define as a stigma. Moreover, they deal with disability from a feminist perspective providing training on these topics for different audiences (students, associations, or professionals). One of the most known examples is the architectural barriers limiting access to certain places or actual forms of physical or psychological violence. According to the "inVisibile" blog by the Italian newspaper "Il Corriere della Sera", which is a blog that denounces a condition in which people who must deal with disability live, the word "*Abilismo describes people by defining them according to their disability with specific characteristic and imprisoning them in stereotypes in which they are irrevocably inferior.*" This blog also aims to change the current situation by talking about it as clearly as possible.

On 28th July 2021, it was published an article in the "Giovanni 2030" website, which is the digital home created by the Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civil Service precisely for those looking for new tools and new challenges to grow and find their way, entitled "Non sapevo di essere Abilista"[4] by Giuseppe Vadalà, who wrote:

"*Paternalism prevents the construction of an empathic relationship group and at the same time places them in a social and economic position of subordination*" (Vadalà, 2021).

Indeed, many organizations have historically invested in pietism. However, recently different associations started experimenting with a different portrait of disabled people

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[4] "I did not know I was an Ableist"

setting up a discourse of rights and the need to advance research without diminishing the value of these people. So, it can be well understood how Abilismo concerns small, discriminated groups and actual forms of violence.

In the field of Disability studies, other terms have also been used to describe related behaviours such as "inspiration porn" and "supercrip."

The expression "inspirational porn" coined by the Australian activist Stella Young (2014) refers to the "representation of disabled people as inspiration solely because they have a disability, objectifying them in favour of non-disabled people, and making them extraordinary even if they perform trivially ordinary gestures, such as going out at *night, studying or becoming parents*" (Righetti, 2019). Inspiration-porn is when a person with a disability is asked to tell their life story to inspire others when they are made to believe that living with a disability makes them exceptional people. What is the communication goal in showing a little girl with no hands drawing while holding a pencil in her mouth or the child running with carbon bra prosthetics? They call them pornographic on purpose because they reduce one category of people to the benefice of another, disabled people to the benefice of non-disabled people (Fedeli, 2017).

The term "supercrip" literally means "superstorpio" and it is often translated in Italian as "superdisabile." It refers to a very active person who actively participates in strenuous sports (Vadalà, 2011). This, too, is a stereotyped conception of disability that creates prejudice and a sense of distance between people with disabilities and others.

In addition to the term Abilismo, there are also a few examples with the adjective Abilista (*Ableist).* The spontaneous formation of ableist is not surprising since the

interrelation between the suffix -ismo and -ista is typical in the morphology of Italian (razzismo-razzista, materialism-materialista) (Serianni, 1988). The most common attestations regarding the adjectives are about (ableist) behaviours, (ableist) language, or (ableist)attitudes. On the other hand, the use of ableist as a noun is still limited and poorly attested.

1.3.2. Diffusion

Contemporary Italian dictionaries do not record Abilismo, but in September 2021, the term was included in the section "Neologisms of the week" in the Treccani website with an attestation from the "Corriere della Sera" dated 17th February 2021. Here, the term Abilismo is defined as "*the discriminatory attitude towards people with disabilities."* On 18th May 2021, among the pages of Google Italia, the results that emerged for Abilismo were 37,800. In addition, Google Trends showed a significant peak of searches for the term in November 2020. This surge can be traced back to the approval by the Chamber of Deputies of the so-called DDL Zan, which concerns the *"Measures for preventing and combating discrimination and violence on grounds of sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability"* and the public debate that ensued. (Di Valvasone, 2021).

Research in the newspaper "Corriere della Sera" archives confirms the first attestation in 2019 in an interview with the Paralympic athlete Sarah Reinerstsen who said: "*I call it 'Abilismo': it's racism towards people like me and Pistorius*" in February 2008. On the other hand, research in the newspaper "La Stampa" archives gives 47 results, all dating back to 2021.

In the United States, at Oberlin College in Ohio, a proposal circulated asking professors to include alerts in their course descriptions. "*Be aware of racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism (about transgender people), Abilismo (about wheelchair users), and other issues of privilege and oppression and realize that all forms of violence are traumatic, that before your classes, students have had lives and have lives outside the classroom: experiences you may not imagine or understand*" (Medina, 2014).

Below are some examples of use.

1. Le differenziazioni messe in atto a proposito della disabilità hanno però una storia comune a quelle che si producono in relazione alla sessualità, al genere, alla razza, in quanto espressione di un pensiero che tende a produrre categorie, accentuando un termine della dicotomia: abilismo (abile/non abile), sessismo (maschio/femmina), razzismo (italiano/straniero)[5] (Modeghini, Valtellina, 2006).

In this example, the meaning of Abilismo is cantered on differentiation about disability. However, it is interesting to note how the term is related to other types of discrimination, such as sexual or racist discrimination. Indeed, Abilismo is often treated together with other kinds of discrimination.

2. L'Italia - spiega a Repubblica Alessandro Zan - era al 35esimo posto in Europa per accettazione sociale lgtb, con questa norma che comprende anche il

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[5] The differentiations enacted regarding disability, however, have a history common to those produced in relation to sexuality, gender, race, as an expression of a thought that tends to produce categories, accentuating a term of the dichotomy: ableism (able/non able), sexism (male/female), racism (Italian/foreigner).

contrasto all'abilismo sarà tra le più avanzate d'Europa. Si tratta di un ampio strumento contro le discriminazioni e le violenze[6] (Custodero, 2020).

First, it should be noted that the term "Abilismo" never appears in the draft of the Ddl Zan. However, once again, the term Abilismo is part of a wider discourse concerning the social acceptance of marginalized people because of their sexual preferences or ethnicity.

1.3.3. Related terms

There are a couple of terms that can be related to Abilismo in the context of disability studies. The first one is audism, a term coined in 1975 by the American researcher Tom L. Humphries and used to describe discrimination against deaf people, based on the belief that the ability to hear makes a person somehow superior. In Italy, a project was recently launched to have the Sanremo songs translated by LIS performers who are predominantly hearing with only 1-2 deaf people.

The second term here has no connection, at least superficially, with a disability. However, it also belongs to the -isms that express discrimination and seem to have a fair diffusion in Italian. Ageism is derived from the English ageism, composed of age 'età' (age) and the suffix -ism. According to Merriam-Webster, it was not attested since 1969, when it was used by the American psychiatrist and geriatrician Robert Butler to indicate the devaluation of and discrimination against the elderly.

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[6] Italy - explains Alessandro Zan to Repubblica - was in 35th place in Europe for social acceptance lgtb, with this rule that also includes the contrast to the abilismo will be among the most advanced in Europe. This is a wide instrument against discrimination and violence.

On the Treccani portal, ageism is registered among the 2016 Neologisms and is defined as a form of prejudice and devaluation against an individual because of his or her age; in particular, a form of discrimination and devaluation towards older people.

Ageism is discrimination whose magnitude no one has understood yet. First, it includes all human beings of any race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, thin or fat, tall or short, nationality or language. At the same time, ageism is also the only discrimination that affects a species that has never been affected by these phenomena in the history of humanity: the white, average, Western man. (Palmarini,2016).

Ageist discourse has progressed from referring to the growing population of older people as a problem, threat, and burden, to talking about a 'silver tsunami' that will wipe out social resources. Ageism, like racism and sexism, serves to justify inequality, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

Chapter Two

Analysis of -isms: lexicographic research and word frequency

This chapter aims to present the first part of the analysis carried out on -isms. Starting from the lexicographical research on two dictionaries, we then calculate word frequencies and clusters and end with a brief diachronic study considering the date of the first occurrence of the searched lemmas. A worksheet has been created to collect the lemmas from the two Italian Dictionaries used for the lexicographic research, namely the De Mauro (2014) and The Sabatini- Coletti (2008). We then proceed with the attribution of each word to a cluster and its distribution over the total number of -isms. The frequency of the lemmas is then searched through the software sketch engine that hosts hundreds of corpora. The result is the calculation, through the Zipf index (Van Heuven, Mandera, Keuleers, and Brysbaert, 2014), of the frequency classes for each word. Finally, using the date of the first occurrence of the lemmas from the dictionary entries, we present a brief chronological analysis of the -isms.

2.1. The two dictionaries: De Mauro and Sabatini-Coletti

The first is the De Mauro available online on the Internazionale website. The Nuovo De Mauro has its first origin in GRADIT (Grande dizionario italiano dell'uso) (De Mauro, 2014). This work, with more than 260,000 entries was conceived and directed by Tullio De Mauro. Published in 1999, the dictionary places particular emphasis on the use of each word, giving, whenever possible, the earliest date of occurrence and the source. The dictionaries of usage include the entries (on average approximately 90,000-130,000 lemmas) with which an Italian-speaking speaker can potentially come into contact passively or actively. The main purpose of dictionaries of usage, therefore, is not the selection of words according to purist and evaluative criteria, but the completeness of the documentation: the lexicon of all sectors of life and all levels of usage is therefore taken into consideration, including slang and vulgar entries.

The Nuovo De Mauro includes about 160,000 lemmas and sub lemmas divided into two large categories: main entries (130,000) and polyrhematic sub lemmas (30,000). As far as the structure of the entries is concerned, here is an example.

abusivismo

a|bu|ṣi|vì|ṣmo

s.m.

1971;

CO tendenza a rendere sistematico un abuso alla norma: *abusivismo edilizio*

Fig. 1: Example of De Mauro dictionary entry

There are some aspects to focus on. First, the lemma is presented followed by the grammatical qualification, i.e., the grammatical category of a speech element. The grammatical qualification is followed by the date of the first attestation of the lemma and eventual etymological information. Then follows the definition with the different articulations of meaning. Here it is important to underline how some words are polysemic, since all the meanings of a word will be considered for the groping that will be done later. Polysemy is the coexistence, in the same term, of different meanings: it can arise as an effect of semantic extension of the word (in Lat. the meaning of "libro" develops from the older one of "corteccia"), or as an effect of obliteration of the diversity of etymology between two words that are semantically different, but phonologically identical (as in the case of albero, a generic name for a woody plant, and tree "pioppo").

The information extracted from the entries and used to draw up the list of lemmas ending in -ism in this work are:

- Lemma (abusivismo)

- Date of the first attestation (ca. 1971)

- Definition (tendency to systematically abuse the norm)

- Example of use if given (abusivismo edilizio)

The second vocabulary used is the Sabatini-Coletti, available online at the Corriere website. It takes in and defines with clarity and precision the lexicon of standard Italian, specialistic and literary tradition. The authors continue to deal with the Italian language and its changes and are recognised as absolute authorities in their field. This edition presents 138,000 lexical units, with about 400,000 meanings and a total of 3,088 pages. The Dictionary records:

- The lexicon of the language suitably "literary"

- The regional lexicon

- The sectorial and specialised lexicon

- Foreign words (both to supply the meaning, and to propose the equivalents in Italian)

- The noun polyrhematic units

- The lexicon of "high availability "

It is the first Dictionary in which the words are also considered in the construction of the sentence and their daily use, explaining:

- The formation of the sentence around each verb

- All uses of pronouns and conjunctions

- The flexible use of language in the variety of texts (professional, non-fiction, journalistic, literary, scientific, etc.).

It is, therefore, the most innovative of the current dictionaries of the Italian language, based on theoretical models that consider

i) the close relationship between semantics and syntax, especially concerning the function of the verb in the structure of the sentence

ii) the differences that communicative use produces in the surface of the language. Particularly noteworthy is the indication of the 10,000 words that are easier to understand and the recording of polyrhematic units. The historical dimension of the language is evoked above all to demonstrate how consolidated specific usages might appear to be recent innovations.

abusivismo

[a-bu-si-vì-smo] s.m.

- Pratica diffusa di illegalità in ambiti regolati da norme e da autorizzazioni: a. edilizio

- a. 1942

Concerning the area of the lemma, it is written in bold with the initial capital letter and the indication of the accent only if it is compulsory in the graphic form.

Fig. 2: Example of Sabatini-Coletti dictionary entry

This is followed by the transcription in square brackets and the hyphenation. The variants of the lemma, if present, are in bold; finally, the grammatical qualification. After the area of the lemma, you can find the definition, the exemplification of meanings and uses of the entry. Finally, the etymological information is introduced by the symbol (E) inside a round brackets. After the etymological information follows a point, a symbol that introduces the session concerning the date of the first attestation of the word.

For words attested before 1800, the century is indicated globally, in Roman numerals.

For entries dating from 1800 onwards, it is suggested, when possible, the year.

The information extracted from the entries is the same as the first Dictionary.

- Lemma (abusivismo)

- Date of the first attestation (1942)

- Definition (pratica diffusa di illegalità in ambiti regolati da norme e da autorizzazioni)

- Example of use if given (a. edilizio)

Both dictionaries consulted are dictionaries of usage or synchronic dictionaries, i.e., those most used to know the meaning of the words we encounter "in nature" today. As we have seen, in fact, although each dictionary may present some small variations, there are some elements which are never missing (i.e., the grammatical category, the year of first occurrence and the examples of use).

2.2. The lexicographic research

This section briefly describes the which information from the dictionaries and how this information has been organised. To do this a worksheet has been created ad hoc with Excel and below is an example.

First, it should be noted that in the two dictionaries all words ending with -ism have been searched. Since the dictionaries are available online, the lemmas are searchable by initial. For example, by clicking on the letter A, it is possible to search for all lemmas starting with A. The total number of lemmas from Sabatini-Coletti is 899, while De Mauro has a total of 1508 lemmas ending with -ismo. Thus, starting from the entries of the dictionaries, the information that has been extracted are: lemma, graphic variant

of the lemma if present, definition or more definitions in case of polysemy and year of first occurrence. Below is an example of how this information was organised.

- Lemma: the actual lemma as it appears in the entries in bold of the dictionaries (e.g., abbandonismo, abolizionismo, absintismo ...)

- Variante (variant): the graphic variants of a lemma with the same meaning (e.g., adozianismo, adozionismo).

- Definizione (definition): the definition that appears in the Dictionary. If a word has more than one definition, all the meanings of the lemma are reported. (the definition of abandonismo is *tendenza a perdersi d'animo, a non prendere iniziative o a non portare a termine ciò che si è intrapreso*". [7]

- Esempio d'uso (usage example): If a dictionary entry also contains a usage example of the lemma, it is also important to better understand its meaning (e.g., for the word abusivismo (squatting), the example of use is: "*abusivismo edilizio*" building squatting)

- Anno (year): date of the first occurrence of the word (e.g., the word abbandonismo has been attested for the first time in the year 1980).

To compile the list of lemmas ending in -ism, a worksheet was used, and it is briefly described below.

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[7] A tendency to lose heart, to take no initiative or not complete what has been undertaken.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	iniziale	lemma	variante	id_sen	definizione	esempio_d'uso	anno		
2	A	abbandonismo		1	TS psic. tendenza a perdersi d'animo ,	a non prendere iniziative o a non	1980		
3	A	abolizionismo		1	dottrina o movimento che sostiene l'abolizione di leggi, consuetudini o is		1865		
4	A	abolizionismo		2	negli Stati Uniti d'America: movimento antischiavista del XIX sec.		1865		
5	A	abolizionismo		3	movimento degli anni '30 per l'abolizione del proibizionismo		1865		
6	A	absintismo		1	TS med. intossicazione da assenzio		1877		
7	A	abusivismo		1	CO tendenza a rendere sistematico un	abusivismo edilizio	1971		
8	A	accademismo		1	CO nelle arti figurative e in letteratura, osservanza pedantesca di modell		1905		
9	A	acosmismo		1	TS filos. nel pensiero di Hegel, teoria che, come quella di B. Spinoza, ne		1907		
10	A	acosmismo		2	estens., dottrina che assimila in un unico principio la molteplicità delle c		1907		
11	A	acrobatismo		1	CO arte dell'acrobata, acrobatica; anche fig.		1907		
12	A	acrobatismo		2	BU fig., acrobazia, funambolismo	gli acrobatismi della politica	1875		
13	A	acromatismo		1	TS ott. assenza di aberrazione cromatica		1865		
14	A	acromatismo		2	ott. assenza di aberrazione cromatica		1865		
15	A	adenoidismo		1	TS med. complesso di sintomi dovuti all'ipertrofia delle adenoidi		1916		
16	A	adozianismo	adozionismo	1	TS st. relig. nei secc. II-III: dottrina eretica che considerava Gesù Cristo		1919		
17	A	aeromodellismo		1	CO l'attività di progettazione, costruzione e sperimentazione di aeromode		1934		
18	A	aerotropismo		1	TS bot. curvatura di un organo vegetale nella direzione da cui proviene m		1955		
19	A	aeroturismo		1	CO turismo praticato con piccoli aerei		1961		
20	A	affarismo		1	CO il dedicarsi senza scrupoli agli affar	: mentalità da affarista	1866		
21	A	aforisma	aforismo	1	CO massima, breve sentenza che espr	parlare per aforismi, gli aforismi c	1321		
22	A	aforisma	aforismo	2	OB precetto di medicina	estens., scienza medica		1321		
23	A	agitazionismo		1	TS polit. atteggiamento politico o ideologico favorevole al prodursi di una		1965		
24	A	agnosticismo		1	TS filos. dottrina filosofica che sostiene l'inconoscibilità di ciò che non è		1897		
25	A	agonismo		1	CO particolare impegno di un atleta o d una finale all'insegna del più acc		1935		
26	A	agonismo		2	pratica di uno sport a livello agonistico		1935		
27	A	agostinismo		1	TS filos. pensiero filosofico e teologico di sant'Agostino	complesso dell		1955		
28	A	agrammatismo		1	TS neurol. incapacità di formare frasi intelligibili dovuta a lesioni cerebral		1899		
29	A	agriturismo		1	CO attività turistica consistente nel soggiornare presso cascine, aziende		1978		
30	A	albinismo		1	TS med. assenza di pigmentazione nella pelle, nei capelli e nell'iride		1830		
31	A	alcolismo		1	TS bot. in alcune piante, mancata formazione della clorofilla		1830		
32	A	alessandranismo	alessandrinismo	1	TS filos. indirizzo filosofico del Rinascimento che riprendeva le teorie de		1955		
33	A	alessandranismo		2	estens., ricercatezza e preziosismo stilistico		1955		

SABATINI-COLETTI   **DE MAURO**   +

Fig. 3: Extract from the worksheet

Two different sheets have been created for the two dictionaries: the first one is renamed "SABATINI_COLETTI" and the second one "DE MAURO". The sheet is subdivided as follows:

- column A: Iniziale (initial). In the first column is written the initial letter of the lemma to be able to envy more easily the lemmas and to have an ordered vision of the list. (e.g., A, B, C)

- column B: Lemma.

- column C: Variante (variant).

- column D: id_senso (id_sense). This column has only one practical function; it describes how many meanings or definitions appear in the Dictionary for that lemma. Each definition is reported on one row so that a word can be repeated several times and appear on multiple lines if it has numerous meanings. (For

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	inizia	lemma	variante	source	id_sens		esempio_d'uso	anno
2	A	abbandonismo		deM	1	TS psic. tendenza a perdersi d'animo ; a non prendere inizi		1980
3	A	abolizionismo		SC	1	Movimento o dottrina che chiede l'abolizione di leggi o cons		1875
4	A	abolizionismo		deM	1	dottrina o movimento che sostiene l'abolizione di leggi, con		1865
5	A	abolizionismo		deM	2	negli Stati Uniti d'America: movimento antischiavista del XIX		1865
6	A	abolizionismo		deM	3	movimento degli anni '30 per l'abolizione del proibizionismo		1865
7	A	absintismo		deM	1	TS med. intossicazione da assenzio		1877
8	A	abusivismo		SC	1	Pratica diffusa di illegalità in ambiti regola	a. edilizio	1942
9	A	abusivismo		deM	1	CO tendenza a rendere sistematico un at	abusivismo edilizi	1971
10	A	accademismo		SC	1	Tendenza a comporre un'opera; spec. artistica; seguendo t		1905
11	A	accademismo		deM	1	CO nelle arti figurative e in letteratura, osservanza pedante		1905
12	A	acosmismo		deM	1	TS filos. nel pensiero di Hegel, teoria che, come quella di B		1907
13	A	acosmismo		deM	2	estens., dottrina che assimila in un unico principio la moltep		1907
14	A	acrobatismo		deM	1	CO arte dell'acrobata, acrobatica; anche fig.		1907
15	A	acrobatismo		deM	2	BU fig., acrobazia, funambolismo	gli acrobatismi de	1875
16	A	acromatismo		SC	1	fis. Proprietà di un sistema ottico di deviare un fascio di luce		1865
17	A	acromatismo		deM	1	TS ott. assenza di aberrazione cromatica		1865
18	A	acromatismo		deM	2	ott. assenza di aberrazione cromatica		1865
19	A	adenoidismo		deM	1	TS med. complesso di sintomi dovuti all'ipertrofia delle ader		1916
20	A	adozianismo	adozionismo	deM	1	TS st. relig. nei secc. II-III: dottrina eretica che considerava		1919
21	A	aeromodellismo		SC	1	Attività, perlopiù ricreativa, consistente nella costruzione di		1934
22	A	aeromodellismo		deM	1	CO l'attività di progettazione, costruzione e sperimentazione		1934
23	A	aerotropismo		deM	1	TS bot. curvatura di un organo vegetale nella direzione da		1955
24	A	aeroturismo		deM	1	CO turismo praticato con piccoli aerei		1961
25	A	affarismo		SC	1	Tendenza a moltiplicare gli affari economici e a perseguirli i		1866
26	A	affarismo		deM	1	CO il dedicarsi senza scrupoli agli affari: mentalità da affaris		1866
27	A	aforisma	aforismo	deM	1	CO massima, breve sentenza che esprim	parlare per aforis	1321
28	A	aforisma	aforismo	deM	2	OB precetto di medicina | estens., scienza medica		1321
29	A	agitazionismo		deM	1	TS polit. atteggiamento politico o ideologico favorevole al p		1965
30	A	agnosticismo		SC	2	estens. Sospensione del giudizio, astensione da esso di fr		1905

example, the word abolizionismo has three different meanings, and the fourth

column will be marked with 1,2,3).

- column E: Definizione (definition).

- column F: Esempio_uso (usage_example).

- column G: Anno (year).

Once all the words were collected, the first Dictionary and the second Dictionary were merged, creating a single list of lemmas with suffix   -ism. To do this, a column was inserted and titled "source" (column D) to see from which Dictionary the lemma had been extracted. DeM indicates the De Mauro dictionary, and SB shows the Sabatini-Coletti.

Fig. 4: Extract from the worksheet with the added column (source)

2.2. Grouping

After the union of the words from the two dictionaries, we passed to the grouping, a process of combining words in groups. Starting from table 1 (see pages 14-15), each word was attributed to a group. As reported above, the total number of lemmas from Sabatini-Coletti is 899, while De Mauro has a total of 1508 lemmas. In the case in which a word had more meanings, it was inserted in two different clusters. Once again, a column has been added to the sheet for this last step (column I). We now present the distribution of the clusters (fig. 5), considering that words belonging to different groups were counted twice. First, we can see that the most numerous clusters are the second representing attitudes, tendencies, collective or individual characters (33,59%), followed by cluster 1 (20,27%) representing religious, social, philosophical doctrines and movements. Cluster 11 (10,78%) represents literary and artistic doctrines so that is quite numerous, too. non-adapted foreigners. This distinction between cluster 1 and 11 is made for the simple fact that the words of concerning literature and art fields were born later than those present in cluster 1. Another group with 12% is the number 4: conditions or qualities, moral or physical defects, and harmful habits. Then group 7 designates peculiarities and moral or physical defects and unhealthy habits (7%). To a lesser extent, we find cluster 3 with 4% (behaviours or actions) and cluster 5 (condition of things) with 4%. Cluster 8, which denotes derivatives of person, is present with 3%. Finally, we find clusters 6 and 9 with 2%, which indicate sports activities and systems and devices, respectively. The last cluster representing those words with the suffix -ism definitively replaced by -ésimo is a small part of the total (1%).

CLUSTER DISTRIBUTION
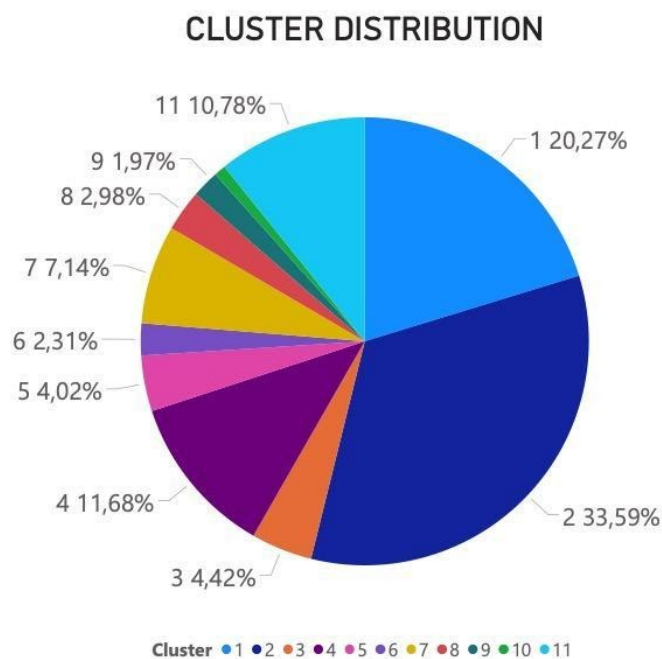
Fig. 5: Cluster distribution

2.3. Frequency of the lemmas

In this section, we will analyse the frequency of words. Analysing the frequency of terms is helpful to understand whether a word can be considered of high or low frequency and its use within the Italian lexicon. The frequency of words is calculated because it represents important data for our research. First, for lemma recognition, which depends on both the frequency with which words are used in a given language and the context in which a word is presented. For example, the word "table" is recognised more quickly than "cabbage". In our case, taking words with an -ism suffix, it could be that the word fascism is more recognised than the word abilismo.

Furthermore, according to the Lògogen model (Morton, 1969; Morton & Patterson, 1980) words have a weight, i.e., a level of activation at rest that can be increased depending on how frequent that logogen is in our mental dictionary. Furthermore, there is a threshold of activation of a logogen that must be exceeded for identification to

occur. For example, if the word is high frequency, e.g., fascism, the activation threshold will be lower. If the word has a low frequency, e.g., abilismo, the activation threshold will be higher. activation threshold will be higher.

In addition, knowing if a word is of low or high use will be helpful later for the selection of terms to be submitted in the questionnaire for the experiment's participants.

To calculate the word frequency, the sketch engine program was used because it hosts hundreds of corpora in many languages. Sketch Engine was founded by the lexicographer Adam Kilgariff in 2003. Two corpora are used to calculate the lemma frequency, which are described below. The list of lemmas with suffix -ism is inserted into the Sketch Engine program by selecting the corpus from which the number of occurrences for each word is calculated. The two corpora are now described, and we will then move on to the description of the Zipf index to calculate the frequency classes.

2.3.1. Corpora Description

We now look at the characteristics of the two corpora consulted for this research. One last piece of information to keep in mind is the date of consultation of the corpora since many of these are also updated daily. For this research, the consultation of the corpora on Sketch Engine took place on April 19, 2021.

i.Italian Web 2016 (itTenTen2016)

The TenTen Corpus Family (TenTen corpora) is a family of text corpora created from the Web. The corpora are built using technology that specialises in collecting only Web content of linguistic value. All TenTen corpora are prepared according to the same criteria and can be considered comparable corpora.

The name TenTen refers to the size of the target corpus, over 10 billion words per language. These TenTen corpora are available in more than 40 languages.

The Italian Web corpus (itTenTen) is an Italian corpus made up of texts collected from the Internet. It consists of a total of 5,864,495,700 tokens and 4,989,729,171 words.

ii.   Timestamped JSI web corpus

The Timestamped JSI web corpus is a new family of web corpora created from the JSI newsfeed by Jozef Stefan Institute, Slovenia (Trampus et al. 2004).

JSI web corpus is a clean, continuous, real-time aggregated stream of semantically enriched news articles from RSS-enabled sites worldwide. The newsfeed is available in many languages.

The project continuously processes 75,000 RSS feeds which bring between 100,000 and 150,000 articles every day.

Currently, the corpus covers 2014 and 2019. There are now regular monthly updates from Jozef Stefan Institute, and regularly amend the corpus with the latest data.

The diachronic annotation is extremely valuable in connection with Sketch Engine and its trends feature. The trends feature analyses the frequency of using a word in time by comparing the frequency across a series of comparable periods.

The Italian Timestamped Corpus is an Italian corpus updated with new texts daily. It consists of 7,691, 374, 904 tokens and 6, 509, 458, 717 words.

2.3.2. Zipf Index

Returning to the list of frequencies of the lemmas extracted from the sketch engine with the search on the two corpora, we can now create the frequency classes. Usually,

the frequency of the words depends on the size of the corpus, and researchers work with standardised measures to compare the data. In our case, two different frequency classes will be calculated since the two corpora have two various measures. Thus, the standardised measure most used is the frequency per million words (fpm). If a word has an fpm lower than five, it will be catalogued as a low-frequency word. On the contrary, with a fpm higher than 100, the word is considered as high-frequency word. There are a few problems with this measure. First, in corpora with tens of millions of words, most words have a frequency lower than 1 fpm, and more than half of the words are situated below the intuitive start of the scale. Secondly, the frequency effect is compressed with the fpm measure, typically represented by a logarithmic curve. This means that the difference between 1 fpm and 2 fpm affects processing times between 10 fpm and 20 fpm, between 100 fpm and 200 fpm. Because the fpm scale provides users with the wrong intuitions (1 fpm is the start of the scale, differences lower than 5 fpm are negligible), Van Heuven, Mandera, Keuleers, and Brysbaert (2018) proposed the Zipf scale as an alternative. The Zipf scale is logarithmic and is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Zipf} = \log 10 \text{ (frequency per billion words)}$$

The frequency per billion words (pbm) is the ratio between words' absolute frequency and the corpus size divided by 1,000,000,000. The scale runs from 1 to 6 and can be interpreted by dividing it into two parts. The lower part of the scale (1-3) represents low-frequency words, while the upper part (4-6) represents high-frequency words. There are also words with Zipf greater than 6, but they are function words such as di, il, la, e (of, the, and).

For example, if a word occurred 500,000 in a corpus of 2,000,000,000 words, its bpm would be 250,000, and its Zipf value would be calculated as LOG10 (25000).

As far as this work is concerned, the Zipf index was calculated from the list of word frequencies obtained from the sketch engine program.

Each absolute word frequency was divided by the total number of tokens in the two corpora. The number obtained, i.e., the relative word frequency was multiplied by 1,000,000,000. The number obtained is the frequency per million words (pbm) used to calculate the logarithm in base 10 with Excel.

The histogram below shows the distribution of the words in corpus 1 (itTenTen2016) and in corpus 2 (Timestamped JSI). The x-axis represents the Zipf index, and the y-axis indicates the frequency of the words. As we can see for corpus 1, most of the terms have a Zipf 3 or 4. We can therefore say that most of the words are of medium-high frequency in corpus 1. The graph, therefore, respects a normal distribution. The trend of the graph differs for corpus 2. Most of the words have a Zipf index between 2 and 3. This means that the words can be considered, for the most part, as low-frequency words.

Also, this graph compares the Zipf indexes of the two corpora. The same considerations made earlier apply. As it can be seen, the Zipf index presents two different trends for the two corpora. This data shows that the frequency of words is related to the size of the corpus.
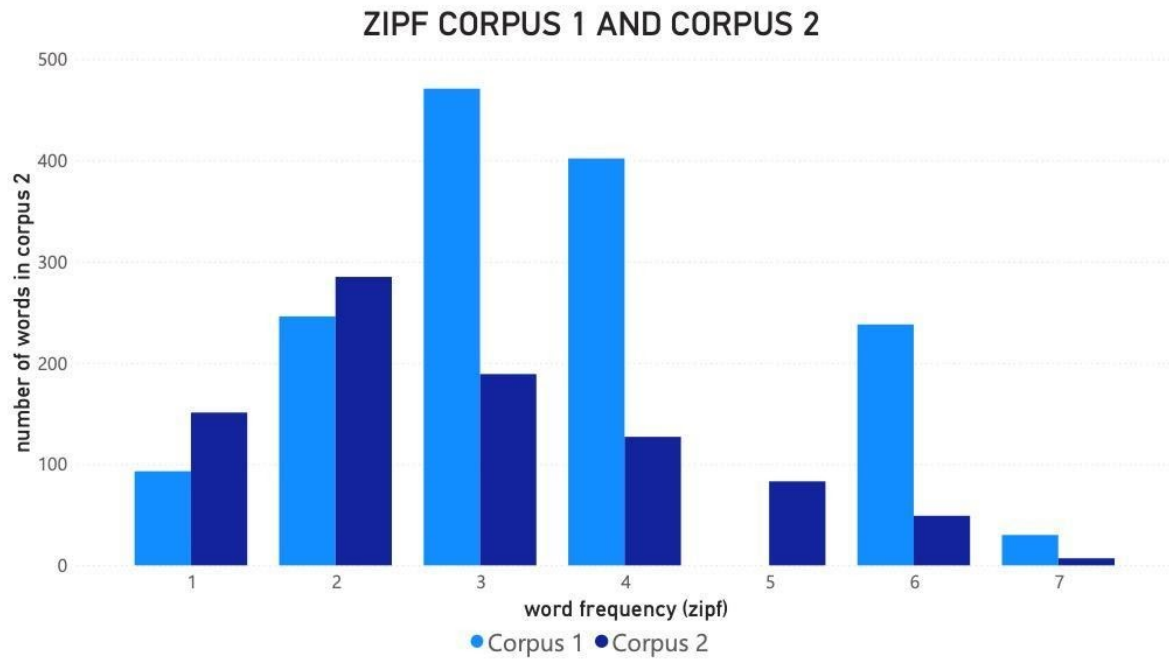
Fig. 6: Zipf (1-7) for both corpora

2.3.3. Relative frequency and proportion of clusters

The data presented below serve for the selection of the stimuli for the questionnaire. For now, we will only analyse with the following graphs the relative frequencies of the clusters and the proportion of the set on

the total of the -isms for both corpora.

Once the frequency of individual words has been calculated, we add up the frequencies and calculate the frequency of clusters within the corpora. To calculate the absolute frequency of the clusters, the absolute frequencies of the individual words were added together. The relative frequency was calculated by dividing by the total

number of words in the corpora. A detail to keep in mind is that 68 words belong to two clusters due to their semantic characteristics. When counting the frequencies, we, therefore, divided the frequency of the word by two to include it in the count of both clusters they belong to.

The histogram below shows the relationship between word frequency and cluster membership in the two corpora.

It can be said that the trend is almost the same, both corpora show a high number of more frequent words in cluster 2, i.e., attitudes and tendencies.

RELATIVE FREQUENCY CORPUS 1 AND CORPUS 2
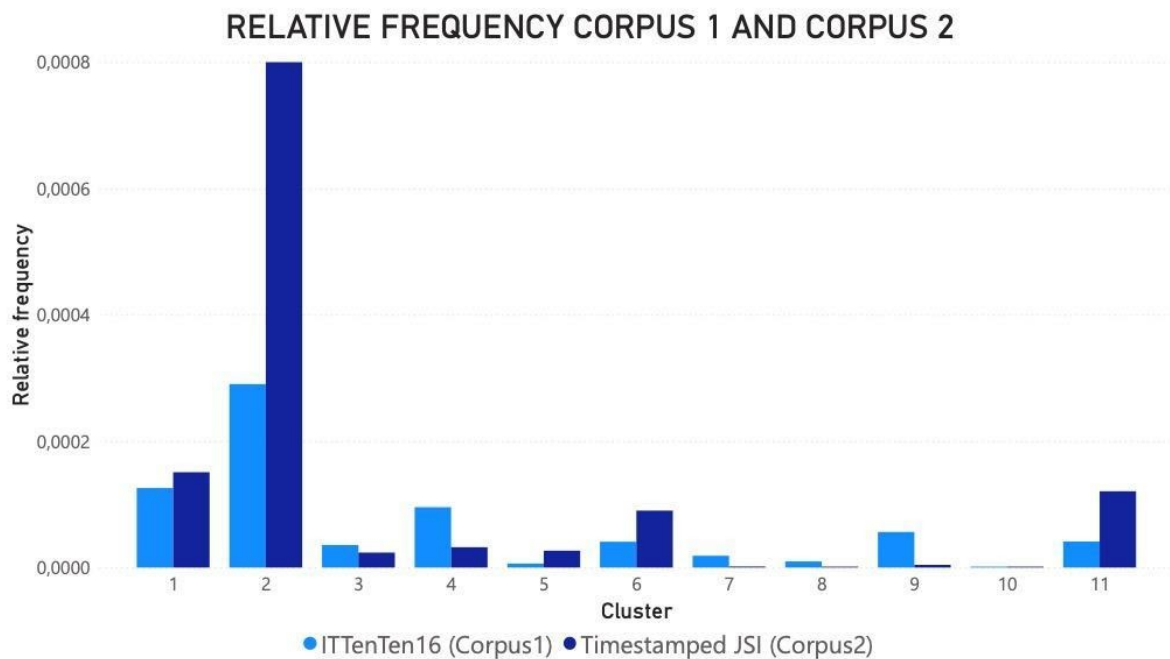
Fig. 7: words relative frequency for both corpora

If we look at the two clusters separately, however, we find a high frequency of words also for cluster 1 (doctrines) and cluster 4 (conditions or qualities) in itTenten16 (corpus 1). Number 9 (systems and devices) also differs slightly from the remaining clusters. The other clusters have a lower frequency. For the second corpus, however, clusters 1 and 11, which both denote doctrines, the former political and religious doctrines, and the latter artistic and literary doctrines, have a higher relative frequency than the other clusters within the corpus. The other clusters present a very low relative frequency.
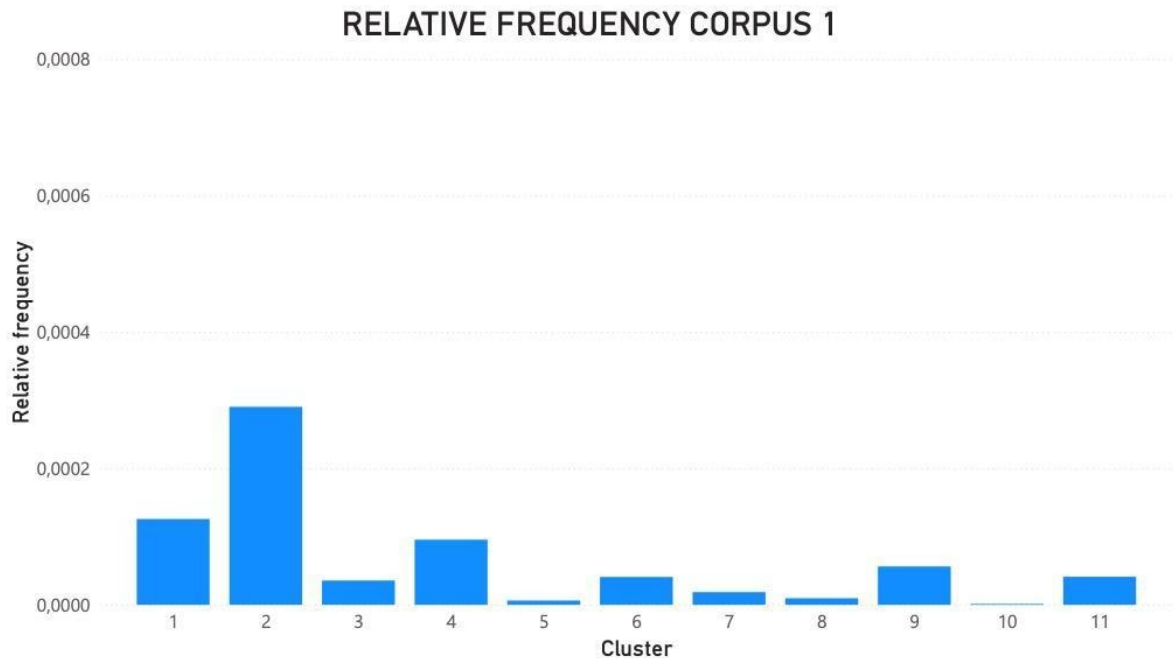
Fig. 9: words relative frequency for corpus 1 (itTenTen16)
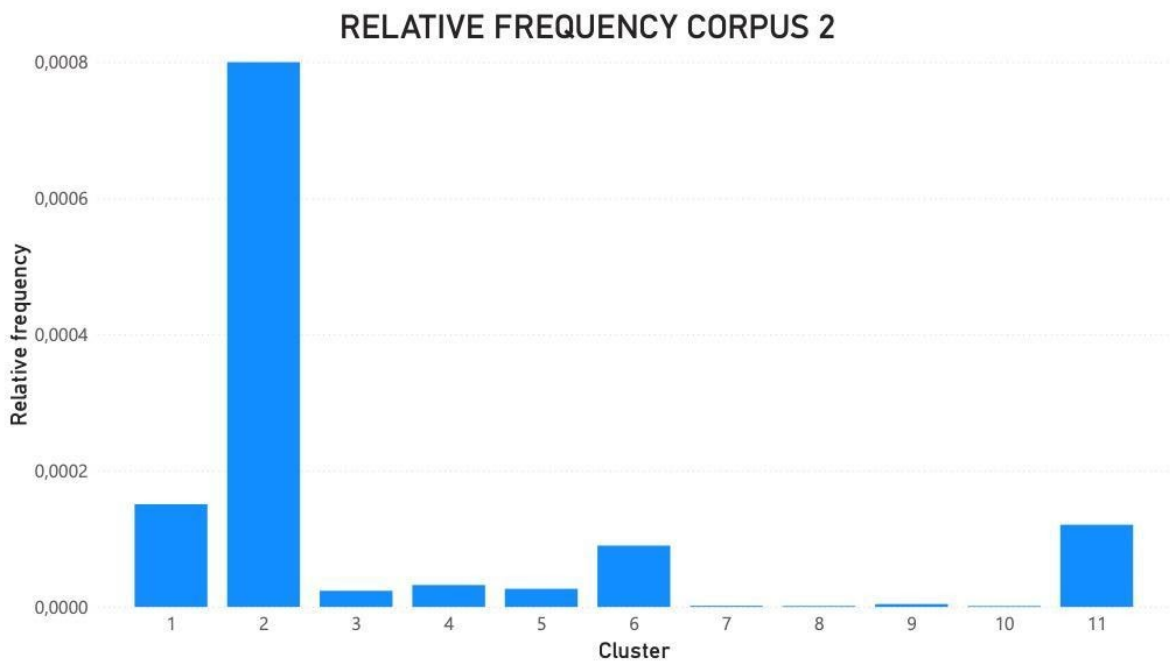
Fig. 10: words relative frequency for corpus 2 (Timestamped JSI)

To understand to what extent the relative frequencies of the clusters influence the total, the proportion of the different types of clusters of -isms is presented. The two pie charts then show the balance of each cluster within the two different corpora for -isms. The pie chart is only meant to be an extension of the graphs presented above for the distribution of the clusters over the total. This chart gives a clear view of the size of the cluster over the total -isms. For corpus 1, the cluster 2 represents 40.26% of the total, so almost half of the words would belong to cluster 2. For corpus 2 as well, cluster 2 represents more than half of the -isms (65, 18%). This means that words designating attitudes and movements represent most of the -isms.
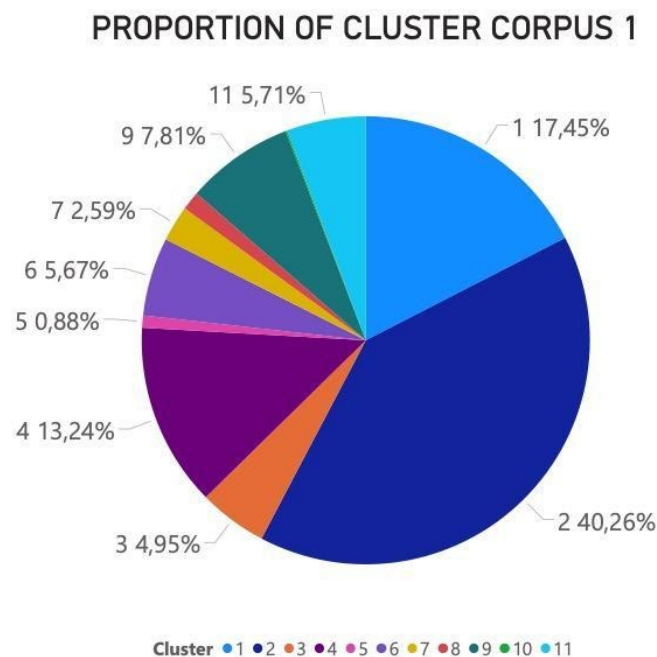
Fig. 11: proportion of clusters on total -isms for itTenTen16 corpus

PROPORTION OF CLUSTER CORPUS 2
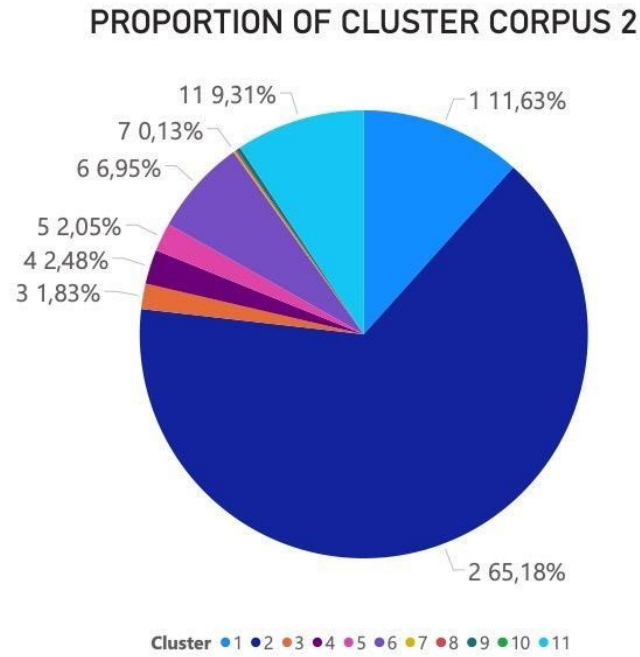
Fig. 12: proportion of clusters on total -isms for Timestamped JSI corpus

2.4. Time plot

This last part is intended to briefly present the temporal data collected in the first phase of data collection from dictionaries. One of the information reported in the entries of the lemmas was the date of the first attestation. Starting from this date, a time plot (sometimes called a time series graph) has been drawn, which includes the dates of the first attestation of most of the words with suffix -ism. The graph displays values against time, and it was draw incorporating all the words. It is worth noticing that for some words only the century of first attestation was reported and not the precise year. Below is the general graph, then the time plot for each cluster will be presented.

YEAR OF FIRST ATTESTATION
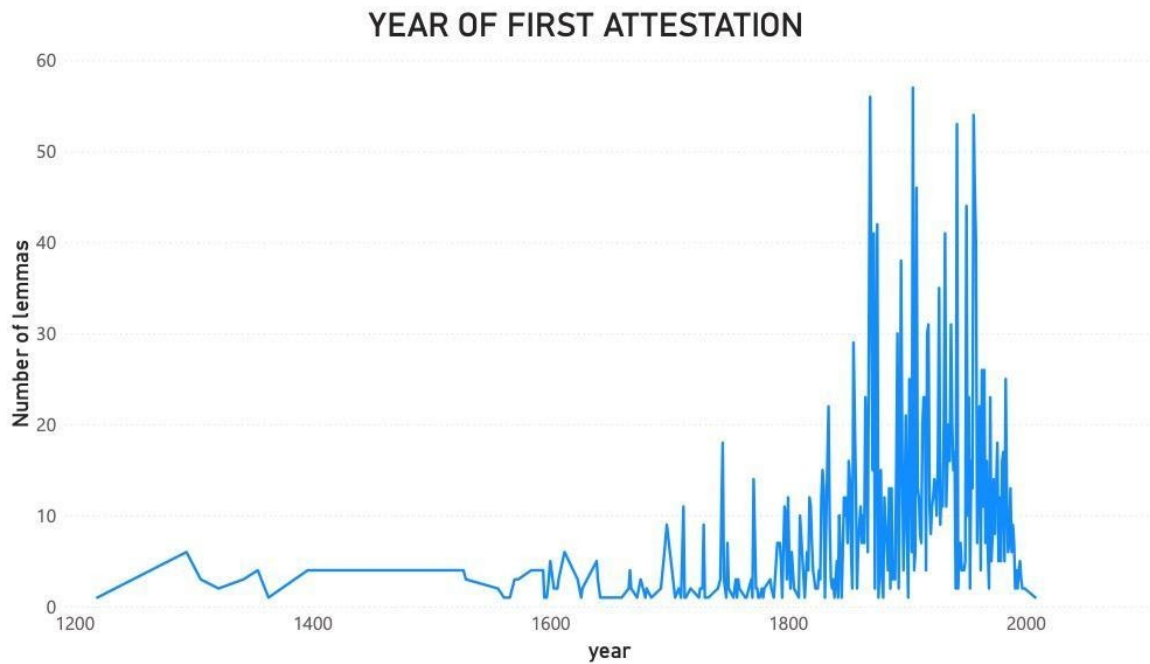
Fig. 13: General time plot for all words

In general, -isms have been present in history since the 13th century. However, since the French Revolution, these -isms have become more and more ideologically connoted. With the significant development of the newspapers and then of the systems of information propagation, from the early 19th century onwards, and with the progressive appearance on the political scene of all the states capable of organising themselves, negative semantic terms have also emerged.

One of the first -ism attested in 1219 is soffismo (sophism). Then, until the early 1600s, there were no peaks of new words.

There has been a systematically increasing trend over the long period until today. From 1869 onwards, there is a less smooth trend with elevated peaks (i.e., many words attested in that period). The high peaks occur more around the period 1869-80, in the early 1900s (1900-1910) and from 1945 onwards until 1960. From

1961 onward, the line decreases until the present. The most recently attested word is in 2008: microchimerismo (microchimerism).[8]

Below are presented the time plots divided by cluster to go into more detail. In some cases, some words belonging to the same group have been attested in the same period; in other cases, there is no correlation.

Below are presented the time plots divided by cluster to go into more detail. In some cases, some words belonging to the same group have been attested in the same period; in other cases, there is no correlation.
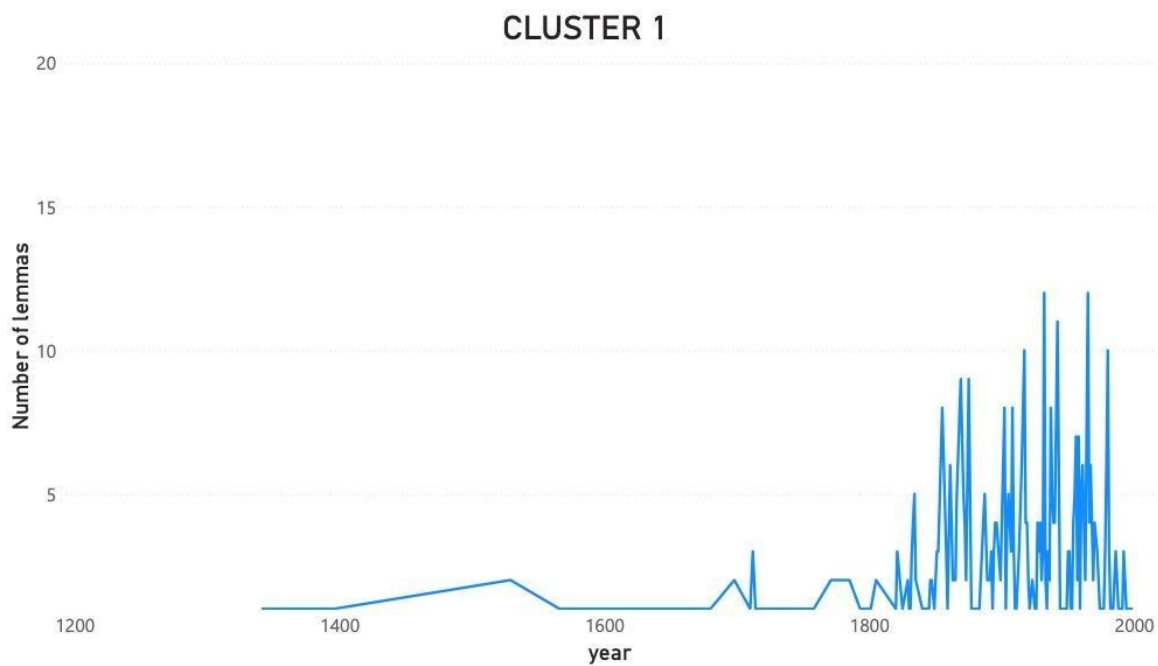
Fig. 14: Time plot for cluster 1 (religious, philosophical, and political doctrines)

_____

[8] Presence within an individual of a small number of cells that originated from another individual and have a different genetic makeup.
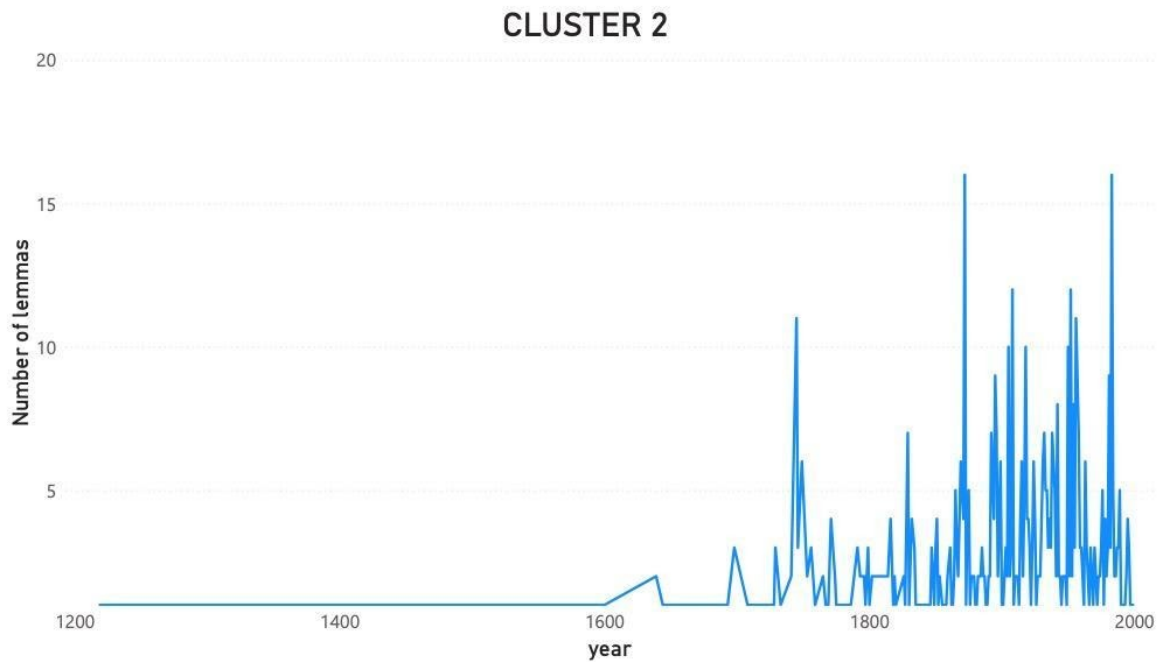
CLUSTER 2

Fig. 15: Time plot for cluster 2 (attitudes, tendencies, collective or individual characters

We do not see a smooth progression in cluster 1 (religious, social, philosophical doctrines). It could be that the words were born as the doctrines and movements were born in Italy or Europe or it could also be a more pragmatic problem, e.g., it could be due to an imbalance of sources. For cluster 2, on the other hand, i.e., words that designate collective or individual attitudes, tendencies, and characters, we see that around the years 1871 and around 1980, more than 16 words with the suffix -ism were coined. Then, the words representing behaviours or actions (cluster 3) do not present correlations between the year of the first attestation and semantic connotation.
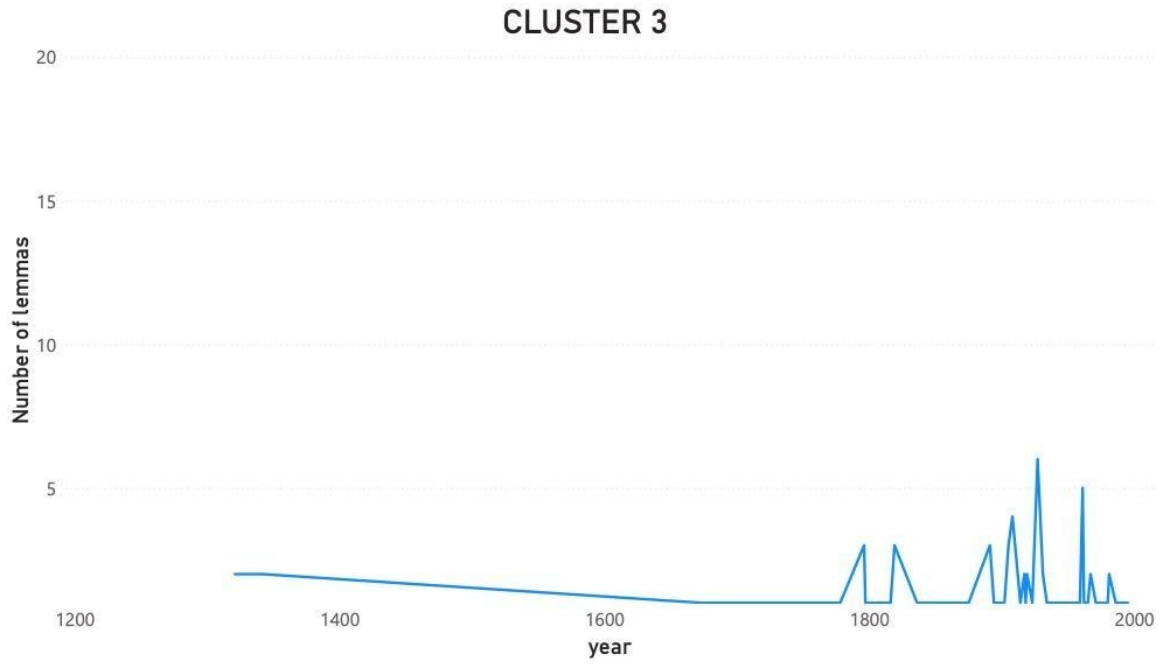
Fig. 16: Time plot for cluster 3 (behaviour or actions)
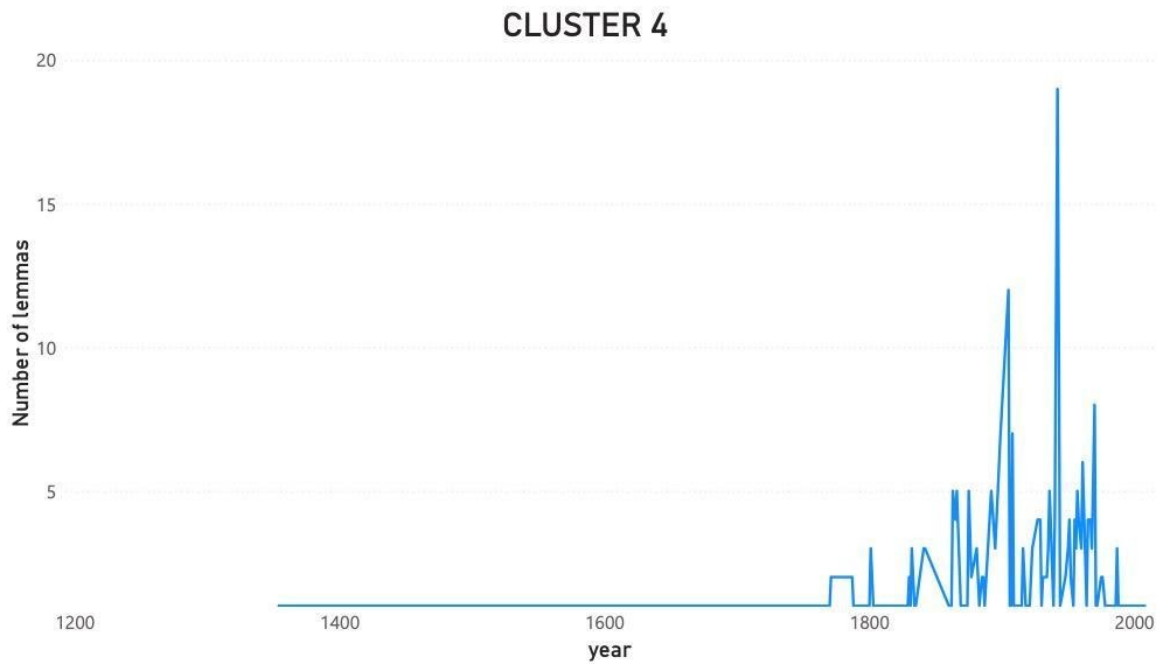
Fig. 17: Time plot for cluster 4 (conditions or qualities, moral or physical and harmful habits)

On the contrary, cluster 4 shows a peak in the last 1800s and an even more important one in the 1940s. These lemmas refer to conditions or qualities of people as well as moral or physical defects and harmful habits.
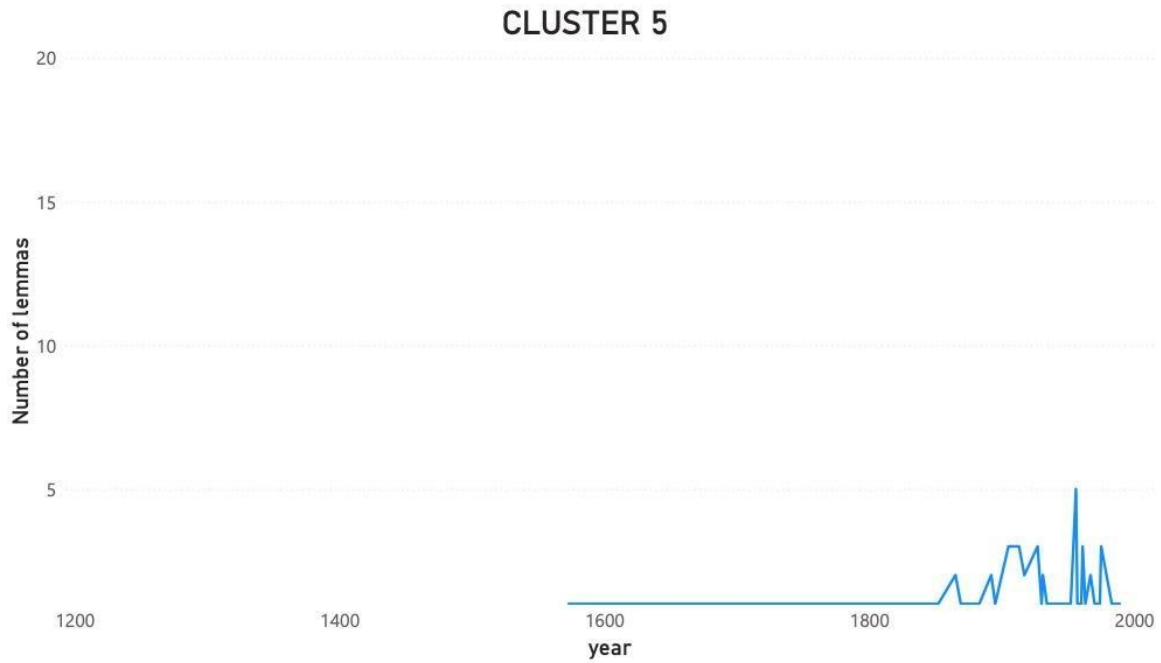
Fig. 18: Time plot for cluster 5 (conditions of things)
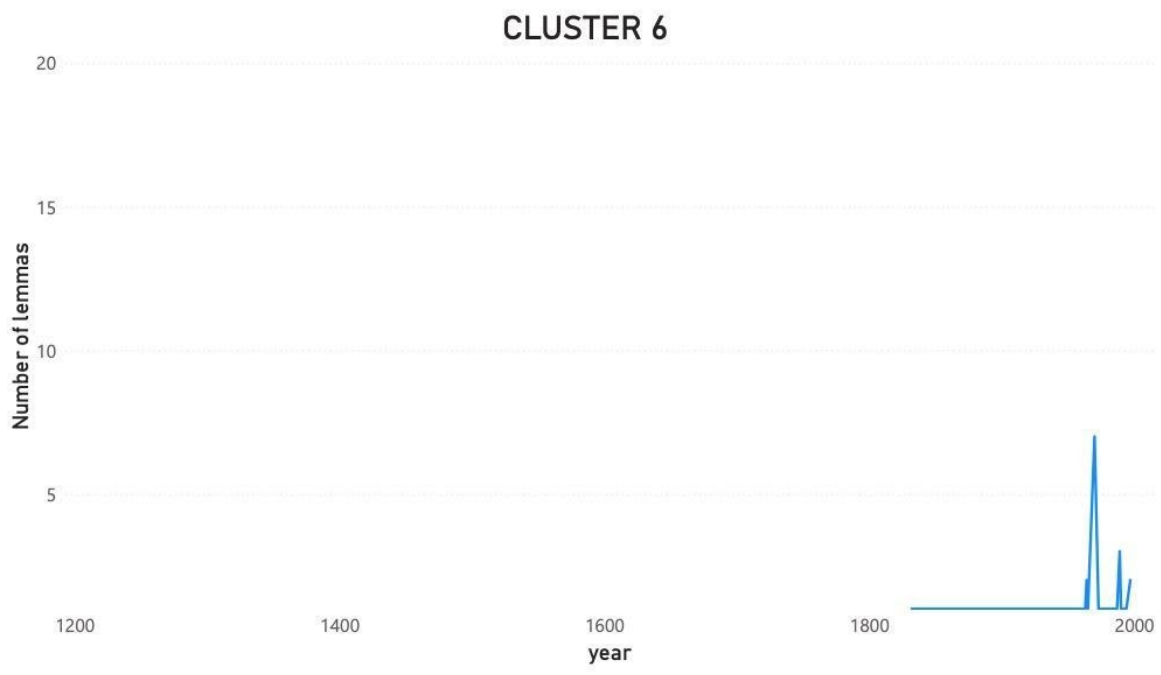
Fig. 19: Time plot for cluster 6 (sporting activities)

Clusters 5 and 6, representing conditions of things and sports activities, besides not containing many words, do not show links between the year of first attestation and meaning.
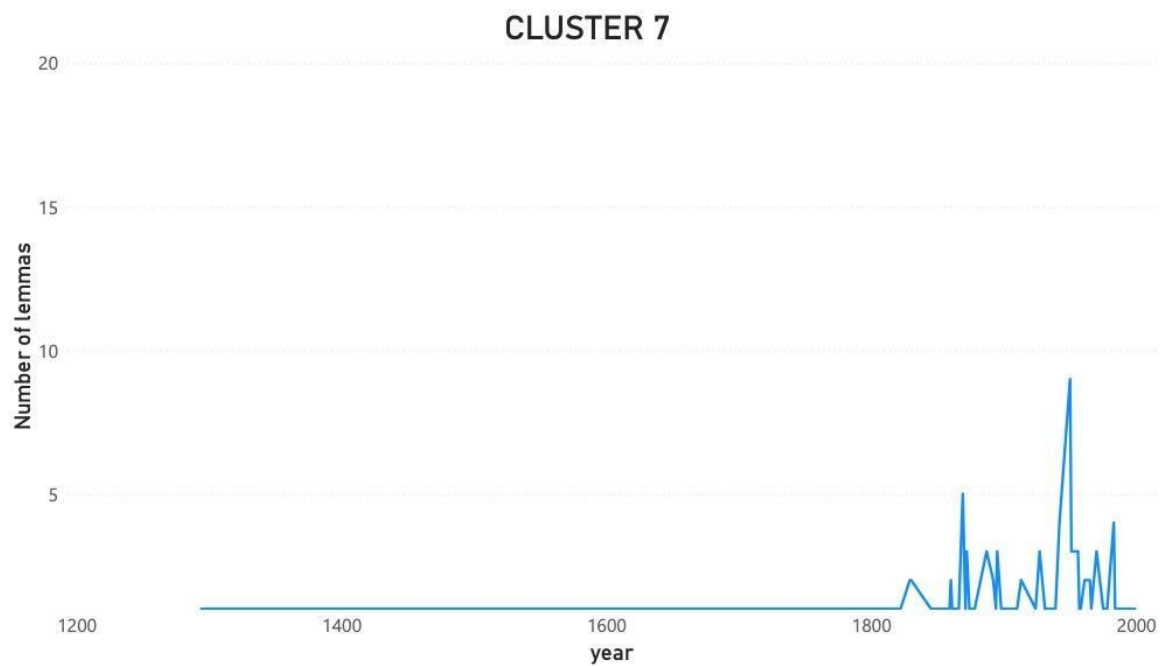
Fig. 20: Time plot for cluster 7 (peculiarities or characters of language and style)

Fig. 21: Time plot for cluster 8 (derivatives of personal names)

We continue with clusters 7 and 8 that, as we could imagine, record the highest number of words attested in the second half of the 1900s. In fact, in these years, the suffix -ism is replaced in some cases with the variant -ésimo and the -isms that denote the language of style are established.
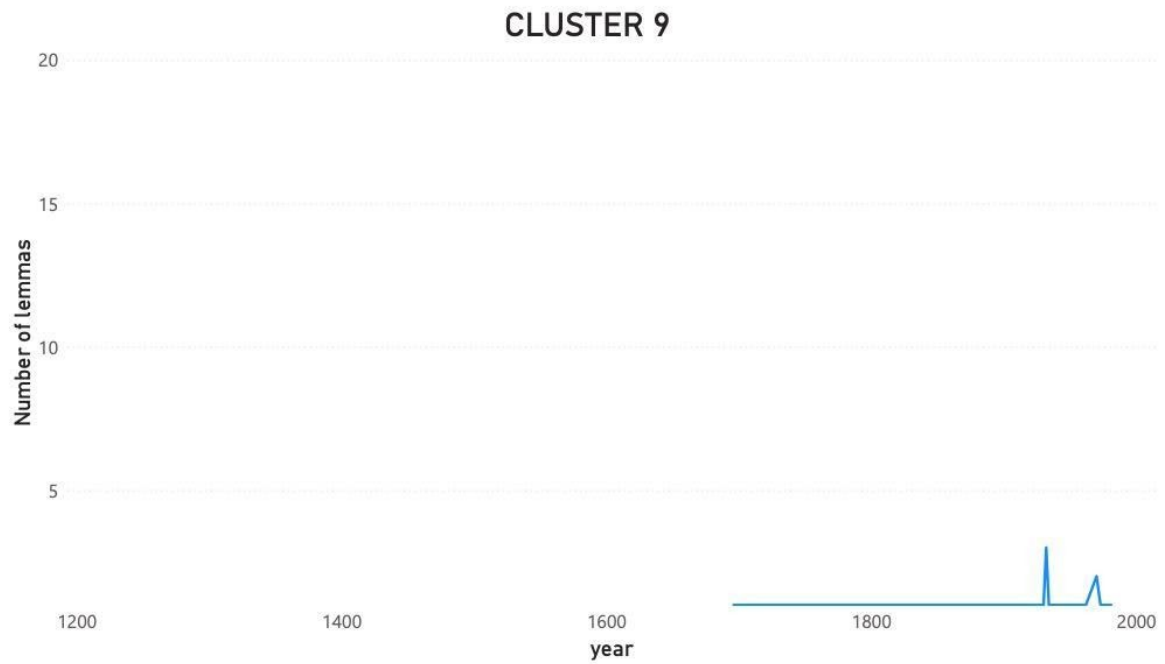
Fig. 22: Time plot for cluster 9 (systems and devices)
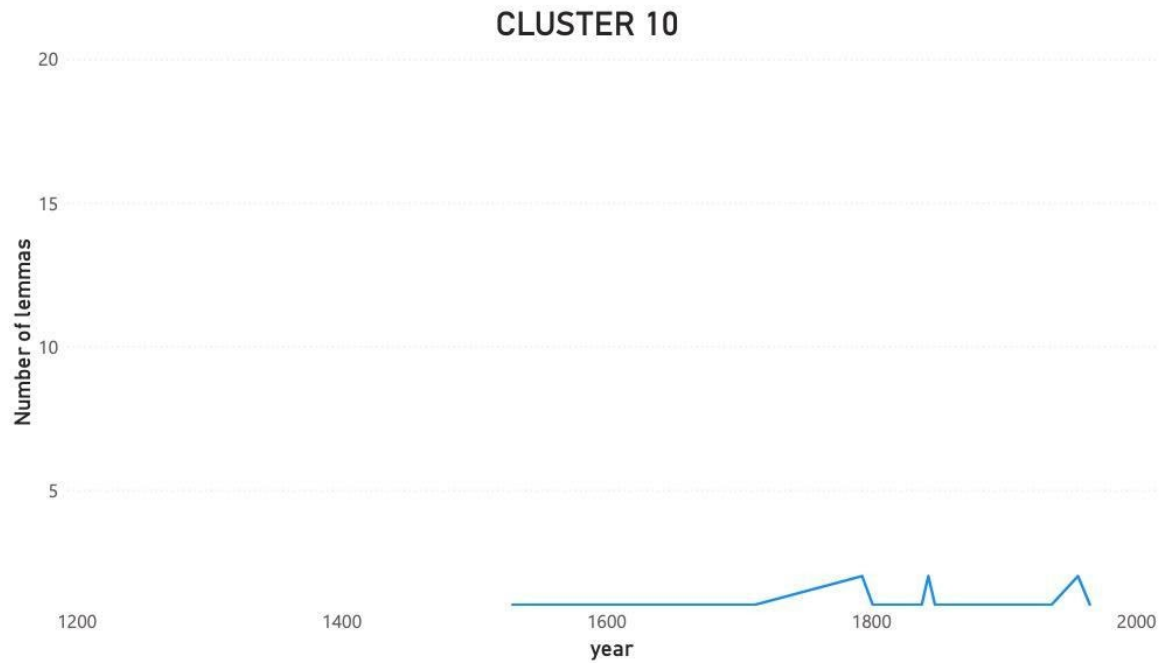
Fig. 22: Time plot for cluster 10 (-isms replaced definitively or preferably by -ésimo)

For clusters 9 and 10, there are no links between the year of the first attestation and cluster membership, perhaps due to the low number of words within the group also in this case.
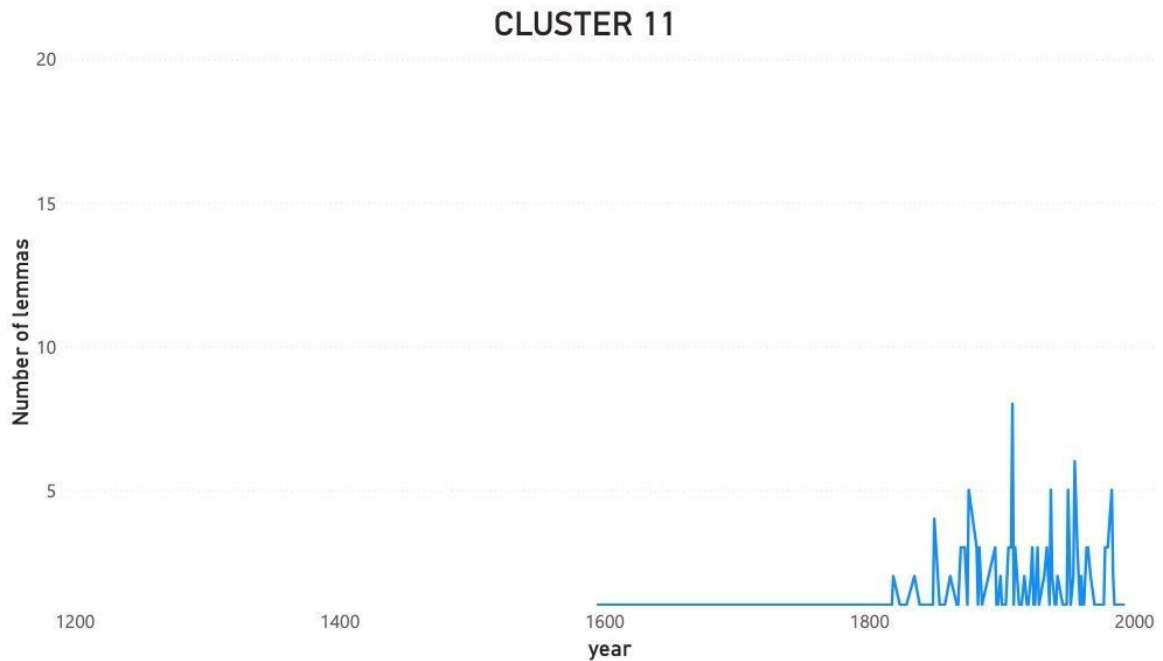
Fig. 23: Time plot for cluster 11 (literary and artistic tendencies)

Finally, for cluster 11, we can refer to what has been said for cluster 1, which denotes literary and artistic tendencies and shows a not very smooth trend with peaks in various historical periods after the 1800s.

In conclusion, we can say that this aspect remains open for future research to analyse, namely when the various -isms were born and a link between the years of first attestation and membership in a specific cluster.

Chapter Three

The experiment: What is the cluster of Abilismo?

The aim of the experiment is to understand to which cluster the neologism abilismo might belong. Starting from the words searched in the vocabularies and their frequency, a series of stimuli were selected to be submitted to the participants through a questionnaire. The selected words are 9, low-frequency and high-frequency words were selected according to the Zipf index obtained previously. To these words was added the word abilismo for a total of 10 total stimuli. Proposing then a series of words with the same suffix in -ism, participants are asked to classify these words according to 3 classes: Doctrines, Attitudes or Conditions. The responses created will be used to understand first in which group of the three proposed could fall abilismo according to the intuition of the native speakers and only then, through the agglomerative cluster new clusters will be created based on the similar traits of the words according to the respondents.

Method

3.1.1. Selection of stimuli

The questionnaire to be submitted to the participants will consist of 10 stimuli, i.e., 10 words among all the -isms are selected for the experiment. The corpus on which it was decided to select the words is corpus 2 (Timestamped JSI) due to the characteristics described above (see section 2.2). Starting from the 11 clusters listed so far, 5 clusters were chosen, i.e., those with more frequent words. Of the 5 selected, 2 were merged to form a single cluster and the resulting clusters at the end are 3. Cluster 1 will therefore be formed by cluster 1 and cluster 11 since both denote doctrines. Cluster 2

stands alone and finally clusters 3 and 4 have been merged. In addition to the frequency of words, the latter cluster was also chosen because of the possible overlap of semantic elements with ableism. So that the resulting clusters are the followings. Doctrines (cluster 1) refers to a religious, political, social, philosophical, artistic, or literary movement (such as socialism or impressionism). Attitudes (cluster 2) are a behaviour or a trend (optimism, scepticism). With Conditions (cluster 3) is meant a physical, moral, psychological, economic status of a person, as well as a moral flaw or a harmful habit, sometimes a condition of something (such as egoism, magnetism). The aim of the questionnaire is indeed to find out to which cluster of -isms ableism belongs.

The criteria used for the stimuli session are two: the date of first occurrence and the Zipf index or word frequency. Here is the table used for the selection of the stimuli.

Zipf Index	Doctrines	Attitudes	Conditions
1	creazionismo	associazionismo	gravidismo
2	scoutismo	snobismo	albinismo
3	simbolismo	lassismo	strabismo
4	cubismo	opportunismo	mutacismo
5	liberismo	cinismo	abusivismo
6/7	globalismo	vittimismo	randagismo

Tab. 3: Selection of stimuli

As regards the year of first attestation, only words coined after 1850 were chosen. The table therefore presents the words selected in yellow according to the Zipf index. For cluster 1, the following words were selected: scoutismo, cubismo e globalismo. For cluster 2: snobismo, opportunism e vittimismo. For cluster 3: albinismo, strabismo e abusivismo. For the first two clusters, 1 low-frequency word (Zipf less than 3) and 2

high-frequency words (Zipf greater than 3) were chosen. For cluster 3, on the other hand, 2 low-frequency words were selected and 1 high-frequency word.

3.1.2. Procedure

After selection of the stimuli, the questionnaire was prepared as follows. The Qualtrics interface was used to administer the questionnaire. In addition to a short introductory part explaining the study and the task, the participants were asked to provide their age, gender and educational qualification. After that, each question was organised into 4 parts. First, a word was presented; the first three questions asked for a judgment of agreement or disagreement based on the three clusters produced. For example, given the term abilismo, how much could this word be interpreted as doctrine? How much as an attitude? And how much as ability? Ideally, then, participants assigned a category to each word by expressing a rating from 0 to 4 in which:

- 0: Not at all agree.
- 1: Slightly agree.
- 2: Neither agree nor disagree.
- 3: Agree.
- 4: Very much agree.

Here is an example of how each question was structured in the survey.

Q1 iQ ✱

Quanto è d'accordo con le seguenti frasi?

La parola **ABILISMO** rappresenta una Dottrina.

Dottrina: un movimento religioso, politico, sociale, filosofico, letterario o artistico.

Per niente d'accordo	Poco d'accordo	Nè d'accordo nè in disaccordo	D'accordo	Molto d'accordo
○	○	○	○	○

Fig. 24: Example of question of the experiment

The aim is to find out whether the native speaker participants can also guess which cluster each word belongs to. Secondly, ableism will also be analysed to see which cluster it may belong to. After these three questions, familiarity with the word is also asked. The possible answers are the following:

- 0: I've never heard that word before.
- 1: I've heard that word, but I do not know it.
- 2: If I hear that word, I understand it.
- 3: I could have already used that word.
- 4: That word belongs to my lexicon.

This also plays an essential role within the research to know how familiar a participant is with -isms. It goes without saying that if a word is unfamiliar, also its meaning might be opaque.
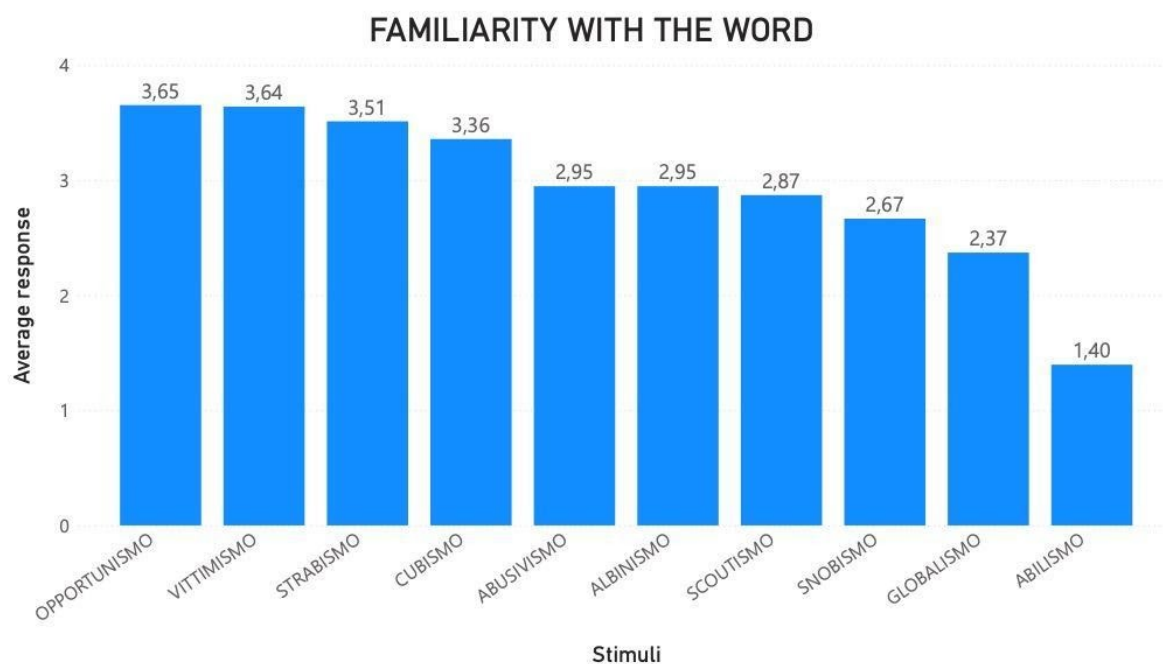
FAMILIARITY WITH THE WORD

Fig. 25: participants' familiarity with the surveyed words

This histogram shows the average response of the participants about the familiarity with the words. As expected, the word abilismo was the least known and opportunismo the most known. Nevertheless, the familiarity with abilismo is actually very low: almost 1.5 and it means that it has already been heard, but the meaning is unclear.

The words globalismo, abusivismo, cubismo, strabismo, vittimismo are high frequency words (Zipf higher than 3), while snobismo, scoutismo and albinismo are low frequency words (Zipf lower than 3).

Thus, the word globalismo has a higher familiarity than abilismo, between 2 and 2.5: it means that if the participants hear globalismo, they will understand it. The same goes for snobismo.

Scoutismo, albinismo, and abusivismo outreach 2.5 value of familiarity and this means that if the participants hear those words, they will understand them and that probably they could have already used them. Cubismo outreaches 3 and strabismo reaches 3.5 familiarity value, that the participants could have already used these two words, or that

these words belong to their way of speaking. Vittimismo and opportunismo got the highest score, more than 3.5, and this represents that these two words are an active part of the participants' lexicon.

Some of the words are very uncommon. In this case, the participants were asked to realise the meaning and choose a belonging cluster without looking for a definition on the web. Moreover, a word could belong to more than one cluster, which is the reason why there was not only one correct choice.

The participants have also been reminded that there were no right or wrong answers and that our purpose was not to assess their linguistic proficiency, but to study the participants' opinion regarding the given words and to understand how the meaning is realised when they are not familiar with a word. Therefore, they have been requested to answer in the most intuitive way, without overthinking.

Filling in the questionnaire took each of them about 10 minutes.

3.1.3. Participant's features

They are expressed by the following charts. The first one is about the gender, the second one analyses the age and the third one describes their educational level.
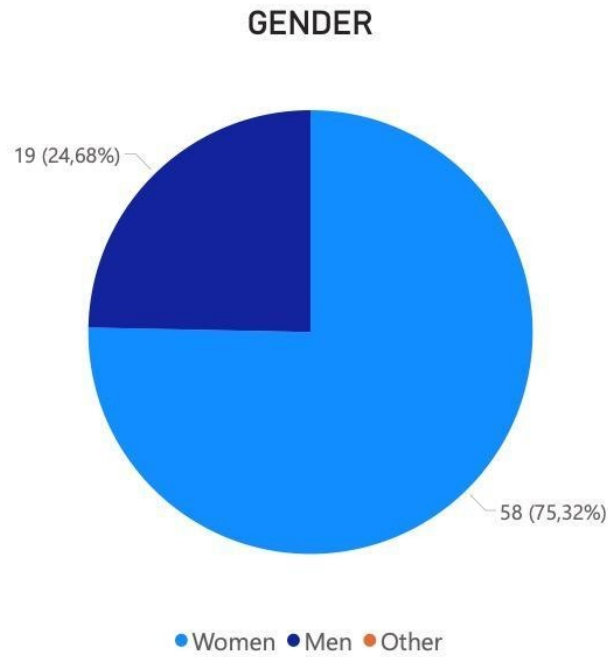
Fig. 26: participants' gender.

According to this chart, most of the participants were women (75, 32%) and just a few of them were men (24,68%).
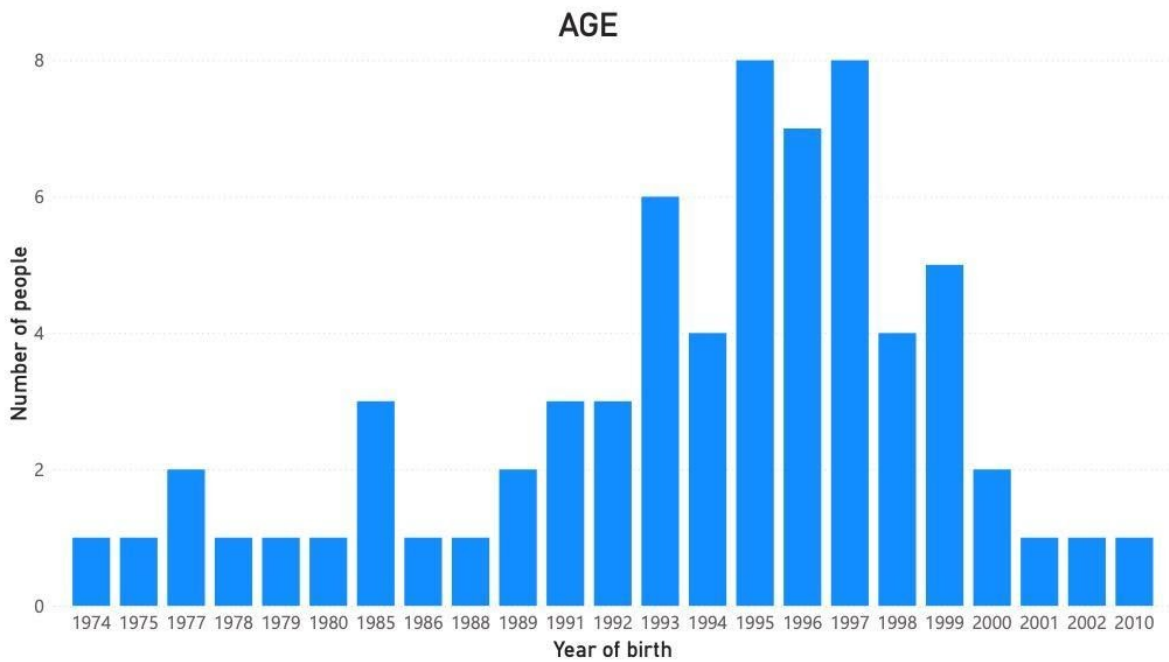

Fig. 27: participants' age

From the graph most of the subjects were born between 1993 and 1999. We can therefore say that the participants are almost young, since most of them are between 21 and 28 years old.
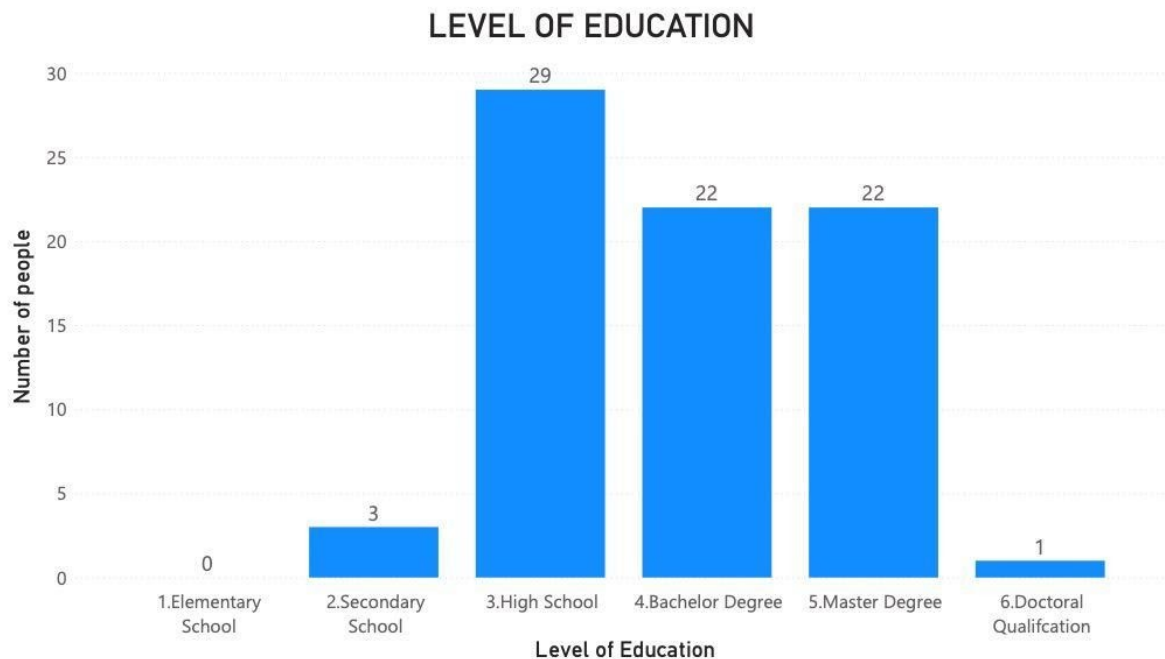
LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Fig. 28: participants' educational level

As far as the educational level is concerned, looking at the chart, most of the participants almost thirty, had a high school diploma (Licenza media superiore o equivalente) and more than 40 participants had a university degree such as a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. It can therefore be said that the average level of education is medium to high.

3.2. Results and discussion

3.2.1. Average participants' responses

Before showing the survey results, it must be made clear that a data clean-up has been carried out. The total amount of the responses was 111. 33 of them have been cancelled because incomplete. One response has been deleted, since all the answers given were "molto d'accordo" (totally agree). In the end, the valid responses were 77.
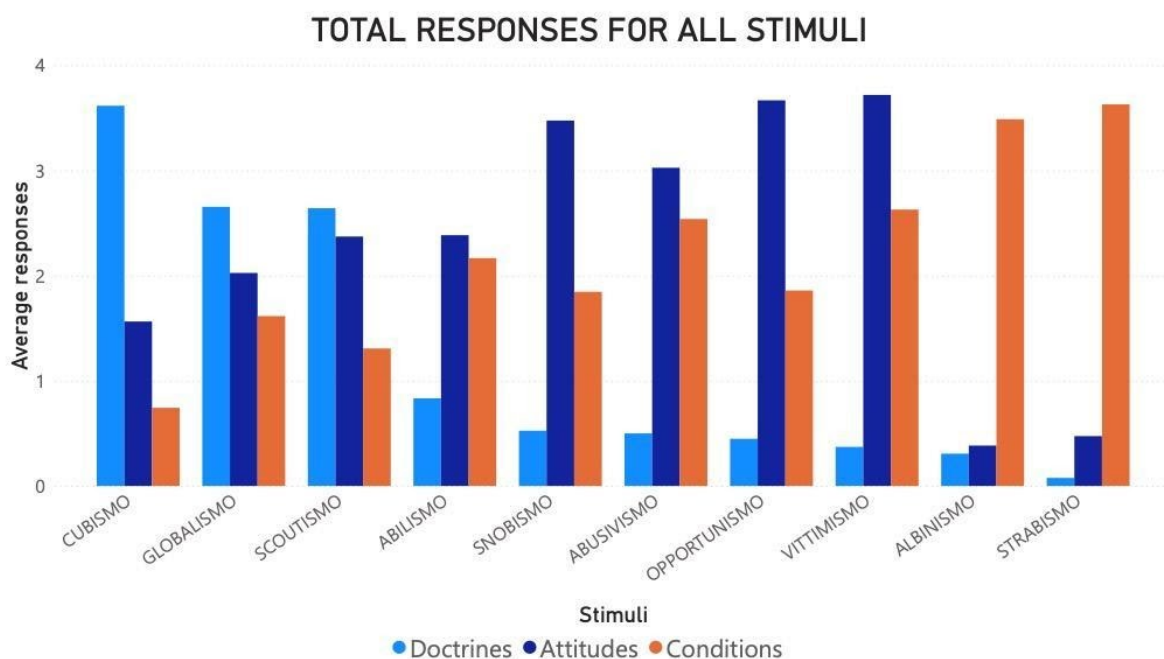

Fig. 29: total responses for all stimuli

The average response for all stimuli is summed up in the histogram above. It is helpful in comparing the different words. In fact, as we can see, cubismo is the word classified most as doctrine, followed by globalism and scoutismo. As regards cluster 2 (Attitudes), the words vittimismo and opportunismo are among the most selected words for attitudes. Strabismo, on the other hand, is the word that was scaled most to indicate a Condition. On the contrary, we can say that the word least classified as a doctrine is strabismo, followed by albinismo and vittimismo. The words least

categorised as Attitudes are again albinismo and strabismo. Regarding cluster 1, however, again strabismo and albinism are among the least selected.

Looking at the individual words and considering that the graph summarises the average of the participants' answers for each word, we propose an example of interpretation of the data.

The word globalismo ideally, or according to the dictionaries, belongs to the cluster 1 (Doctrines). Most of the participants placed the word into cluster 1, which is the same (2.65). Some of them classified globalismo as an Attitude (2.03), maybe because being global, or a global citizen, could be perceived as a state of mind, and a very few of them (1.62) classified the word as a Condition. The only word that deviates from the cluster to which it initially belonged is vittimismo.

Indeed, it belongs to cluster 3 (Conditions), but most of the participants placed the word into cluster 2 (Attitudes). However, the word that interests us most at the centre of our study is abilismo, so let us focus on the responses to this stimulus.
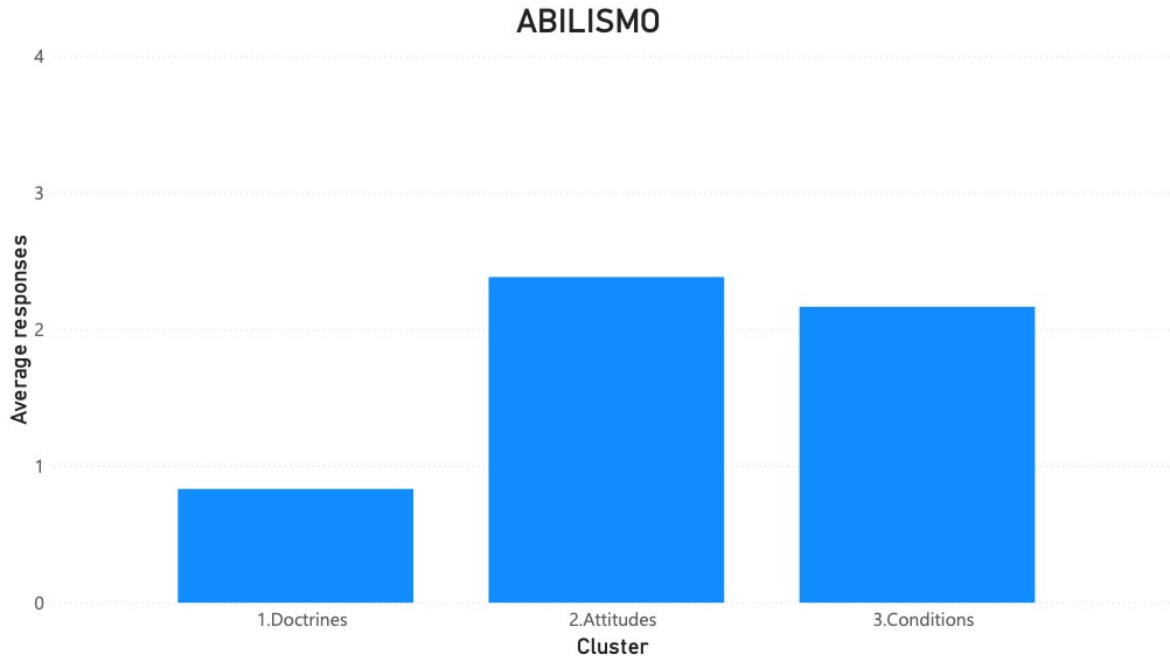
Fig. 30: participants' average answer for the word abilismo

Most of the participants (2.38) placed the word into the cluster 2 (Attitudes). Some classified abilismo as a Condition (2.17), maybe because being able could be perceived as a condition and almost nobody (0.83) classified the word as a Doctrine. Therefore, Most subjects classified abilismo as an aptitude, regardless of their knowledge of the word.

3.2.2. Groups identified

In this last section, the groups resulting from the analysis of the participants' answers are presented. The dataset consists of the average of the participants' answers. i.e., when a word could result in doctrine, condition or attitude

The first step was to upload the data on the R software to create the graph. The data were entered in R version 4.0.2. (R Core Team 2021). R is a programming language and a specific development environment for statistical data analysis.

To create the new clusters, we used the hierarchical agglomerative clustering (HAC) method using Ward's method and Euclidean distance for word similarities. Hierarchical clustering's method proceeds by splitting clusters recursively until individual documents are reached. The graph used is a dendrogram. The dendrogram is a tree used to visualise similarity in the clustering process. The dendrogram is used to provide a graphical representation of the clustering process of instances. The horizontal lines represent each merger, and the y-coordinate is the similarity of the three clusters that have been merged. For example, the combination similarity of the cluster consisting of globalismo and scoutismo is ≈ 0,5. We define the combination similarity of a singleton cluster as its document's self-similarity. Moreover, a dendrogram allows us to reconstruct the history of merges that resulted in the clustering by moving up from the bottom layer to the top node. Although HAC usually does not require a specific number of clusters, in this case there are 3 clusters so that the hierarchy must be cut at a certain point. In our case the cut point is the gap between two successive combination similarities is largest (≈ 4,5). Such large gaps indicate natural clustering.

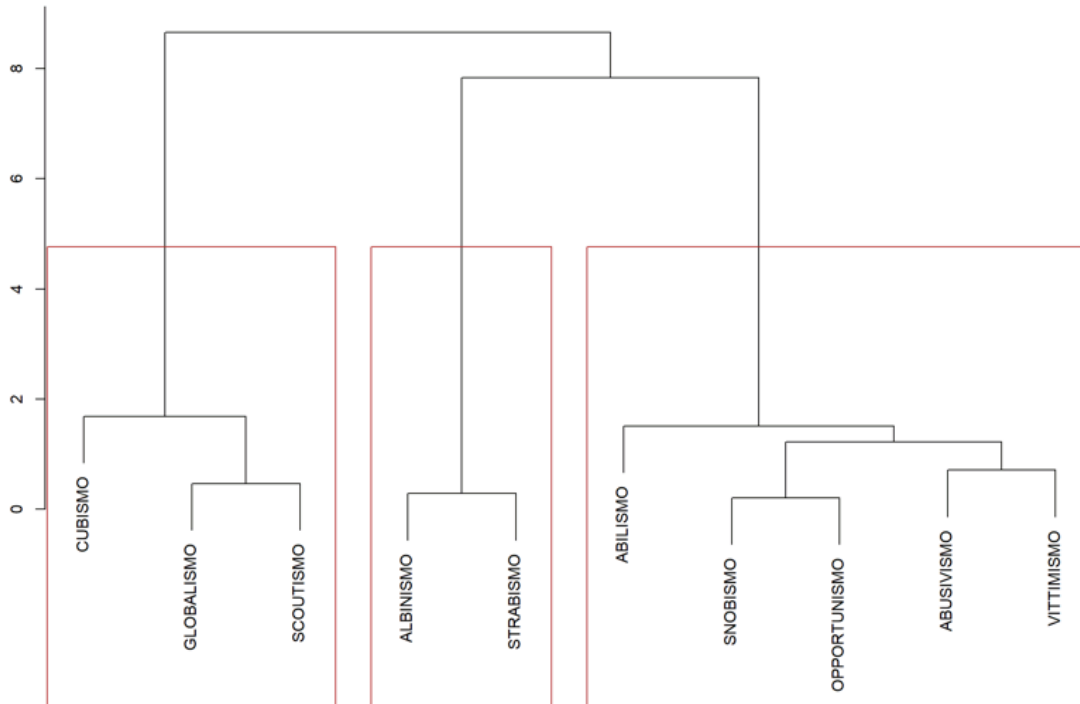What follows are the resulting clusters.

Fig. 31: resulting clusters

In summary, based on the data collected, we created this graph to understand where abilismo ranks according to people's responses. In this case hierarchical clustering produces groupings of items following a hierarchical process. Basically, the lower (close to 0) the joining points are, the more similar the elements of the graph, in this case the words. This resulting dendrogram has got three branches.

In the first one, there are cubismo, globalismo and scoutismo. It shows that the values of cubismo are higher than globalismo and scoutismo. The values of both globalismo and scoutismo are similar.

In the second branch, there are three words albinismo and strabismo. Both have very close values since they are used to describe two natural features or conditions: having a low amount of melanin in the body and not having the eyes aligned while looking at something, respectively.

In the third and last branch there are the following words: abilismo, snobismo, opportunismo, abusivismo and vittimismo.

The word abilismo has a higher score, if compared to the others belonging to this branch: in fact, it shows a more extended unit. The other remaining four words form two couples. It means that snobismo and opportunismo have gotten a similar score and the same goes for abusivismo and vittimismo, which have similar values.

According to this dendrogram, we have 3 new result groups for the surveyed words. The first cluster contains the three words belonging to the Doctrines cluster (cubismo, globalismo, scoutismo). The next cluster (Conditions) consists of two words (albinismo e strabismo). Finally, the Attitudes cluster contains five words: snobismo, opportunism, vittimismo e abusivismo. We can therefore receive the following concessions.

First of all, we can say that victimhood was analysed as an attitude and not as a condition, perhaps over time the word is changing its meaning and words are using it with a negative meaning as well. If being a victim was once considered only a condition, nowadays many people use it to denote an attitude self-imposed by people.

The focus of our analysis, however, is on the cluster into which the word Abilismo; it has been placed in cluster of attitudes. it is surprising to note that the participants, on average with a qualification higher than a secondary school diploma, classified the word as attitude despite not knowing it or having never heard of it. Abilism, in fact, is increasingly used to denote any kind of discrimination, but is often included in sentences as a relative of racism or sexism. This work, therefore, also showed how speakers, even though they are not aware of the meaning of a word, can still intuit its semantic features.

Conclusion

The initial aim of this dissertation was to study the word Abilismo by placing it within one of the semantic groups that usually denote words with the suffix -ism. Starting from a subdivision into 11 clusters given by Treccani, the frequency of the words was then researched to define their frequency class. To do this, the Zipf index was calculated, which is a scale of values from 1-6 and allows us to establish whether a word is of low frequency (Zipf < 3) or high frequency (Zipf < 3). Once the frequency of the words and then of the clusters had been calculated, it was decided to take 3 clusters as representative. The first two were those that contained the most high-frequency words (Doctrines and Attitudes). The third cluster (Conditions), on the other hand, was chosen because of a possible semantic proximity that could be attributed to Abilismo (the physical condition of being able-bodied). From these 3 clusters 9 words were chosen for the participants of the experiment to question. The words are cubism, globalism, scouting, albinism, strabismus, opportunism, snobbery, abusivism and victimism; plus, one ableism, for a total of 10 stimuli. The questionnaire produced a total of 77 valid answers. With the collected data we were able to construct a dendrogram that rearranged the words according to a hierarchical clustering based on the similar traits of the words. This resulted in a graph divided into 3 clusters. The first cluster contains the three words belonging to the Doctrines cluster (cubismo, globalismo, scoutismo). The next cluster (Conditions) consists of two words (albinismo e strabismo). Finally, the Attitudes cluster contains five words: snobismo, opportunism, vittimismo e abusivismo. We can therefore receive the following concessions. As regards to Abilismo, participants to the experiment, classified the word as attitude. Although its morphological properties could lead it to a physical condition (the condition of being able-bodied or not), due to its semantic features it is often used as

a relative of racism or sexism. In conclusion, from the resulting clusters obtained through the agglomerative hierarchical clustering method, ableism falls into the attitudes cluster alongside words such as victimhood, opportunism, snobbism and abusiveness.

The question of -isms remains open for future research. In fact, this thesis could be placed as an introduction to a possible study on isms, both as regards the temporal axis and the morphological and semantic field. Some of the questions that arose during the writing are in fact the following. Why did Franco, Dante, and Stalin become -isms but not Mussolini?

Others are isms in one language and not in another. Think of English criticism, in Italian critica, as in the other Romance languages, and in German: this word now takes the form in -ism now not. The -isms find their limit more in the laws of linguistics than in the progress of philosophical investigation.

Aknowledgements

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