



“Kiel povas Esperanto helpi aliajn minoritatajn lingvojn? Stam mo a vèder! How can Esperanto help other minority languages? Let’s find out! A sociolinguistic enquiry into the linguistic practices of Esperanto and Emilian speakers.”

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool
for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by

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May 2023

Abstract

Faced with an increasing number of speakers abandoning the use of the world's minoritised languages, this thesis investigates two language communities by observing the linguistic practices and attitudes that characterise them to inform future efforts of language support. Taking Emilian and Esperanto as two comparable minoritised languages, data from the two communities are collected to reveal the key similarities and differences across them. While Esperanto boasts a thriving number of speakers, Emilian is thought to be rapidly declining. Likewise, the academic literature on Esperanto is both thorough and current, whereas, when it comes to its sociolinguistic landscape, the literature on Emilian is virtually non-existent. This thesis builds on the existing knowledge on Esperanto and lays the foundations for our understanding of the linguistic practices and attitudes in the Emilian community. In an attempt to provide a broad overview, research questions are open-ended and their aims are three-fold: (i) to gauge linguistic practices comparatively; (ii) to deduce key factors in the maintenance of Esperanto in order to inform efforts for language support for Emilian; and (iii) to reveal the usefulness of a framework of interconnectedness in contexts of language endangerment. Adopting a published paper format, this thesis contains five self-contained journal articles: one of theoretical nature where the triangulation model designed to observe language attitudes is presented, and four of empirical content where analyses and findings are discussed to answer research questions. Following a triangulation of methods and of results, in this thesis I conclude that: (i) a positive correlation exists between language attitudes and language maintenance in both communities; (ii) Esperanto is being maintained in all domains investigated while Emilian is only meaningfully used in the local, physical environment; (iii) to successfully achieve language maintenance a balance of positive attitudes, competence, and use must be restored; and (iv) the concept of interconnectedness can serve as a practical strategy to foster reconnection with both language and green space.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank my supervisors, Stefania Tufi and Nicola Bermingham. Your support provided me with everything I that needed, and more: from intellectual stimulation, to reassurance, recognition, and direction – you did it all. You had a tremendous impact on my doctoral journey and I count myself lucky to have had your supervision throughout these four years. Next, I want to express my gratitude to Caterina Guardamagna. It has been so rewarding working on your projects; you nurtured my academic curiosity and widened my horizons in so many ways. Grazie! This thesis is the product of 8 years in the making. In recognition to this, I wish to thank Arran Stibbe. You instilled in me a new vision of the world and a new appetite to bring about change through my work. Thank you for offering such invaluable space of self-discovery and for offering your support throughout the years. Leonie Carr and Khoi Nguyen, you’ve been a wonderful part of my time since before Liverpool and your friendship has made it all the more enjoyable. Likewise, Simone De Cia, I feel privileged to have co-authored a paper with you and your support made such a difference to my outlook - *gracis amundi!* Next, I wish to express my upmost gratitude to Stefano Coretta: thank you for all you’ve done and all you are. I hope you know how much I cherish your friendship, your essence and your presence. At Liverpool I met wonderful colleagues who made days spent on campus some of the most fun days I’ve ever had. Joanna Morley, Dominic Bridge, and Steven Daniels: thank you for being awesome! *Koraj dankoj al Peeter, Brandon and other members of the local Esperanto community.* Thanks to Damien Hall, Angela Tellier, Geoffrey Greatrex, from the Esperanto committee, and Guilherme Fians for helping me with the translation of the survey. I couldn’t have done this without your help and that of other Esperantists. Likewise, I wish to thank those who helped me disseminate my questionnaire in Emilia and those who gave their time to take part in the study. A special thanks to *Æmilians, Il ragaz di Bolo, Tobia Poppi, Giuseppe Schieri, papi, Patty, and Marika. Siete stati preziosissimi!* This brings me to thanking my closest family: my sister, Jennifer, my husband, Steve, and my children, Jamie and Ethan. *Tata, grazie per aver sempre creduto in me. Il tuo esserci sempre è una delle costanti più rassicuranti della mia vita. Tato, you supported me both emotionally and practically without ever questioning my intentions. Your actions speak louder than words ever could. Thank you for being the partner that I need.* Last but not least, I wish to thank all the academics at LCF who guided me and provided us all with a stimulating environment in the department – Robert Blackwood,

Rosalba Biasini, Ian Magedera, and Marco Paoli, just to name a few. Likewise, my gratitude to staff at HLC whose help and support didn't go unnoticed.

And, you, Nonna. This is *for you and because of you*. L'è a té chi mé a déev incôsa.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The wider context

Languages are dying. Out of the 7,000 estimated living languages, around 50 percent are considered to be endangered and on their way to extinction (Crystal 2002). Languages are dying and they are doing so at a faster pace than it is currently possible to keep up with (Sallabank 2013). While it is true that the issue of the disappearance of languages is well-known to both linguists and laypeople, it is not a given that current strategies of language maintenance and revitalisation are being effective in their aim to save endangered languages. Acknowledging the central role played by language in the shaping of our identity and sense of belonging, this thesis aims to contribute towards the efforts needed to slow down this process by focusing on two minoritised languages, namely, Emilian and Esperanto. Emilian is the name linguists use to refer to the language family historically spoken in the Emilia region of Italy¹. Likewise, Esperanto is the name of the language constructed by a Polish doctor named Zamenhof at the end of the nineteenth century (originally known as *lingva internacia* in Fiedler & Brosch 2022). As will be discussed below, both languages can be classified as minoritised languages due to their historical and present context. What is, however, striking is the increasing vitality that Esperanto has been seen to gain in recent times, in contrast to a rapidly declining use of Emilian in its community that has brought it to be classified as an endangered language. While seemingly diverging, the two languages and respective communities share commonalities whose analysis can produce vital insights into the creation of language maintenance and revitalisation efforts for minoritised languages.

Indeed, quite a few parallels can be drawn between Esperanto and minoritised lan-

¹Emilia is part of the modern Emilia-Romagna region

guages (including Emilian), such as the predominance, in terms of percentages, of older speakers, the multilingual environment within which it is spoken, and the mere size of its community compared to higher status languages (Fiedler & Brosch 2022). Esperanto did not develop naturally from an older linguistic form, nor is it historically spoken by an ethnic group that can be located in a specific geographical area. It does, however, share in common with both Hebrew (Wood 1979; Versteegh 1993), and pidgin languages (Liu 2001) the peculiarity of being a language that was purposely adopted. Furthermore, Rašić (1992) identifies a central contradiction between the intended function of Esperanto (that of being a universal language) and the actual sociolinguistic role it plays in its speech community. As a minoritised language, Esperanto is spoken by a minority few and its speakers feel attracted and motivated to speak it for the sense of intimacy they achieve by belonging to such a small linguistic community (Kimura 2012).

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the linguistic practices and attitudes of the Esperanto community (as an example of a thriving community) and to compare them with data from the Emilian community to see how the former can help the latter and other minoritised languages in a white, European context². A historical overview of the two languages and their respective communities will be outlined in section 1.2 as a form of contextualisation to the thesis. This will be followed by a short discussion on the issue at hand in section 1.3 to give way to the narrowing down of the scope of enquiry and the formulation of three research questions in section 1.4. The thesis structure is outlined in section 1.5, and a self-reflective discussion on the ethical stance of giving back to the communities follows in section 1.6 to conclude this Introduction before moving on to the theoretical framework discussed in the next chapter.

1.2 Emilian and Esperanto: An overview

1.2.1 Emilian

The linguistic repertoire of the Italian territory is discussed in great depth as one of unique richness in Blackwood & Tufi (2015). So far, I have been referring to Emilian and Esperanto as languages. Citing Professor Ejskjær, Røyneland (2020:3) reminds us that a language is a mere construct of social, cultural and/or political nature. Nevertheless, from a linguistic perspective the linguistic varieties spoken in Italy can be

²This is to acknowledge the difference in privilege and stigma experienced by the average white speaker of Emilian compared to, for example, speakers of a Quechuan language in South America.

grouped together and classified following different criteria, such as typological, phonetic, morpho-syntactic and identity-based (for a historic overview around the discourse of language vs dialect see Van Rooy 2020). While their classification is still an area of debate, these varieties are commonly known in the literature as dialects of Italy (the only context in which the term *dialect* will be used to refer to Emilian in this thesis) and are considered Italo-Romance varieties because they diachronically developed from Latin within the historical territory of Románia (Maiden & Parry 1997).

Up until its unification in 1861, Italy was “characterized by polycentric structures based on city-states which enjoyed political and economic autonomy” (Blackwood & Tufi 2015:23). It was within the border of each independent state that these languages were spoken in all informal contexts (Foresti 2010). Following its unification, the country saw the imposition of the Florentine variety of Tuscan as the new national language. The move, however, was not sufficient to produce a national shift towards Italian at the expenses of the local vernaculars. It was through “radical socio-economic changes” that “processes of Italianization” were accelerated “in the second half of the twentieth century” (Blackwood & Tufi 2015:23). As pointed out by Tufi (2013), these dynamics are complex and deeply rooted in the history of the country. However, one of the main factors for which nowadays these vernaculars are no longer being transmitted down through intergenerational interactions can be pinpointed to the advent of the television.

It is, indeed, since the wider distribution of TV sets in the 1950s that through more and more exposure to the national language, the dialects started receding more quickly and to fewer domains of use (Blackwood & Tufi 2015). These dynamics produced a particular kind of diglossic landscape which differs from Fishman’s (2001) definition insofar that the Low language (the local varieties) is spoken alongside the High language (the national language, Italian) in the least formal domains of social life, such as in the family, with friends and local shops. With regional variation, in these domains speakers freely use the two varieties interchangeably in what Berruto (1987) describes as fluid diglossia. Following a Jacobin ideology (for example Wright 2007), and through an act of internal linguistic colonisation, the dialects of Italy have been largely deprived of their social functionality and their speakers left with a sense of inadequateness and uselessness attached to their use.

As pointed out above, I only ever refer to Emilian as a dialect due to the terminology used in the literature. This is because dialect is a term that can stand for different things, even in the same discipline. An example of how dialects can take on different meanings depending on the context, comes from Norway. The language space of Norway

is characterised by the absence of a standard variety and by language policies in the classroom where children are taught in their own local dialect (Røyneland 2009). This would suggest that dialects in Norway escape social stigmatisation, however, this is not entirely the case as certain varieties that emerged from phenomena of vertical levelling attract negative attitudes through the lens of linguistic purism (Røyneland 2009). In a recent study, Røyneland (2020) revisits the linguistic repertoire of Norway to reveal how any type of variation is considered a dialect: “not only traditional dialects qualify for the term *dialect*, but also levelled dialects and speech” (p. 31) [italics in original]. The striking effect that this seems to have on speakers is a lack of “regional linguistic consciousness” (Røyneland 2020:32) and, consequently, of regional dialect formation. In this sense, Norway differs from other European countries, such as Denmark, France and Germany, where regional dialects are used as a “means of displaying regional affiliation and identity” (p. 33). Despite a lack of awareness and no signs of dialect formation at the regional level, the local dialects of Norway seem to be thriving. This is very different to what is happening in the Emilian context where the lack of awareness is coupled with a desire to index one’s regional belonging.

Returning to the use of dialect in the literature, Blackwood & Tufi (2015:23) argue that “unlike anglophone environments, the dialects of Italy can be structurally very different from Italian and their lower status is due to extra-linguistic factors”. In other words, what is commonly known as a dialect in anglophone repertoires is in fact a variation of the English language which bears social stigma for linguistic factors such as morphosyntax, phonetic, and pragmatic features by virtue of differing from the standard variety. In contrast, Emilian is a group of Gallo-Italic varieties spoken mainly in the Emilian portion of the Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy (cf. map in Figure 1.1). As argued by Berruto (2018:496), “the structural distance between” Emilian, as an Italo-Romance variety, “as well as from standard Italian, is widely comparable to the distances between the “full” or “great” Romance language”. This distance is mainly measurable in their “phonetics and lexicon, but also in morphosyntax and pragmatics” (ibid). Unlike some of its sisters, however, Emilian does not share a common, mutually intelligible variety (also known as a *koine*, e.g.: Marcato 2002) that can function as a linguistic representation for all other varieties. Emilian, as such, is not a single, self-contained, and self-evident linguistic variety, but a geographically-based denomination which identifies a continuum of vernaculars. While other dialects of Italy, such as Piemontese and Veneto, have a *koine*, it is thought that the main road that runs through the region – Via Emilia – might have contributed to the linguistic fragmentation of Emilian thus hindering the development of a common variety (Hajek 1997).

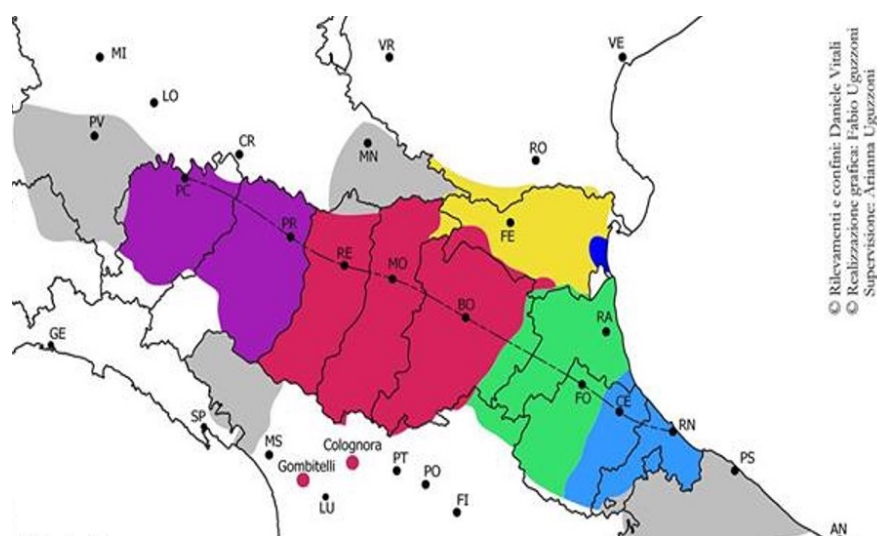


Figure 1.1: Varieties of Emilian and Romagnol. [Map created in 2017 by Daniele Vitali, Fabio Uguzzoni and Arianna Uguzzoni and used here under their permission. An updated version of the map can be found in Vitali (2020)]

Due to this fragmentation, I feel compelled to clarify that the data collected for this thesis originate from members residing in the provinces of Modena and Bologna, thus capturing practices and attitudes around their respective varieties of Emilian (central Emilian varieties, cf. MO and BO on map in Figure 1.1).

It was partly the socio-historical developments in the region, such as the Boii Gauls' occupation in 390 BCE and the Longobards' arrival during the 6th Century CE, that characterised Emilian from a typological standpoint (Foresti 2010; Vitali 2020) (typologically different from Italian and from other non-Gallo-Italic dialects). Despite the sense of identity afforded by the historical membership to the pre-existing state (Blackwood & Tufi 2015), geography, history, and linguistic features are sometimes not enough to unify a community. While Emilian may be an accepted term to speak of the vernaculars of the region, community members tend to identify their linguistic code at the local level. For example, instead of Emilian, speakers might refer to the “Vignola speech” (a town in the province of Modena), or to Frignanese (the autonym given to the portion of Tosco-Emilian Apennine in the province of Modena) – thus reflecting the linguistic fragmentation across Emilian and in the identity of its members.

The UNESCO *Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (Moseley 2010) refers to Emilian as “definitely endangered” while also indicating that, out of an ethnic population of around 3,000,000 people, only 1,000,000 are expected to be speakers of

this vernacular (cf. 440,000 estimated by Ethnologue 2020). Not only is this an alarming datum in itself but, being a rough estimate, it also indexes the urgent attention this linguistic group requires. This, however, is not a recent judgement. Hajek (1997) had already established the lack of a detailed dialect survey for Emilian and more than 20 years later very little has been done to fill this gap. Furthermore, following the publication of “*The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*” in 1992, Italy recognised official status to a multitude of so-called regional and minority languages in 1999. Many of the dialects of Italy, including Emilian, were not included in this piece of legislation thus reinforcing, once more, the idea of non-languageness attached to these varieties. In this thesis, I elaborate on the similarities and differences found between Emilian and the data from the Esperanto community to reflect on the functions that Emilian can fulfil in efforts of language revitalisation. I now turn to Esperanto to provide an overview of the language and its community as context informing the rest of this thesis.

1.2.2 Esperanto

Though artificial in its making and lacking a historical development that links it to any specific geographical area or an ethnic community, Esperanto is now a fully-fledged language which shares many of its sociolinguistic features with other minoritised languages (Fiedler & Brosch 2022; Fians 2020). In their paper, Kimura (2012) argues for a parallel to be drawn between Esperanto and other languages that goes beyond both the mere *Lingua Franca* function that this planned language was originally designed for and the artificial element of its roots (also Fiedler & Brosch 2022). Instead, building on Fettes (1996) and the idea of Esperanto as “a quasi-ethnic linguistic minority”, Kimura (2012) points at number, identity, prejudice, and voluntariness as features that the Esperanto community shares with other minoritised languages. This can be illustrated by taking Emilian as a comparison and starting by the fact that neither the Gallo-Italic variety nor Esperanto hold official status. In terms of numbers, speakers of Esperanto also represent a minority in the wider societal context it is spoken while also showing higher percentages of older people among speakers, as found for Emilian. Though Esperanto was designed by its creator, Zamenhof, as a neutral language to be used in international communication, its speakers find comfort in the intimacy created by the closed, tight-knit community the Esperanto community represents (ibid).

To identify with a language, like Esperanto speakers identify with Esperanto, means the language becomes part of one’s cultural identity (Llamas & Watt 2010). This is

true of minoritised languages just as it is of dominant languages. However, while the latter are the default language, taught at school and used to communicate in all aspects of societal life, the former often have no role in the specific society and their speakers actively choose to learn them and use them not out of necessity but voluntarily, as a form of “linguistic-ideological prop” (Kimura 2012:171). As previously hinted, Emilian has been subjected to stigmatisation and perceived as not important, not prestigious, and not used by the educated classes. Crucially, Kimura (2012) comments on such prejudices as also applicable to Esperanto: a language that is often considered not worth learning because useless and too simple to be used in all domains in life.

On the subject of domains, I contend that it is worth noting that another characteristic shared among minoritised languages is, indeed, the limitation of their use in everyday life. While a dominant language can be used in all social functions, a minoritised language is characterised by the confinement of its use to more informal and familiar domains, such as among friends, at home or in the local shop. As already introduced in section 1.1, this linguistic configuration was first discussed in Berruto (1987) when looking at the social functions assigned to both Italian, as the national language, and the local dialects. Berruto coins the term *dilalia* which, he argues, differs from both bilingualism and diglossia, and states that this term is needed “in order to capture the cases in which a clear functional differentiation exists (with a High variety and a Low variety), as in (classic) diglossia, but unlike diglossia, there is a functional overlap in spoken domains, with both L and H varieties used in ordinary conversation and primary socialization” (Berruto 2018:497).

While in a bilingual community the two linguistic forms share equal prestige and functions in society, with diglossia there is a distinction between the High/dominant language and the Low/minoritised language. However, in a diglossic community speakers do not use the High Language in familiar domains, whereas having permeated all social functions, Italian is now a common – if not the predominant – linguistic choice even in domestic environments. Conversely, even though bilingual, a speaker of Esperanto cannot fulfil formal functions using this language in the community, thus sharing this aspect with the dialects of Italy. Such are the differences and commonalities between Esperanto and other minoritised languages that the academic study of Esperanto can truly be a valuable instrument in better understanding many of the language-related questions that still go unanswered, may that be syntactic, of language acquisition, or of attitude, ideology, and identity (Kimura 2012). Together with reasons closely linked to my positionality (cf. Chapter 5), this informs the rationale of electing Esperanto as an insightful and helpful source of data to help other minoritised languages. In

the following section, I justify this choice alongside a brief discussion on the need to investigate both Esperanto and Emilian.

1.3 The issue at hand: Do Emilian and Esperanto need assessing?

In section 1.2.1, Italy was presented as having a linguistic repertoire that boasts a wealth of linguistic diversity. Such diversity was not, however, recognised by the introduction of a new Italian law in 1999, through which only Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovene, Croatian, French, Franco-Provençal, Friulian, Ladin, Occitan, and Sardinian were granted protected status (Woehrling 2005). A large proportion of Italy's minoritised languages were therefore ignored and the opportunity to contribute towards their maintenance and vitality was once again missed. Among these neglected languages is also Emilian. Up until 2016, Ethnologue (an online catalogue on world languages) reported that out of an ethnic population of 3,000,000, only 'some' are L1 speakers of Emilian (the updated version now states 440,000 as mentioned in section 1.2.1). The vague estimate of the number of fluent speakers of Emilian is a sign of how endangered the language is, as well as an indicator of the understudied state of the language from a research perspective (thus in line with Hajek 1997). Emilian therefore seems to provide an example of a historically minoritised language whose vitality is suffering through the rapidly increasing shift towards the national language and the constant neglect from both political and academic interests. Prompt actions aimed at the revitalisation and promotion of language maintenance should arguably be implemented in order to avoid the death of the language. I would also argue that such measures ought to be designed with language attitudes in mind so that informed awareness of what the dialects of Italy are can be tackled appropriately.

On the issue of language attitudes in Italy, the overall impression is that there is a lack of awareness among the public around Emilian, Lombard, Ligurian and other Gallo-Italic varieties. While there is a degree of variation on a sort of continuum of awareness between different dialects, community members do not tend to be aware of being speakers of a language. This, I argue, is an ideology of erasure – an erasure of the dialects from the collective consciousness (this idea is further elaborated in Chapter 9). The lack of awareness is not unique to the dialects of Italy and is, in fact, part of the issue in many other minoritised speech communities (Grinevald 2003). This, however, is not true of Esperanto which largely relies on a speaker's conscious effort

to acquire it and use it. The concept of consciousness is strictly linked to that of voluntariness; a shared characteristic of both Esperanto and Emilian as discussed in section 1.2. The main difference then is in the environment of exposure in which the language can be acquired by a speaker. While Emilian is normally acquired in an environment of unconsciousness and denial (i.e.: intergenerational transmission is occurring regardless of the language not being recognised as such), it takes consciousness of the fact that Esperanto is indeed a language for someone to acquire it in the first place. Even when Esperanto is transmitted through child-caregiver interactions (so-called *denaskuloj*, Fiedler & Brosch 2022), this is done in the awareness that the child is acquiring one of the many world's languages.

Despite this nontrivial difference between the two languages, I would argue that both need assessing and documenting (documentation will be discussed in Chapter 2.4.4). Firstly, neither Emilian nor Esperanto have the support of national institutions. It follows that researchers engaged with these speech communities might have to take it upon themselves to think about the needs of these languages in terms of their survival. This would be done in the hope that efforts to revitalise the language will eventually succeed, and a well-compiled documentation will, in turn, help future generations of speakers. The aim then is not to create museological collections of data, but for our research output to allow future generations to get to know and learn the language; an output that must therefore be suitable and beneficial to future speakers. Secondly, the documentation of minoritised languages represents a wealth of resources for secondary linguistic projects, such as language change, language attitudes, pedagogies, and indeed comparative studies. Though valuable, these still assume language documentation as a mean to an end.

Documenting and promoting minoritised languages can also be seen to have intrinsic value as an end in itself. Some argue that endangered languages are carrier of cultural knowledge and oral traditions which would otherwise be lost if no longer transmitted through the language (Patpong 2019; Evans 2009). The loss of a language can also have a detrimental impact on the relationship between younger generations and the local environment, as discussed in Emeka-Nwobia (2020) regarding the loss of connection through the endangerment of Igbo in Nigeria. In line with Wexler (2009), I contend that all languages are worth documenting because central to the formation of our sense of identity and belonging (cf. Chapter 2.3). On the basis that identity and belonging are informed by our quest to know who we are and where we come from, an ancestral language can be a precious tool for the well-being of both present and future generations. In this light, we can recognise all minoritised languages, including

Emilian and Esperanto, to have the potential to act as vectors of sense of belonging and identity and thus intrinsically worth documenting and promoting. This concept will be revisited throughout this thesis and finally elaborated through the lens of heritage, and language as heritage, in Chapter 8. In the following section I close in on the specific aims of this thesis by formulating my three research questions.

1.4 Research questions

The crucial role played by research questions is spelled out in Sunderland (2018:9) who argues that “[r]esearch questions are [...] the key to any empirical research project. Without research questions, you will flounder; with them, you will be guided in terms of data needed, data collection methods and data analysis”. Defining a clear set of questions is consequently needed not just for the sake of guiding the reader through the research design but it also functions as guidance for the researcher in the decision-making processes from the very beginning.

So far, I have presented the focus of this thesis as one interested with the linguistic practices of Emilian and Esperanto in an attempt to compare data across the two communities and find key dynamics at play in the latter with the aim to help the former. This, however, is a very wide scope of enquiry which would not be practically possible to satisfy as part of a doctoral research project. Instead, I take a pragmatic approach to the issue by tackling it from a strategic perspective. Due to a lack of previous work conducted on Emilian around linguistic attitudes and behaviours, I decided against the idea of surveying its vitality – a nontrivial task that would require measuring a number of different parameters depending on the framework followed (for example Hammarström et al. 2018; Lee & Van Way 2016; Moseley 2012). Instead, I formulate two main research questions on which future studies can build, namely:

1. What is the current state of affairs of the linguistic attitudes and practices for Emilian and Esperanto? What are the differences and similarities across the two? [RQ1]
2. What can the findings from the Esperantist community tell us about efforts for language revitalisation in the context of Emilian and other historically marginalised languages? [RQ2]

As will be discussed in Chapter 6.4, these questions are open-ended to capture an overview of what may be going on in the Emilian context and act as a starting point for

future studies. This approach renders my study data-led and of experimental nature. It is around these research questions that I designed the triangulation model discussed in Chapter 4 and towards which my interpretations of the findings are directed. In line with my positionality and a worldview of interconnectedness where language, identity, and environment are all linked (Blythe & Brown 2003), I formulated a third research question, namely:

3. How can Ecolinguistics, as a framework of interconnectedness, practically help minoritised communities to reconnect with both language and local environment?
[RQ3]

While the concept of interconnectedness runs throughout my thesis, either overtly or simply underpinning it from a theoretical standpoint, it is in Chapter 9 where this research question is addressed directly. Ecolinguistics is a relative recent sub-discipline of linguistics whose focus is on the analyses of ecological texts to resist ecologically destructive narratives and propose alternative stories which encourage a more sustainable and equal future. The theoretical assumption underpinning ecolinguistic approaches is one of fundamental interconnectedness which, as I argue in Chapter 9, can inform efforts of language support that help reconnect a community with their language and their local more-than-human world. By formulating and addressing this research question, I am able to bring my posthumanist stance to the fore and provide practical examples for how linguistic scholarship can help find solutions to real-world issues such as the climate crisis and language endangerment. The other two research questions will be addressed in different chapters, as outlined in the next section.

1.5 Thesis structure

This Introduction lays out the key components of the entire thesis, both from a theoretical perspective and from a structural point of view. It aims to provide an overview of what the reader can expect to learn from this manuscript while also preempting considerations over its format. This is due to the fact that this thesis follows a journal format (this is why I refer to some chapters as article/paper). In line with this expectation, the structure of this thesis can be summarised as follows:

- Chapter 2 acts as a literature review around the main theoretical concepts encountered throughout the thesis, some of which form the ontological perspective underpinning the entirety of the study. This chapter lays down the basis for how

language is conceptualised in the thesis by subscribing to the poststructuralist idea of language as a social practice, and, consequently, to language attitudes as social action.

- Chapter 3 follows on to outline my epistemological stance and to position my study within the scope of applied linguistics. Here the triangulation model designed and adopted for the project is introduced and its single methods justified briefly as context to what is discussed next.
- Chapter 4 is the first of the five self-contained journal articles [in print] comprising this thesis. This is a methodological contribution to the study of language attitudes in which my triangulation model is described in detail and justified as a necessary tool to observe language practices and attitudes in a systematic way. The chapter/article concludes with a section on how the global pandemic of 2020 affected my data collection and how the use of social media platforms shaped the population for my survey data.
- Chapter 5 offers a reflective discussion around my positionality and how it influenced my research design in its entirety, starting from the selection of languages, methods, data and the interpretation of analyses.
- Chapter 6 is the second self-contained article in the thesis and the first of empirical nature. In this chapter/article I analyse some of the data from the sociolinguistic questionnaires to capture a snapshot of the main dynamics at play behind the language attitudes observable from the data. Data are analysed in their own right and also compared across the two language communities to formulate hypotheses to investigate in future studies. This chapter/article addresses both RQ1 and RQ2 by providing evidence of a correlation between language maintenance and positive language attitudes. In turn, this allows me to formulate falsifiable hypotheses to be tested in future studies as an advancement in the study of language attitudes in the Emilian context. This is done in line with a poststructuralist approach which rejects essentialist claims about a given phenomena but that can accept general statements as informed artefacts of phenomena as situated and constantly negotiated.
- Chapter 7 is a self-contained journal article [under review] in which I present the analysis of two YouTube rap songs: one in Emilian and one in Esperanto. Borrowing analytical tools from narrative archetypes, enregisterment, and metadiscourse,

I analyse the lyrics to reveal how both artists narrate their story as heroes on a journeys of quest (Emilian) and rebirth (Esperanto). Crucially, the artists make use of Hiphop discourse as a form of resistance against the status quo in their respective community to promote an alternative story of belonging and friendship. It is through the meaning-making processes ascribed to Hiphop that both Emilian and Esperanto are rapped into modernity and made relevant.

- Chapter 8 revisits the findings from both Chapters 6 and 7 together with data collected from the diary method. This is done in the form of a self-contained publishable article and follows a process of triangulation of results to answer both RQ1 and RQ2. Here I conclude that both Emilian and Esperanto share overall positive language attitudes expressed through concepts of conviviality, intimacy, and attachment with the main difference being the temporal direction towards the past that is ascribed to Emilian. In terms of language use, my data suggest that the maintenance of Esperanto is more active than that of Emilian; both in number of domains and in number of uses by speaker and by domain. Driven by the correlation discussed in Chapter 6, I build on these findings to develop an integrated model for language maintenance which revolves around attitudes, competence and use (both uses of spaces and spaces of use). This is done in answer to RQ2 and also to propose a theoretical framework to inform efforts of language revitalisation in Emilian and other similar contexts.
- Chapter 9 finally brings the concept of interconnectedness to the fore and at the intersection with language endangerment. In this final self-contained journal article (published) I answer RQ3 by actively showing how planning for research on endangered languages in a way that embeds principles of language documentation and ecological identity can support the communities to reconnect with both language and local environment.
- Chapter 10 acts as a conclusive chapter where the thesis is summarised around its main findings and outputs to provide an at-a-glance overview of the contributions I produced through the study.

As I strive to remind the reader throughout this thesis, every single assertion, hypothesis, idea, model, and output presented as my own is a unique product of who I am as a researcher. As such, I make use of the following section to make one final point about my ethical stance as someone who engaged with communities of people to collect data for a research study.

1.6 Giving back to the community: An Ethical Stance

When it comes to whether or not a researcher feels an ethical responsibility to give something back to the community in exchange for the data collected, the choice is personal as there are no written rules dictating what one should do. As I discuss in Chapter 9, I argue in favour of linguists and other researchers working with endangered languages to make a conscious effort in returning the data to the community in a way that can truly benefit them and the vitality of the language (cf. advocacy in Cameron et al. 2018). Crystal (2002) introduces the topic of language death as one deeply connected with the relationship between speakers and community. When considering cases of last speakers, Crystal argues that the language is already dead. This is because, as social practices, languages are only alive when used in a community of speech and the mere mental storage of a language in one speaker does not allow for such embodiment. Languages therefore belong to their communities and whenever data are collected from speakers, it can be argued that the researcher is taking something out of its rightful environment. Collecting consent from participants can only satisfy the legal aspect of the ethical implications of taking something from someone (Crowley 2007). Even then, researchers must consider whether consent is a concept that can be fully understood by the participants.

In line with principles of language documentation (cf. Chapter 2.4.4), when consent is established in an informed and ethical way, data collected should be fully annotated and archived (Schultze-Berndt 2012; Himmelmann et al. 2006). It is indeed accessibility to primary data that fosters accountability by acting as a sign of ethical practice towards both the speech community and fellow researchers. The latter will benefit from this insofar that they can verify the contents and claims put forward by the documentarist (ethical because transparent), whereas members of the speech community can gain indirectly by the care and attention their efforts receive in the process and by building visibility of the language within the academic world (ethical because respectful). This way of turning research projects involved with endangered languages into activities with an end in itself adds moral purpose to the academic enterprise while also creating impacts within and outside of the community. It is not, however, an obligation but relies solely on the researcher's ethos.

It is not enough to create didactic materials without consulting the community and feel accomplished in having given something back. Being in tune with what the community actually needs is what is necessary to fulfil this ethical effort (Olko & Sallabank 2021 for a discussion on the best practices for language revitalisation). For

the maintenance of Emilian, I would not focus on didactic resources as it happens in the revitalisation efforts of other endangered languages. Instead, I am more interested in raising awareness around the missed opportunity of perceiving Emilian as part of the heritage of the community. In line with this, I plan on getting in touch with the ‘Institute for natural, cultural and artistic heritage’ (*Instituto per i beni artitisci culturali e naturali*). In 2017, the Institute for Emilia Romagna ran a competition aimed at funding a project with the scope of promoting public awareness and appreciation of the region’s vernaculars and I therefore hope that they will welcome a summary of my findings translated into Italian to use to create resources.

Regional institutes of this sort would therefore be an ideal partner for researchers interested in attracting funding for the archiving of their documentation. Decentralised institutions may not however guarantee access of materials to the local communities – an issue worth bearing in mind when projecting archival solutions (for a discussion on archival issues, see Dwyer 2006). In addition to contacting institutions, I am also planning on sharing all my data by publishing them on an open data repository.

As for Esperanto, the original purpose of the language is to serve as an easy language to learn and to use in international contexts. In this regard, I feel I have contributed by running two beginner’s courses in the language. The first was done in person at the University of Liverpool in early 2020 and the second was taught online in 2021. During the second cycle of teaching, I had the privilege of introducing five people from the United Kingdom, China, and Canada to the language and culture of Esperanto. One of them is an academic who decided to further their learning of the language and is now planning on conducting their own project.

Ultimately, I acknowledge that this is my personal ethical stance. A stance that as a researcher takes me closer to closing the loop of continuity of fieldwork and to fulfilling the responsibility that researchers have “to the larger human community which [the] results [of the field research] could affect” (Hale 2001:76). Or as Turin (2007:202) put it, it takes me closer to my aim to “collect, protect, connect”.

1.7 Conclusion

The function of this introductory chapter was to present to the reader my thesis as a posthumanist study concerned with the linguistic practices of Esperanto and Emilian. After providing an overview for both languages and justifying the necessity to assess them from a sociolinguistic perspective, three research questions were identified through a process of narrowing down on the scope of enquiry. This was then followed by a

succinct summary of chapters presented in order according to the structure of the thesis. A final section on my ethical stance as a researcher concludes this Introduction and gives way to the following chapter where I outline the key theoretical concepts that underpin this thesis.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework and Considerations

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is two-fold. In the more traditional sense, it functions as a self-reflective review of the current ideas and discussions available in the relevant literature. However, given the journal format chosen for the overall doctoral thesis, this chapter will also serve to contextualise the main body of the dissertation which will consist of five self-contained publishable articles (the higher than usual number of chapters is due to the chosen format of the thesis and to the fact that self-contained articles are shorter than the average thesis chapters would allow). Having adopted a mixed-methodology throughout the project, an article-based format allows for both a focused and in-depth discussion as studies in their own right and as co-elements of the same phenomenon (this latter aspect will be considered in the final discussion of the thesis). Ultimately, this literature review will serve as a theoretical framework, an in-depth glossary of all the key terms and theories that will be adopted in my analyses.

2.1.1 Linguistic Autobiography

What is often the case in a literature review chapter is for the researcher to provide a summary of the current understanding of the topics, concepts and areas that are relevant to the research project at hand. It is an opportunity to show to the reader how the researcher has come to form their knowledge, how connections from previous studies have been made to their own project and to set out from the outset the definitions of the

core concepts that form the basis for the framework, the methodology and consequent discussions. In a sense, to write a literature review is to recreate the mental process through which the researcher has undergone – this, in turn, requires a sophisticated level of introspection and organisation in order to ensure cohesion for the benefit of both parties.

This section will therefore be used as a reflective exercise whose aim is to allow me to verbalise some of the key ideas and understandings I have developed so far in my academic career. At the core of my research are two historically minoritised languages, namely, Emilian and Esperanto. Whilst I was brought up hearing a variety of Emilian and can understand it perfectly, I have mastered more fluency in Esperanto and can now speak it better than the regional language spoken in my family. Competency aside, I feel very close to both languages and my personal involvement and commitment to the scope of my research is arguably indisputable. This project is a milestone in what I would describe as a lifetime journey which has been in the making since before I had even taken consciousness of it. To faithfully verbalise how the current body of literature has helped me shape my knowledge and how my project will in turn engage with and contribute to the state of the arts in the field, I must take a step back and reflect on how this process unfolded. To help me achieve this I took inspiration from D’Agostino’s (2007)¹ to write my own linguistic autobiography:

Sixteen. I was sixteen years old when I realised for the first time in my life that *al dialet* (‘the dialect’) was not an abstract and mysterious entity which only inhabited the conversations that took place within the walls of my house, but was in fact an experience shared across my country, Italy. The realisation was deeply shocking but not sudden. In fact, the way I conceptualised the dialect before then was quite fuzzy and semi-rationalised; I somehow understood that the dialect was separate from Italian but unconsciously took it to be one and spoken by all, and that Neapolitan, Sardinian and Sicilian were different entities altogether which co-existed with Italian and the dialect I knew. I even resented people from Sicily and Sardinia and was jealous of the fact that they could claim to be bilingual while I grew up “only speaking Italian”. It is now clear to me that in my mind *al dialet* was

¹But also in the work by Busch et al. (2006) on language biographies in multilingual contexts; Holman Jones (2007) for a discussion on autoethnography as working framework; Galița (2013) for an account of how linguistic autobiographies can aid language learning; and, more recently, Garrido & Moore (2016) for an analysis of language biographies as tools for reflexivity in identity production of bilingual speakers.

stuck in a limbo: different enough from Italian to be considered as a barrier to your aspirations because vulgar, uneducated and as such forbidden outside domestic walls, but not distant enough from Italian to be called a language.

As a child, I used to live with my grandmother Piera, her husband Olinto, and two of their children named Patrizia and Francesco who were and still are my auntie and my uncle. My grandparents spoke exclusively dialect with one another and to their children, but would speak Italian whenever addressing me. While Patrizia would hardly speak back in Italian to her parents, Francesco would speak dialect in only few occasions, with a typical short exchange between him and Piera sounding like:

Piera: E gh'é ancára d'la lègna da tajée. (Emilian)

“There’s still some wood to be split.”

Francesco: Adesso, dopo la taglio. (Italian)

“I’m going to split it later.”

Piera: A m’arcmand, ch’i an det c’al ven fred dmen. (Emilian)

“Make sure you do as they said that tomorrow is going to be cold.”

Francesco: Sé! A t’u det c’ag vag dóp! (Emilian)

“Yes! I told you that I’m going to later!”

As in the final example, whenever frustrated, irritated and annoyed, Francesco would resort to the use of Emilian; likewise, even though my grandmother tried really hard to only speak to me in Italian, she would tell me to behave well, *Fé a mod!*, to understand that things can be tough, *L’è acsé, Cina*, and to stop misbehaving, *Mia fer acsé!*. It was only recently that I understood the close link between the use of the dialect and emotions.

I used to look forward to our Sundays. Although Catholic by culture, no one in my family attended Mass and instead, Sundays were days of family gatherings. My two other aunties would travel to visit their parents and their siblings together with their husbands and children. The usually spacious kitchen would suddenly feel cramped and overcrowded with chairs being moved from the dining table into the sitting room to allow for as many of us to sit around the kitchen table before lunch. Sometimes sitting on my own chair, most times sharing the seat on one of my aunties’ lap, I would stare in adoration at this mad bunch of people talking about their last

failed attempt at making *al carsenti*² with the same passion and emotional distraught as you would expect from someone who is ranting about their employer and has just been made redundant. Yes, food is that important to us and family's recipes which are transmitted down from generation to generation are part of the genetic tissue that binds us together and makes us a family. But what about the dialect? Does it too form part of who we are as a family?

The dialect was everywhere and was used by everyone around me; I was surrounded by its essence. But unlike food, which was profusely discussed, heatedly debated and centre stage to many arguments, I do not recall my family talking about the dialect – ever! Its presence was in the silent erasure from our consciousness. It existed and yet it was not there. It was used but never acknowledged. It was the binding rope that kept us together, afloat as logs of a raft for survivors of the economic and social injustice historically endured, blindly navigating a sea of unspoken rules, prejudice and limited opportunities. And yet, it was that very rope that bound us together that was also perceived to choke and further limit our chances of survival.

This was very clear to me when – in a non-explanatory but still very telling way – my auntie once told me off for answering back in dialect with a scolding “Speak Italian or you won’t get a job when you’re older!”. I was six, getting a job was the last thing on my mind and all I wanted to do was to contribute to the conversation by speaking like them; I did not aspire to be like them but craved to be *one of them*. Access to the dialect would have meant access to their most intimate conversations but instead I was left out and my competence of the dialect confined to mere understanding rather than speaking. I know my auntie did what she thought was in my best interest, but it is somewhat ironic that I am now planning to make a living by researching and writing about *al dialet*.

Growing up as an only child in a household full of much older people who worked most of the day and had very little time and energy to dedicate to me, I would find myself passing the hours in the company of Japanese anime on television. I loved talking but despite my efforts, those Japanese characters did not seem interested in talking back to me, so in the evening

²These are known as *crescentine* or *tigelle* in Italian. They are a round, flat type of bread traditionally eaten in my hometown.

and whenever an adult was around me, I would initiate a conversation. In a house of very humble people, with no books to read nor new technologies to be distracted by, talking was the mean to socialise with one another – over a plate of food, of course. It was not at all uncommon for me and my auntie to spend a couple of hours in the evening talking about anything and everything as we snuggled under the covers, distracting ourselves from the sub-zero temperatures outside. Or for my grandmother to call me outside in the summer, as she sat on the chair and warned me of the danger of the “cold current of air” (yes, in August with 40c!) and asked me to tell her about my day.

Talking was all I had. Not only to make sense of who we were as a family or of where I came from, but especially so in terms of belonging in the here and the now. With so much of our time spent talking, as I obediently refrained from using the dialect, I was unknowingly robbing myself of chances to feel like an authentic member of this family and to truly get to know the fine details of what was going on in my relatives’ lives. Not only that, but I also missed out on opportunities to affiliate myself with it. The dialect did not feel mine; it was theirs and I a mere passive recipient of it.

I am now reclaiming that sense of belonging. I long for it as a legacy, a family heirloom. I refuse to accept that the dialect was mine only when I was to be reprimanded, warned, or given a life’s lesson. I will not care about the judgement of other speakers about my “ugly pronunciation”. Nor will I stand for the erasure of the dialect that decades of prejudice and hegemonic ideologies have created, leaving behind an unspoken void from our consciousness which left me soaking in ignorance until I was sixteen. The taboo created around the dialect is surrounded by a silence so deafening that one can hardly hear oneself thinking and reflecting about what the dialect really is. It is time in my life to fully expose myself to its dismissal and the dynamics that pushed for this to happen in the past and still recur in the present. It is time to hear this voice and call it by its name.

...

Although very personal and individual, this linguistic autobiography touches upon thematic issues that transcend the problem at hand (i.e. my understanding of what *al dialet* is) by spanning across aspects of life that are arguably at the core of society and of being human, such as emotions, family, identity, belonging, opportunities/limitations,

and authenticity. When speaking, a language dictates the quality and level at which these experiences, among many others, will be afforded or constrained or even at all recognised to the speaker. For example, the fact that I was born in Italy meant that I learnt Italian as my first language and the circumstances in my upbringing coupled with the opportunities, or lack thereof, I was exposed to throughout my schooling meant that by the time I was 18, I could speak some basic English. This knowledge in turn allowed me to travel to the United Kingdom where I eventually found a job and settled down.

On the other hand, the fact that I was not allowed to speak the dialect with my family resulted in a divide which affected me both at a physical and psychological level. More precisely, the prohibition of speaking the dialect meant I did not belong in family conversations of the most private kind which consequently drove me apart physically – because I would no longer see a reason to sit with them during those discussions – and emotionally – because I could no longer relate to my family as one cohesive unit where everything is shared. It is therefore clear that specific languages come with specific powers; powers that, crucially, can shape a person's life. At the heart of what drives this dis/empowerment – and will ultimately inform my theoretical framework – lie the notions of *ideology* and *discourse*.

2.2 Ideology and Discourse

As discussed in my linguistic autobiography, the understanding and the perception I had on the language spoken in the family had a deep impact on the conceptualisation of my identity and my culture and, arguably, on the ways in which I came to understand the world around me. It was only during the first year of my BA in English Language and Linguistics at the University of Gloucestershire that I understood what kind of intricate dynamics lie behind the way we come to form our worldview. During a class on identity and society, we were introduced to the notions of ideology and discourse as key words that encapsulate what is at stake in our society when it comes to the ways things are, how they operate, and how our actions sustain these systems without us even knowing it.

First introduced in the work of Marx & Engels (1845), the term ideology has been given a multitude of albeit similar definitions by many academics across various disciplines. In the field of rhetoric studies, ideology is said to stand for “an enduring constellation of associated concepts, values and arguments that orient political actors towards distinct programmes of government and social interest” (Martin 2013:10). Sim-

ilarly, in the related area of discourse analysis, Fairclough (2015:32) describes ideologies as “assumptions which are taken for granted as ‘common sense’” or, as Simpson et al. (2018:4) put it: “*ideology* refers to the ways in which a person’s beliefs, opinions and value-systems intersect with the broader social and political structures of the society in which they live” [italics in original]. All three definitions rely on the notion of systems of ideas that inform our everyday living and guide us in specific directions and in politically-loaded ways. It therefore follows that ideologies are not naturally present in our collective minds, they are not the natural ways things are, but they are presented, assumed, and unquestionably reproduced as if they were.

It was Gramsci (2005) who, following a Marxist approach in analysing the fabric of society and its sources of power struggle, built on the notion of ideology, and identified what he named *hegemony*. With the concept of hegemony, Gramsci refers to the ways in which power is exerted by a few dominant groups on the masses in order to reproduce and sustain their dominance. Power is maintained by convincing subordinate groups of its legitimacy which in turn is achieved by creating and, crucially, routinely repeating specific narratives about the ways things work in society as natural and therefore legitimate (see Simpson et al. 2018). Because language permeates all areas of social life, it can be said that language affects us at the level of knowing and the way we perceive the world. Locke (2004:11), for example, builds on Foucault’s work and claims that language is crucial in informing our understanding of the world because it is language that constitutes the object of which is being spoken.

Language is therefore paramount in shaping and informing our worldview, may it be about how we relate to one another, what is expected of us as students, as citizens, as friends or how we understand economy, technological advances, or medicine. Stibbe (2015) argues that this is achieved through the systematic use of selected vocabularies, presuppositions, and grammatical patterns by members of specific groups in a given society, such as journalists, economists or writers. These features come together to form standardised ways of speaking about certain areas of life to the point that they become taken for granted and no longer questioned; they become ideologies: “belief systems about how the world was, is, will be or should be” (Stibbe 2015:23). Even though presented as neutral, ideologies are selected ways in which the collective mind is persuaded to see the world, and it is through language that they operate. Ideologies come together to form the specific ways in which we refer to areas of life through language by creating even bigger patterns called *discourse*.

Before I move to providing a definition of discourse, it is useful to bring into the discussion the tangible roles of language in our everyday life. There is currently general

agreement among scholars that language is not a mere conveyor of information or a passive container of grammar, words, and semantics. Above this abstract system emerges the real, tangible world; the world that we experience every day, the world that presents itself to ourselves through language. An account that draws upon philosophical phenomenology (more on this in Chapter 3) is the theory of Speech Acts. With this theory, Austin (e.g.: 1962) (later developed in Searle 1969) posited the idea that it is through language that we get things done (this concept will be revisited in this chapter in section 2.3.1 where it will be linked to recent theories of languaging and performative analyses of language and identity). For example, in many countries it is from the very moment a couple is *declared* married by the relevant authority that the pair is officially recognised as such.

This example is fitting for two reasons as it not only satisfies the requirement of illustrating how things are done through words but it also shows that other factors such as location, culture, and legal systems can be crucial in the recognition of a speech act. In Johnstone (2010), the author links the effectiveness of speech acts to the power relations in place between interlocutors which, in turn, is closely linked to one's identity. Going back to the example of the newly-wed couple, the declaration is only officially recognised because uttered by someone who has authority and can legally pronounce the pair married (power relation) and depending on religion, legal system and other factors, this person is likely to be a priest, a registrar or a wedding officiant (social role = identity).

In order to fully understand how these components truly operate and relate to one another, a further step back is necessary to look at how meaning-making processes come to form or, in other words, how social meaning is expressed and interpreted. Linguist Saussure (e.g.: 2011), first put forward the notion of a sign as a two-part minimal unit to create meaning. This area of study, known as semiotics, takes the sign as a unit whose meaning is only recognised and interpreted through an arbitrary relation between a signifier (such as an image or a sound) and a signified (the concept the signifier refers to). Language and languages are a prime example of this: in written English the string of graphemes DOG stand for the domesticated, four-legged, tail-wagging mammal we all know and because DOG does not look like the animal it refers to, the word has a symbolic function (i.e.: it is a symbol that stands for something other than itself).

However, the same subspecies of animal is represented by CANE in written Italian and HUNDO in Esperanto therefore showing how the relation between the signified (the actual animal) and the signifier (the string of graphemes) is completely arbitrary and conventionally accepted and recognised depending on the language in use. What is

more, in time the sign tends to acquire different semantic layers that go beyond its literal meaning and subsequently DOG can go from referring to the four-legged subspecies of mammal that is normally kept as a pet (denotations) to concepts of loyalty, friendship and cuteness (connotations).

For Barthes (for example Bouzida 2014), connotations are attributed to the sign by cultural conventions and can only be recognised by those who share the same cultural experience and knowledge. If I now apply this theory to what just discussed on the concept of Speech Acts, it is possible to understand how the conventional agreement in place between a signifier and its signified occurs through internal interpretation but its effects are external and exist in the real world. That shows that there is co-operation between the signifiers, its signified, the interpretants, the shared cultural experience of the given context and any social structure relevant to the speech act.

This co-operation was first discussed by Peirce (1991) (but for a secondary reading see, for example Bucholtz & Hall 2010) who further developed the study of signs and recognised their indexical meanings and how these operate at the social level (this will be discussed in more depth in section 2.3). Peirce's contribution to semiotics is also key to the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis because of its emphasis on the element of agency. While agency was disregarded by Saussure, Peirce and later scholars working on multimodality recognise the role of language in creating new, tangible realities; a role that is crucial to the viability of any language maintenance efforts, and that will be explored in depth in section 2.4.

Earlier on in the discussion, I linked ideologies to the formation of patterns as discourse. Now that an explanation of how the formation of meaning occurs through the study of signs has been explored, an extension of this process must be applied beyond the level of the single word, phrase or sentence in order to recognise how ideologies operate in discourse. On discourse, Hart (2014:3) argues that “[l]anguage use reflects social structures but at the same time it (re)enforces social structures” and, echoing Fairclough (1995), that discourse is both shaped by society and constitutive of society. It follows that discourse is not a mere linguistic practice but because it affects and is affected by society, it must be seen as a social practice instead. According to Machin & Mayr (2012:20), discourse is “language in real contexts of use” and when the role of ideologies is accounted for, it can be said that “[d]iscourses are standardised ways that particular groups in society use language, images and other forms of representation” (Stibbe 2015:22) [*italics in original*].

What this means is that while ideologies are the normalised ways in which things are accepted for in a given society, it is through discourse that these ideologies operate by

informing our worldview and therefore shaping society. Ideologies are concealed behind the standard ways we normally talk about things and through the analysis of discourse, ideological patterns can be unpicked and brought to the fore to be consciously rejected, accepted or renegotiated (see for example Shohamy 2006). The role of language ideologies and consolidated discourses about language will be a key aspect in the analysis of language attitudes in this thesis and, in particular, in Chapters 7 and 9.

2.2.1 Attitudes and Authenticity

The notions of textuality and interpretation in the creation of meaning behind the conventional constitution of a sign are what sets apart a structuralist view of semiotics to its post-structuralist counterpart. Through the intellectual movement of deconstruction, Derrida (e.g.: 1966; 1976) sought to create a theory in which the binary and hierarchical system of written language versus and over speech assumed by structuralists is challenged. Instead, Derrida argues that nothing can escape text and everything around us therefore has an element of textuality which adds to the creation of meaning already present in our oral and historical understanding of the world (Hendricks 2016). Crucially, deconstruction allows to account for the plurality of voices in discourse by recognising the role played by interpretation in giving meaning to our world. It then follows that ideologies and discourses are ubiquitous and the role of language is central to their preservation, consolidation, reproduction as well as to their refusal and potential decline through a paradigm shift.

While language can be used as a vector for ideologies through discourse, languages themselves can fall victim to ideological discourse. The idea of a “standard” language – that is a conventional set of prescriptive rules that organise the way a language is supposed to be spoken and written (e.g.: Milroy 2001) – is, for example, ideological in its nature and purpose. Arguably a standard language is nothing more than a variety of said language which was chosen above all other varieties for reasons that are normally linked to status and prestige (ibid). This was the case for English whose RP spoken variety, for example, originates from the way the King or Queen spoke and how one was to address them when being received – hence the term Received Pronunciation (RP). The way we speak and write is part of our everyday experience of life arguably beyond what one realises.

It is undeniable that when we speak, we say a lot more than just what is being expressed through our utterances. On the sole basis of how we sound, our interlocutor can instantly make assumptions about us. This happens for example when wondering

about a person's age, gender, and provenance whenever speaking on the phone with someone we have never met before. These traits, and with them many others, are aspects of our identity that are constantly being negotiated through our accent, regional variety, lexical choices and other acoustic qualities of our voice. This extra layer of communication happens beyond our control as our interlocutors interpret these choices, ascribing qualities to us and drawing assumptions about who we are (more on the role of language in relation to identity will be explored in section 2.3). These choices can be both intentional and unintentional and we only have control over some of them.

The answer to how these traits and choices can allow for assumptions about one's identity to be drawn, lies in the social meaning that is conventionally accepted and recognised to different accents and regional varieties. The way we speak creates meaning and tells our interlocutor something more about us; in other words, our speech is semiotic and has indexicality (as first introduced in section 2.2). Just as arbitrary the relation between a signifier and its signified is for words, the same is true for accents/varieties and the qualities and connotations generally ascribed to them in the given society. These connotations are ideological because often favouring those already in power while discriminating against those on the fringe of society, and, most importantly, they are also part of the pattern formation of *language attitudes*. According to Sallabank (2013), who investigates language attitudes and ideologies in relation to the maintenance of minoritised languages, “[l]anguage attitudes and ideologies are associated both with perceptions of a language's vitality and with language practices, and thus with language policies at all levels of society – although there is no single connection between expressed attitudes and actions” (p 60-1).

Following Garrett et al. (2003), Sallabank continues by defining attitude as “an evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort, but that, being a “disposition”, an attitude is at least potentially an evaluative stance that is sufficiently stable to allow it to be identified and in some sense measured” (Sallabank 2013:61). This means that, when we hear someone's speech or read someone's words we instantly evaluate and make an assessment of that person as if their language use were a direct manifestation and extension of their intrinsic worth. As Garrett (2010:1-2) points out, these evaluations may just happen unconsciously but come to the surface whenever overtly articulated, may it be in everyday conversations or in the media.

Language attitudes and ideologies are closely related and inform one another. Following the definition of ideology provided in section 2.2, we can consider language ideologies as systems of beliefs about specific languages and varieties that are held by groups of a given society. These beliefs will inevitably yield pre-made assumptions

about the speakers of said varieties which in turn can manifest through attitudes. Indeed, language attitudes can reveal themselves as reactions towards a person (e.g.: “She sounds so posh”), a group (e.g.: “Footballers are inarticulate”), and even a whole population (“French is the language of love” – and by extension French people are romantic). When these attitudes are of a negative nature and stable in a given society, they can yield stereotypes and crucially lead to marginalisation (see for example Smith & Mackie 2000).

Attitudes are therefore real in the sense that they do things to people and have tangible effects on society. As well as directly involving a person’s social image, language attitudes can equally affect the reputation of a language and its status in society. As argued by Rice (2001), working with speakers is an ongoing process of ever-learning. Even when a researcher feels familiar with the community, informants can and will surprise you with unexpected reactions – an important lesson that has informed the introspective account I provide on my fieldwork in my positionality chapter (cf. Chapter 5). One but crucial example discussed in the chapter is the recurring reaction of disbelief I am normally faced with, whenever informing participants of my academic interest in our *dialet*. My own people, my own neighbours, friends, former colleagues, cannot believe that I would be so naive as to invest four years of my time and resources to something that does not even exist.

Quoting and translating some of my participants’ objections to my project: *al dialet* is not worthy of being studied because “It’s not even a language!” so “What use is studying it?” and anyway “You youngsters can’t even speak the real *dialet*; what you speak is just an Italianised mash-up”. Scholarly work on linguistic attitudes provides numerous examples of similar reactions such as, among others, Austin (2013), Suek (2014), and May (2000). The issue of negative attitudes is real and can constitute a challenge to the researcher. Indeed, Lehmann (1999) recognises the ambivalent role of the attitudes held by the public towards minoritised languages and how difficult it can be for linguists to try and change things.

Some of the quotes just provided to exemplify the reactions I encountered in my fieldwork clearly question my status as an authentic speaker and member of the community. Authenticity, as an aspect of sociolinguistic enquiry, has increasingly been discussed in the literature in the past two decades, with Eckert (2003) and Coupland (2010) for instance referring to it as the elephant in the room because it is “something significant, perhaps embarrassing, that no one was talking about” (Coupland 2010:99). While it is true that the issue of authenticity is no longer being ignored in sociolinguistics, this is predominantly the case for the kind of considerations that the sociolinguist

makes in relation to the speakers and the community investigated, rather than to their own positionality.

In their theoretical considerations of relevant literature, Lacoste et al. (2014), for example, show how authenticity has been discussed through the lens of indexicality in the form of variation and how a speaker's pronunciation may index different social meanings of politeness (as in Eckert 2008), stereotypes (as per Johnstone & Kiesling 2008), and even as a form of commodification for marketing strategies (Heller 2010). While necessary, timely and certainly valuable, these studies and theoretical considerations tend to account for the construction of authenticity as a process witnessed from afar and not wholly representative of the practical issues that I found myself dealing with in my fieldwork and personal experience. These vital connections I was able to find in the work of Sallabank (2013) whose fieldwork in Guernsey brought to light themes of legitimacy to the notion of authenticity and speaker's perception.

Just how an older speaker of Guernesiais is automatically perceived to be a more legitimate and authentic native speaker, in my hometown I am instantly assessed as illegitimate and inauthentic because of my age and gender. An experience that brings me to the realisation that the barriers I faced in my upbringing in my exclusion from the dialect, are the same barriers of delegitimization with which I am currently dealing as a researcher.

Through the exercise of writing up a linguistic autobiography, I was able to come to terms and articulate some of the long-standing issues that I have experienced at the personal level as well as an individual who is part of a broader, common community. Belonging, identity, emotions, and authenticity are all salient themes in the role that languages have in a person's life. As discussed throughout this manuscript, these themes are informed by and borne of specific ways of thinking in society – it is their cultural embeddedness to which we are exposed throughout life that can shape our worldview, in one way or another. By acknowledging the power of discourse and the existence of ideologies in society, systematic patterns of the specific ways we talk about speakers and their languages can be identified and scrutinised for the way they inform our attitudes.

The non-acknowledgement of *al dialet* as a language is, for example, a type of language attitude which has very real consequences on the lives of its speakers and the survival of the language itself. Language vitality is a key aspect of this thesis which will be thoroughly explained in a later section of this literature review chapter (section 2.4). This topic will be introduced through a consideration and definition of identity, place, and belonging (section 2.3), and will lead to an encompassing discussion on the practice of language maintenance in the family and in the wider community (section

2.4.2).

2.3 Identity, Place and Belonging

I chose to start this literature review by introducing myself through the exercise of a linguistic autobiography. This strategy is deliberate insofar that it wishes to announce the man-made nature of this doctoral thesis from its very outset. It is a declaration, a statement to show the reader that as a researcher I am aware of my role in the creation of knowledge in this piece of research; from reading choices, to data collection, analyses, and dissemination (more on positionality will follow in Chapter 5, as a central theme of my methodology). But that is not all. As already noted in the introductory paragraph, this choice was inspired by D'Agostino (2007) who used the autobiography of one of her students to report on her lived experience of Sicilian as a way to portray the linguistic landscape of Italy while also providing a summary of the main themes discussed in the book.

D'Agostino (2007:21) justifies this choice as a useful method to foster critical thinking in students, one that allows them to make connections between theories and their lives while also developing writing skills in a genre not normally recognised as academic (see, for example, Pavlenko 2007 for a discussion on the use of autobiographic narratives in applied linguistics). Through this exercise I too was able to make such connections by positioning myself as an outsider to my own story, merely observing and drawing linkages of introspection and self-rediscovery. The application of critical thinking allowed for people, languages, ideas, and even places in the story to take on different meanings and different roles. In line with this and in reference to other authors who made use of a linguistic autobiography in their academic works, D'Agostino (2007:21) describes the auto-biographers' position as "a privileged observational point of their personal story³".

In my autobiography I narrated my journey as one affected by a shift of consciousness, from a stage of erasure and confusion to one of recognition and clarity. The shift occurred through a discovery of the self and was enabled by newly found affordances such as intellectual space and ability, time, and freedom. These affordances are the manifestation of my current privileged status as a junior researcher, and although I recognise this as privilege, I am still coming to terms with the idea of *being* privileged. Due to a humble upbringing, I have never identified myself as someone who is

³Own translation from the original in Italian "*punto di osservazione privilegiato della propria storia personale*"

privileged but can now understand the fluidity and nuances of privilege in my lived experience. What is certain is that others have the power to associate privilege to who I am regardless of my conscious acknowledgement of it.

The tension between how I perceive my identity and the awareness of how others construe it independently raises very important questions on the sort of dynamics that are at play. In section 2.2.1 I discussed the role of ideology in relation to language attitudes and how the latter can enable the creation of socially accepted assumptions about who people are. The ramifications that this process has on one's identity often lie within the scope of a sociolinguistic enquiry. The literature offered by sociolinguistic works would therefore be an ideal trove of ideas to inform my current understanding on identity. However, to truly appreciate this aspect of human life, I felt the need to comprehend what identity is and why it is important to humans outside the realm of linguistics. While theories of identity within the discipline of linguistics will be discussed in this section, first I wish to explore the concept of identity from a different perspective, and Shadden (2005) offers just that.

This article reviews the ways in which aphasia, the clinical term for trauma-induced speech impediment, had been previously discussed in the literature and proposes to reframe it as "identity theft" (Shadden 2005:211). Like any other metaphors this too comes with its limitations. For example, the use of the word theft implies that the identity was stolen by the trauma and may therefore be problematic in terms of how the person affected by aphasia relates to the cause of their impediment. However, by mapping identity onto the idea of speech, this metaphor achieves something very specific as it captures the extra layers of loss that go beyond the articulatory and cognitive functions required to produce speech. Shadden (2005) highlights the role of collective identity in social interaction (i.e. communication acquires meaning because it is organic and transcendent of the individual) and how aphasia therefore threatens who we are both at the individual and collective level. She accomplishes this by reconciling the works of Prather (1983) on communication with that of Taylor (1997) who sees identity as who a person is and where they are coming from.

This simplistic and essentialising idea of identity as the mere collectedness of our actions and experiences in their continuity resonates with that of philosopher Derek Parfit (for example 1984). For Parfit, identity is the psychological connectedness that we carry about us and our life; Merricks (1999:984) explores this theory and further elaborates it by explaining that "[p]sychological connectedness involves a person at one time sharing psychological states, such as beliefs and desires, with a person at another time". In other words, I am me because present me shares experiences and memories

of experiences with a past version of me.⁴

This further step back is necessary to reveal the innermost aspect of how humans experience identity in order to make connections within a broader spectrum. First of all, as Mingarelli (2013) argues, through the lens of psychological connectedness it is possible to capture the everchanging embodiment of identity and therefore overcome the disingenuous idea of an identical, disembodied self, as inherited from the Cartesian method. If the body and the mind are not separate and if identity is the psychological connectedness of the factual, lived experiences of a person, it follows that identity, too is real and constantly embodied in the world through the affirmation, negotiation, and renegotiation of who we are.

As stated by Merricks (1999), psychological connectedness finds its origins in the idea of continuity (first developed in Locke, for example 1963). Continuity lays the foundations of identity at both the internal and external level (i.e. our own identity and what we perceive to be the identity of others) and its mechanisms manifest themselves whenever something hinders the process. This is for example the case when friends fall out with each other over accusations such as “I don’t recognise you anymore. This is not something the you that I know would be capable of doing”. Continuity and connectedness are not only central to establishing a personal, internal identity but it is also an essential part of social interactions. Through the consolidation of beliefs about who we are, such as trust and reputation, continuity lets us build rapports in society which in turn allow us to organise our lives. In other words, personal identity is important to us because it is how we get things done in life. D’Agostino (2007:147) also makes reference to the concept of social identity and how it helps us organise life at the intersection of language; an idea that aligns itself with the concept of *linguaging*, that is doing things with language (further explored in section 2.3.1).

So far, I have shown how continuity and connectedness are essential processes at play in our understanding of who we are and who others are. Continuity can therefore be seen to be central to identity both at the individual and internal level, as well as at the collective and external level. Identity and self-awareness is not only something that is needed for practical reasons. Wexler (2009), for example, shows this to be the case in the role that cultural identity has in establishing purpose and well-being in teenagers. In our quest to know who we are, we look for continuity and connectedness with our past as well as our future. As if looking at “ready-made templates” (Meinhof

⁴See Locke (1963) on the origins of this theory, Whitehead (1910) for an integration of interaction in our connectedness, Rorty (1976), Mingarelli (2013), Mingarelli (2013) and, more recently, Olson (2016), for discussions on its ontological and epistemological affordances and limitations

& Galasiński 2005:10), we learn how to behave like a woman, speak like working-class individual (cf. *enregisterment* below), or what it means to be a white person by looking at the information that we have at our disposal about these social agents both at the local and national/societal level (Joseph 2010). It therefore follows that psychological connectedness takes place at the individual level just as much as it does at the community, cultural and ethnic level and that our well-being and sense of purpose are strictly reliant on these processes of connection.

Let us now go back to language and the loss of identity experienced by sufferers of aphasia. Goffman (1967) argues that communication is essential to maintaining a healthy sense of identity and it is therefore not surprising that patients with aphasia manifest weakened self-awareness (Shadden 2005). Crucially, what this shows is how language relates to us at the level of being; in other words, it is through language that we can enact, or perform our identity. Blommaert (2005:203) argues that identity goes beyond the initial assumption of the “who and what you are”. Instead, identity is semiotic in nature. Moving away from the essentialisation of identity as a static, presupposed entity that exists a priori, Blommaert embraces the performativity (Butler 1990) nature of identity as something that is produced, rather than possessed.

It is within the realm of social practices that identity is performed, maintained, negotiated, and shifted. Identity is therefore situated because contingent to the constraints and affordances granted by external factors, such as the situation, the genre, the interlocutors or the occasion. While the individual can make use of their “identity-building resources” (Blommaert 2005:207) to enact the identity most relevant to the given occasion, it is others who, through recognition of the performed identity as belonging to an established category or social group, have the power to ascribe labels. As already discussed in section 2.2, socially constructed labels depend on language for their existence and it is language itself that some of these labels assign an identity to. This is in line with Meinhof & Galasiński (2005:7) who argue that “identity is a discursive construct which continually shifts in the local contexts in which social actors enter”.

To add to this spectrum of interconnectedness, Stibbe (2015) argues that as well as identity, ideologies, and other beliefs informing our worldview, our sense of connectedness, well-being and belonging is first and foremost grounded in our day-to-day relationship with the natural world (on this and the role of ecological interconnectedness in language revitalisation, I will discuss in Chapter 9). Nowadays it is an established practice in sociolinguistics to consider a speaker’s surroundings as variables of the analyses. This tradition first started with Labov’s (1966) study in New York City (now considered first wave sociolinguistics) in which criteria such as socioeconomic

background, geographical and ethnic variation were observed in interaction with a person's speech. During this first wave of variational studies, the idea of belonging was interpreted through the lens of geographical provenance, cultural background, and socioeconomic upbringing as objectively observable characteristics of a person (for more examples of first wave studies see Trudgill 1974, Macauley 1977, and Kroch 1978).

In contrast with the passive role of the speaker of the first wave tradition, the second wave acknowledged speakers as social agents and developed methods centred around a person's social surroundings (i.e. social network studies, first introduced by Milroy 1980 and further replicated in, for example, Cheshire 1982, Rickford 1986, Edwards 1991, and Knack 1991). In order to observe a speaker's social agency within their network, an ethnographic element had to be included, this in turn allowed the researcher to gain access to the local surroundings and to the internal dynamics that were inadvertently excluded by studies in the first wave. As Eckert (2012) points out, second wave studies allowed for patterns of stylistic variation to emerge and be observable, but still considered a speaker's identity in terms of static categories. This changed in more recent studies of variation, known as third wave studies (such as Moore 2004, Wong 2005, and Zhang 2008, to name a few), whereby the meaning of variation is seen as "an essential feature of language" (Eckert 2012:94) which is constantly being negotiated by the speaker as they navigate through social space.

Speakers are therefore recognised as social agents who are constantly making choices about the use of their linguistic features to index specific characteristics about themselves (the concept of indexicality was first discussed in section 2.2.1). In reference to Johnstone's (2004; 2010) studies, Schieffelin (2018:29) states that "speakers are highly aware of dialects, among other forms of verbal difference" and that not only can they verbalise the meaning they associate with dialectal variation, but they can also hear and associate features with geographical provenance and "sense of localness" (ibid). This association is known as enregisterment and "refers to a complex set of processes which allow communities to identify a set of linguistic features or *register* as typifying local speech and speakers" (Straw 2020:70-71). Place is therefore made, and it becomes necessary to speak of it in terms of place-making practices.

Cornips & Rooij (2018) warn that the concepts of place and belonging remain relatively underdeveloped from a theoretical perspective within sociolinguistics. While they build on Tuan's (1991) definition of place-making as socially constructed and rendered meaningful by language practices, they concur that belonging can be understood as, rather, *feelings* of belonging which "are best seen not as simply enduring through time and space, but as changing and variable across situations and stages of life" (Cornips

& Rooij 2018:2). Meinhof & Galasiński (2005) point out that there exist different forms of belonging, such as social, geographical, and institutional and that we constantly construct these forms through discursive patterns. Crucially, it is during these continuous processes of negotiation and renegotiation of belonging that our identity is co-constructed, thus showing how identity is, too a “discourse of (not) belonging” (Meinhof & Galasiński 2005:8).

While the theories and definitions so far provided are borne of a sociolinguistic perspective (because relevant to and used throughout this thesis), it is worth looking at other disciplines for how place and belonging can be understood. Place and space are central to studies of human geography and its theories have informed those adopted by sociolinguists (Monka 2018). Pred (1984), for example, sees place as a perpetual process of becoming, whereas Tuan (2001) offers an insightful and thought-provoking account of how culture influences the way we organise our physical space, whether it be man-made or natural. While Tuan (2001) fails to directly address space as a mental concept, some sociological/anthropological perspectives account for this by seeing place as “a critical force, both locational and conceptual, physical and psychical, in shaping social life” (Schieffelin 2018:34) which itself can be reshaped by the advent of new technologies (Bauman 2013).

In turn, belonging can be grasped as affiliation and detachment on the grounds of commonness or differentiation in self-identifying or identifying others to specific groups in society (for example, Jaspers 2018, Banaś 2018). For two further examples from other disciplines, Mylonas (2013) offers an in-depth discussion of assimilation and exclusion in relation to place and belonging in the field of International Politics, and Gammon (2019) deconstructs and reconstructs place-making by looking at place and space in the non-human world. The concepts of place and belonging truly permeate all aspects of social inquiry and will indeed be discussed throughout this thesis from different perspectives.

2.3.1 Linguaging as a social practice

As noted in the introductory paragraph, this section will look at recent theories of *linguaging* and performative analyses of language and identity as the theoretical framework adopted in my research. What is instantly observable from the term itself, linguaging is a way to characterise language in its dynamic, fluid, interactive modes. From a static, passive noun, language is turned into a verb to signal the theoretical shift which now sees social agency taking centre stage. If language is a verb, it follows

that to language must be implying the doing of something. This idea is grounded in Fishman's (2001) definition of the social role of language, who states that "[s]pecific languages are related to specific cultures and to their attendant cultural identities at the level of doing, at the level of knowing and at the level of being" (p. 3). I have already discussed how language relates to the level of knowing (i.e. ideology and discourse in section 2.2) and to the level of being (i.e. identity in section 2.3) so let us now see how it also relates to the level of doing.

In order to capture how language relates to culture and identity at a practical, tangible level we must escape the misleading assumption that language is a mere mean of communication. Indeed, it is through a specific language (a language spoken in a specific society) that a specific kind of activities at the local level takes place. This can be anything from the most mundane of practices, such as the particular way people greet each other in public, to how education and laws are planned and carried out. This is in line with Pennycook (2010:1) who defines language as "a form of action in a specific place and time". In other words, he continues, language is "mediated social activity" situated in time and at the local level, here understood as place (ibid).

Echoing what was introduced in section 2.2, to view language as a practice is to move away from the abstract notion of language as a pre-existing system we draw from in favour for a more practical, situated and engaged perspective. This is the perspective that I take throughout this thesis whenever referring to language and languages. Language is no longer a mere relation between a system and a context; language is understood as actions, a set of social activities that organise our everyday life (Pennycook 2010:2). In the same way as we respond to the environment around us as physical objects in the world, language practices, as activities undertaken by humans, are also contingent to place and to the dynamics of mobility, such as globalisation and its effects. A compelling example of how language practices can look like in the increasingly diverse cities of Sydney and Tokyo is provided by Pennycook and Otsuji's (2015) *Metrolingualism: Language in the city*. The authors set out to explore these urban settings in order to investigate how people get by in their everyday activities in places like a market, a café, a restaurant – places where people and languages travel and get into contact, places where extraordinary diversity is simply ordinary.

Pennycook and Otsuji build on from the work of others (such as Higgins and Coen 2000, Watson 2009, and Vertovec 2007) to consolidate a framework which allows them to look at metrolingualism from below as an outlook interested in "the ways in which people get by linguistically and how they understand such linguistic practices from their perspective [...] constantly challenging those very ideas of language that are employed in

language policies” (Pennycook & Otsuji 2015:12). An outlook which therefore accounts for language as a form of localised everyday action and that seeks to overcome the idea of agency as only in the hands of few powerful people (Vincent 2015).

Though the adoption of languaging as a sociolinguistic term has only been established in the past decade (for example, Rosa 2019, Makoni and Pennycook 2007, and Flores 2013), García & Wei (2014) show how the term can in fact be traced back to ideas already discussed by Chilean biologists in 1973 first, and later by Becker (1988; 1995). Building on the notion of *autopoiesis* posited by Maturana & Varela (1998), García & Wei (2014:8) state that “[t]he term *languaging* is needed to refer to the simultaneous process of continuous becoming of ourselves and of our language practices, as we interact and make meaning in the world” [italics in the original]. By languaging not only are we able to carry out mundane tasks but we are also constantly performing our identity and indexing meaning about ourselves. We are therefore indisputably a social agent of our own identity-making process and of our languaging. But not the only ones.

Indeed, in what Vincent (2015:xx) refers to as “Self-languaging” and “Other-languaging”, in the same way I can identify or distance myself from a category, others can language me into and out of an identification process. Languaging in this sense is accomplished through the assignment of membership categories (for example, a northerner, a footie, a cyclist, a socialist) and can be used to exclude and, crucially, to other (e.g.: Balirano & Nisco 2015). While some of the membership category assignments can be explicit and obvious in the language used, oftentimes a more in-depth observation of linguistic devices is required to capture subtle and covert strategies of such processes. Linguistic studies that look at corpora through a critical analysis lens can show how lexical choices (as a component of languaging) adopted by the media form patterns that, if widespread enough, have the power to reinforce, resist or even change what it means to be a member of a category.

Membership categories can be about specific groups of people, such as “rioter” in Nisco & Venuti (2015), or a vague and generic idea such as “diverse” and “diversity” (Zanca 2015). In this sense, then, languaging constructs identity and discursive practices become representative of the meaning ascribed to categories and their members. This is how the representation of social groups in texts can be investigated through the use of linguistic analysis such as critical discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and, more recently, positive discourse analysis (cf. section 2.2).

2.3.2 Speech Community

One clear way of delineating boundaries between groups of people in society is through the conceptualisation and designation of community. The notion of community is not modern and traces back to, at least, ancient Greek times. Through a historicization of the concept, sociologist Delanty (2018) shows how community already referred to the urban space (i.e. the city) in Aristotle's times and coincided with the modern, contractual expression of society. Delanty therefore refuses the idea of community held in the Enlightenment as an entity in opposition to society and goes on to argue that this differentiation is a result of the loss of "immediacy of direct relationships" in the idea of society which was instead retained in the notion of "community" (Delanty 2018:12). This distancing is evident in the critique of the state that characterises the discourse of community from 1600 onwards and is still echoed in much of Western ideas of a stateless society, such as anarchism (ibid).

It is thus clear that the dualistic vision of society and community is a modern expression of Western worldview whose advent is closely linked to the creation of states. From a linguistic perspective, the relevantly recent concept of nation is said to be discursively created, as evident in the term "imagined communities" coined by Anderson (2006). As Makoni & Pennycook (2007:7) state, the adjective "imagined" "effectively captures the multidimensionality of the process of construction" and "point[s] to the ways in which nations are imagined and narrated into being, and [...] stress[es] the role of language, literacy and social institution in that process". Nation is therefore conceptualised at the institutional level, whereas, as Jaspers (2018:19) argues, "[c]ommunities are now frequently identified on the basis of people's collective orientation to a communal practice, with an emphasis on speakers' more temporary, changing and fluid identities".

Crucially, Jaspers (2018) continues by pointing out that rather than tradition and groupness, the value of linguistic practices is associated with "their potential for conviviality, creativity or socio-political transformation" (p 19). Perpetuating the idea of separateness from society, community is seen as a local, ever-changing experience to be had with like-minded people, coming together for specific purposes. The juxtaposition of community and nation/society (the latter here used interchangeably) creates the impression that what operates at the top (i.e. the institutions) is separate and even in antagonism with what goes on at the bottom (i.e. communities). A topical example of the lived experience of such tensions can be provided by the recent developments around the handling of the Covid pandemic in England. While the Government asked

communities to report neighbours when caught not abiding to the restrictions, members of the community retaliated and refused to effectively breach the relations of trust and comradery that bind them together for the sake of helping out the State. From a linguistic perspective, the tension between State and community creates very important dynamics in the realm of minoritised languages and will be explored and discussed in more depth in section 2.4.2.

The notion of community can be defined even further when applying the performative theory so far discussed in relation to identity. This is, for example, provided by Moore (2010), who builds on Eckert and McConnell-Ginet's (1992) concept of the *Community of Practice* and which they define as social groups observable through a sociolinguistic enquiry that incorporates and starts with an ethnography of the population as a whole. These groups "comprise clusters of individuals *mutually engaged* in a *joint enterprise* - an enterprise resulting in the construction of a *shared repertoire* of social and linguistic resources" (Moore 2010:124) [italics in the original]. Strikingly, the same can be applied to multilingual contexts in which interlocutors do not share a linguistic code. In such settings Canagarajah (2007) argues that from a perspective of communities of practice it is possible to "posit shared pragmatic strategies without having to invent common centralized codes" (p 236), in other words, "what speakers need are ways of negotiating difference rather than codes that are shared with others" (ibid).

The viewpoint offered by the community of practice is vital in seeking to observe and capture what lies at the heart of the two speech communities under investigation in my research. It will indeed be crucial in gaining insights into the Esperanto community as one whose speakers are predominantly multilingual, ironically coming together in an effort to speak exclusively in one language. And it will be equally as instrumental in understanding the linguistic strategies in the Emilian community (where *al dialet* is spoken) in which speakers often fail to recognise themselves as bi/multilingual and are constantly battling with social stigma and negative attitudes. In this manuscript the terms communities and speech communities will often appear and whenever used, they are to be understood as defined through the lens of the community of practice.

2.4 Language Shift and Revitalisation

So far, I have provided definitions of the main terms and themes that underpin the theoretical framework adopted in my research. In this section I aim to bring these concepts together and apply them to the issue of language vitality. This doctoral

thesis is a sociolinguistic investigation of two minoritised languages whose future largely depends on the use they serve to their speakers. If not spoken widely enough (widely both in terms of domains of use and number of speakers – as will soon be discussed), these languages run the risk of dying out. Not only is it then a useful exercise, but it is also apt and necessary for the build-up created in this literature review to culminate with a discussion of how theories of ideology, identity, attitude and belonging relate to the vitality of a language.

Before I can show how these concepts intersect and interact with one another in determining the future of a minoritised language, I must first address and define what I mean with language vitality. I must point out that vitality can also be understood in the literature as the “ecology” of a language (cf. Cornille, Lambert and Swiggers 2009). The metaphorical use of ecology would however create ambiguity in the course of this thesis as one of the main themes here explored is indeed the relationship between minoritised language and the discourse of nature (i.e. “ecology”) and for this reason I have opted to only use ecology and its derivations in their pure semantical meaning. Berruto (2015) argues that to understand a language in terms of vitality it is to acknowledge its organic essence, a concept that also allows a state of a language to be graded insofar that it can have no/little/many properties of vitality. Because languages live, they have a past, a present, a future, they evolve and sometimes they die.

Crystal (2002) makes for a compelling discussion on language death and highlights the dependency that the survival of a language has on community. Specifically, Crystal shows how without a community of practice (although not defined as such by the author), a language cannot be said to be alive (a concept developed from Wittgenstein 1953). The living aspect of a language is not given by the interior, mental, cognitive, linguistic knowledge of one speaker, instead it resides and manifests itself in the speakers’ practices. Crucially, as already discussed in the previous section, it is in the community that these practices are undertaken and where the language lives and is lived. The active living is enabled by its internal vitality (i.e. its linguistic system, its grammar, its vocabulary, and its capacity to adapt to new technologies and innovations) whereas the passive, lived expression of languages is observable through external criteria of *use* (Berruto 1995).

In respect to the external aspect of vitality, Berruto (2015) offers a further classification based on considerations of attitude that differentiates between the speech community as a group, and the individual speakers that make up the community. These attitudes can in turn be categorised as internal or external, as in internal to the representations of speakers (own subjective perception) and perception within the com-

munity, or external attitudes (from the perspective of non-speakers) to both community and speakers.

Regarding the external, observable, empirically measurable aspects of language vitality, different models of evaluation have been proposed and used, such as the taxonomy developed by Giles et al. (1977) in which structural variables such as status (economic, social, sociohistorical, and of the language), demography (distribution and numbers), and institutional support (formal and informal) form the main behavioural parameters. In an attempt to develop a standardised typology of vitality, in 2013 UNESCO designated a team of researchers who developed a model of level of endangerment also known as UNESCO's parameters (Simons & Lewis 2013). The model consists of nine parameters, namely, intergenerational transmission, absolute number of speakers, speakers/population ratio, domains of use, response to new domains and media, didactic materials, language policy, language attitude within the community, and language documentation (Brenzinger et al. 2003).

On the basis of how a single language scores for each of the nine parameters an overall vitality score is given on a scale of 0 to 5, whereby 0 stands for *extinct*, 1 *critically endangered*, 2 *severely endangered*, 3 *definitely endangered*, 4 *unsafe*, and 5 *safe* (ibid). Another frequently used model is outlined in Wurm (1996) according to which language death comes in five stages of endangerment: potentially endangered, endangered, severely endangered, moribund, and extinct. As Berruto (2015) states, UNESCO's model is now the most commonly used method to assess the level of vitality of a language in the discipline and I will too follow this approach – not only for its popularity but also for the relevance of its parameters to the two minoritised languages under investigation in my research. This is particularly true for intergenerational transmission, response to new domains, language attitude, and language documentation.

While numbers and ratio of speakers, didactic materials and language policy will inevitably inform my analyses, the focus will be on whether care givers are speaking Emilian and Esperanto to their children (this will be approached from a theoretical perspective in section 2.4.2 and also form part of the main discussion in Chapters 6 and 8), whether members of the two communities feel they are dealing with any sort of social stigma or stereotyping (Chapters 6 and 7), and how the data collected and findings of my research can help build a documentation for both languages (the definition of which will be provided in section 2.4.4).

Once the level of vitality of a language has been assessed and an overall score attributed, it is reasonable to assume that a plan of action is to be put forward in order to help maintain a language deemed to be at risk (level 4-1). However, as Romaine

(2008) points out, “doing something” is not a guaranteed outcome and, instead, three different reactions can be expected: do nothing, document the language, or revitalise the language. Oftentimes doing nothing is the default position of many authorities, this is also referred to as “no policy” and goes to reinforce the social stigma of minoritised languages in its assumption that “minorities and their languages are not worth making policy for” (Sallabank 2013:15). As already mentioned, language documentation as a reaction to the assessment of an endangered language will be outlined in section 2.4.4, instead I will now turn to language revitalisation (which in turn provides theoretical foundations for what is to be said later on documentation).

In order to understand how languages can be revitalised, it is important to comprehend *why* languages need revitalising. Crucially, not all languages are at risk of dying as out of the 7,000 languages currently spoken in the world, half are considered to be safe (Austin & Sallabank 2013a). The other half are expected to be extinct in a few generations’ time; an outcome mainly due to the phenomenon of language shift. This term refers to the generational move which sees younger people shifting from the use of a socially weak language (usually a regional language) to that of a powerful variety (often the national language); a process which thus occurs within a bi-/multilingual context (Austin & Sallabank 2013a:1). Shift, however, can also be observed from perspectives of indexicality and “changes in notions of authority and legitimacy as they relate to linguistic forms and speakers and change in expectations of perfect consistency in people’s use of those languages and the social personae they inhabit when they use them” (Pietikäinen et al. 2016:26).

This clearly shows how identity, ideologies, language attitudes, and discursive practices related to a minoritised language can influence, one way or another, the linguistic choices of a community and, with it, the future of the language itself. The act of revitalisation requires a proactive effort to promote and encourage the use of the endangered language within the community. For such efforts to have an impact and make a positive difference to the vitality of the language, the revitalisation plan needs to instil a sense of belonging through the self-identification of the speaker in the language (e.g.: Meinhof & Galasiński 2005) while also address certain ideological aspects which will be better outlined in section 2.4.3.

These include, but are not limited to, language purism and protectionism (e.g. Sallabank 2013), the issue around the notion of native speakers (Meinhof & Galasiński 2005:19) and the implications of the term, such as what this means for speakers who are not deemed fluent and authentic enough (e.g.: Blommaert & Varis 2011) and the negative connotation of the concept of semilingualism in relation to second language

speakers in immigrant communities (e.g.: Lucchini 2009).

2.4.1 Superdiversity and Transnationalism

On the subject of immigration, I wish to explore *superdiversity* and *transnationalism* as two interconnected themes that – albeit for very different reasons – are relevant to both of the communities under investigation. Vertovec (2007) provides a definition for superdiversity in relation to the phenomenon of immigration in Britain as

“a notion intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced. Such a condition is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade” (p. 1024).

Though immigration and diversity are not new social events – and certainly not so in Britain (e.g.: Ackroyd 2000) – the addition of *super* is needed to overcome the mono-dimensional tradition of conceptualising diversity as just ethnicity and place of origin, often misleadingly used in an interchangeable way (Vertovec 2007:1026). Super is to emphasise the multi-layered stratification of the kind of diversity that these recent waves of immigrants are creating in Britain. This, however, is not a phenomenon that is only taking place in Great Britain, but also in many other countries in the world. Indeed, in their edited volume on superdiversity in Rotterdam, Scholten et al. (2019) explain how in more and more cities at least fifty percent of the population is of migration background. Because of the simultaneous process of globalisation and the advent of faster and cheaper travel, migration has reached levels that now allow diversification within diversity (ibid.)

Super-diversity encapsulates this insofar that it captures the temporary nature of mobility (some people move permanently while others for just a period of time, see also “liquid mobility” in Engbersen 2016), the arrival of individuals from all over the world (and not just a few, historically linked countries) and from all different backgrounds (whether it be economic or in terms of their education and professional skills), the different ways in which immigrants are classified on the basis of their arrival (legal, asylum seeker, illegal, etc), and the acknowledgement that migrating no longer requires a complete uprooting of one’s cultural and social systems. In turn, this shows that cultures and identities are conceived across a multitude of interconnected spaces (Pratt 1998:27) and languages (e.g.: Blackledge & Creese 2018).

This very turn in the experience of the migrant as one no longer severed from their roots, their social networks, their customs, traditions, and cultural behaviours is what lies at the heart of what Vertovec (2004) defines “transnationalism”. The current increased level of engagement between migrants and their place of origin, largely due to affordances of new technologies and cheaper travel, is what transnationalism – as contextualised within a framework of superdiversity – seeks to gauge in setting apart past migration practices to what is being experienced now. Superdiversity is not only a research lens useful for the study of migration but can be successfully applied to other disciplines. Through a focus on the intricacies of social constellations, and by acknowledging their temporality, the researcher can truly appreciate the dynamics within social patterns (Blackledge & Creese 2018).

This is for example demonstrated in Canagarajah (2007) who, building on the work of Khubchandani (1977) shows how even in natural contexts of multilingualism (as in historically so and not migration-driven), such as in South Asia, language boundaries are fuzzy, language identity is fluid and community is conceptualised as spatial, rather than on the basis of a unitary practice of language or culture. This is also in line with Wise’s (2009) “quotidian transversality”, that is “how individuals in everyday spaces use particular modes of sociality to produce or smooth interrelations across cultural difference” (Blackledge & Creese 2018:xxxvi). These concepts will therefore be central to my analyses of Esperanto and Emilian; the former a prototype of the transnational community, and the latter spoken in a historically multilingual context where community is understood as spatial.

2.4.2 Language Policy

Coupled with the advent of new technologies, globalisation has allowed for a more connected and interconnected economy to develop in which intercultural exchanges often take place in one of the few major international languages. As Cornillie et al. (2009) argue, English is a prominent choice in such business exchanges – a choice that is not random but finds its roots in history. The move towards English is not in fact a neutral transitional process, but a consolidation of the historical colonisation carried out by the former British Empire around the globe. Elaborating on Phillipson (1997), Cornillie et al. (2009) state that “the impact of English [is] an instance of linguistic imperialism from the centre to the periphery, with all the benefits for the language industry located in the centre [...] without the need of direct “physical” contact” (p. 17).

Electing English as the international language in intercultural exchanges is a form of language policy which, in the words of Spolsky (2004) can be defined in the breaking down of its three components in relation to a speech community:

“its language practices – the habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire; its language beliefs or ideology – the beliefs about language and language use; and any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management.” (p. 5)

Language policy is therefore a social construct because reliant on ideologies and beliefs (see for example Schiffman 1996) and for it to exist, it needs to be exercised (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997). As Johnson (2013) points out, the planning of a language through the management at the institutional level is only one, and arguably a limited way to observe how language use is regulated. It is instead more useful to account for such mechanisms through a critical lens that accounts for power relations and asymmetries. From this perspective, language policy ceases to be a dichotomy of top-down versus bottom-up processes and becomes a nuanced approach that recognises the multi-layered dynamics of human interactions through which language use is legitimised and delegitimised (McCarty 2011). To name but a few examples of institutionalised policies on language use around the world, see Coleman (2010) on language education choices in Pakistan, Errihani (2008) on Berber in Morocco, Lundberg (2018) on language policies in Switzerland and Sweden, and Leung (2005) on the introduction of English as an additional language in mainstream schools in England.

This doctoral thesis is however centred around the nuances of language use within the community and how these relate to the institutions in terms of power struggles rather than language policies as mere legislation. Khan & Barkhuizen (2018) offer a study on the implementation of top-down regional-language policy in Pakistan. They do so by investigating the attitudes of interested parties, such as teachers, parents, and children and their findings indicate a level of mistrust in the community towards the new policy. In other words, even though the introduction of regional-language teaching in schools is seen as a positive and welcome move, the stakeholders perceive this as an attempt for the government to score political points and are therefore sceptical of it. This is a further example of the ideological divide of modern times between community and state (previously discussed in section 2.3.2), a divide that cannot be ignored when involved in efforts of language revitalisation. One way to limit the politicisation of language policy in the eyes of the public is to aim efforts to what is known as Family

Language Policy (FLP hereafter), defined by Jenks (2020:313) as “concerned with how children acquire and use languages in spaces where the decision to employ a particular linguistic resource over another is shaped by rules established at home by primary care-givers or parents”.

In section 2.4, I mentioned the three reactions that can be expected from the institutions when faced with the issue of language shift and endangerment – two of which consisting of taking no actions and a passive approach only (Romaine 2008). However, as just discussed, language endangerment can be tackled and helped from within domestic walls. FLP as an academic enterprise has its roots in the seminal work of Maurice Grammont (*Observations sur le langage des enfants – Observations on Children’s Language*) whose methods laid the foundations to what is now known as the “one-parent one-language” strategy (Smith-Christmas 2015). This strategy later proved to be inadequate due to the different levels of exposure that children tend to spend with each parent.

Though its origins trace back to the beginning of the last century, FLP has only recently been acknowledged as a research field in its own rights, a recognition owed to the work and efforts of King & Fogle (2006). The affirmation of FLP in 2006 was however preceded by a paradigm shift introduced by Lanza’s (1997) work. The theoretical shift in Lanza’s analysis is one that goes from seeing child language acquisition as a process separate from developing social cues of cultural norms to one that understands it as embedded in it (Smith-Christmas 2015:5). The body of literature that followed Lanza’s steps include, but is certainly not limited to, Gafaranga (2010) whose model looks at the sequence of utterances between caregiver and child in terms of code choices, Showstack & Colcher (2019) whose work highlights the role of language ideologies in FLP in Kansas, Lanza’s (1997) later work on multilingualism and language mixing in the family, and Wilson (2020) whose studies on families with children of French heritage in England show how FLP can foster harmonious bilingual competence when focusing on the positive, emotional effects of language maintenance in the home.

In citing Lanza’s and Gafaranga’s work, I described their methods as focused on linguistic choices in terms of patterns emerging from the analysis of utterance sequences (a practice that originates from Sacks’ (1974) Conversation Analysis approach). The activity of moving between one code to another, either in between sentences/sequences or even intra-sentence, are traditionally known in the sociolinguistic literature as code-switching (e.g.: Gumperz 1977). The theoretical assumption behind code-switching is that the linguistic repertoire of a bi/multilingual speaker comprises of a series of autonomous and independent grammars from which the speaker switches back and

forth (García & Wei 2014). This assumption has now been countered by neurolinguistic studies (e.g.: De Groot 2011) which argued for the interdependence between a speaker's cognitive competence of two or more languages.

2.4.3 The problematization of 'endangered languages' and alternative discourses

One way to see languages is to see the world's linguistic repertoire as representative of what it means to be human in all its variety and possibilities. This perspective makes use of biodiversity as a metaphor which maps the positive connotations attributed to the existence of a multitude of different species of animals and plants in the natural world to that of the realm of human language. It follows that by suffering language death, humanity is losing part of its own diversity, and preserving our diverse identities would therefore be a task intrinsically worth pursuing (cf. Maffi 2002). From this point of view, not only is language worth exploring in its own rights, it may be that in terms of acquisition, syntactic properties, or variation, but it is also because it represents the very own repertoire of knowledge that can inform our understanding of what it means to be human.

The preservation of language diversity is the preservation of our past, our present, our future. It is therefore not surprising that languages have come to mean so much to speakers that the endangerment of a specific language is perceived as a threat to one's intergenerational continuity or, as Fishman (2001:5) describes it, the "‘essential' bodily inheritance that one generation passes on to the next".

In the introduction to their edited volume on the discourses of endangerment, Heller & Duchene (2008) address the biodiversity argument as one of the main tropes recurring in the discourse on minoritised languages. The editors aim to critically evaluate the discursive practices on endangerment by arguing that ideology and interest are at play in the constructions of such tropes. They conclude that, while these discursive practices are grounded in language, the urgency triggered by the threat of language loss as loss of diversity, heritage, knowledge, or equality is really about social order and the organization of everyday life. Even though never explicitly, Heller and Duchêne employ a Foucault-inspired critical approach to the formation of knowledge by looking at how the discourse of endangerment has been historicised. In Foucault's words (for example Foucault 1977), they tackled this discursive practice by problematizing the way the knowledge about the idea of endangerment has come about and by looking at the actors involved in its formation.

This poststructuralist analytic strategy brings Heller and Duchêne to conclude that the framing of endangerment has gone through different stages, each contingent to whatever socio-economical events were on-going at the time. Since its conception, language endangerment has been framed as a threat to diversity, as a struggle between the nation-state and its minority communities, as an issue of human rights and, more recently, as potential value in terms of access to the global market (on these reformulations, the editors refer to Muehlmann 2008, Hobsbawm 1990, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, and del Valle 2008, respectively).

It is thus clear that there is no one true representation of what endangerment is. This is not to say that the problem of language endangerment and death does not exist but, rather, that many versions of it exist and that each construct must be understood within its own historical context. Problematizing the way knowledge about a concept is formed is to look at a concept (in this case language endangerment) as a practice that itself constitutes the problem as an object and those affected by the problem as subjects. The making of knowledge is never neutral; it is through knowledge that subjects can be regulated and governed and, more importantly, it is through the conceptualisation of the problem that subjects learn to identify themselves and ultimately self-regulate (e.g.: Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

To problematise the discourse of endangerment we must therefore question not how we can help preserve these languages but “What’s the problem Represented to be?” – WPR approach (Bacchi 2018:3). This means that we must dig deep to reveal what assumptions are lying beneath the discourse on endangered languages, when and how the problem first came about, what is being erased from the discourse, what the effects of this representation of the problem are, and by whom it is being produced. This includes questioning the knowledge production of linguists and anthropologists, too. The aim is not to discredit their work, nor to say that government policies on language are without their value. Rather, agreeing with Heller & Duchene (2008:11), it is to question the assumption that languages must be saved and to ask “instead who benefits and who loses from understanding languages the way we do, what is at stake for whom, and how and why language serves as a terrain for competition”. Crucially, by understanding the limits posed by our own methods through a process of problematisation, we keep ourselves to account – thus reminding ourselves to keep pursuing new possibilities (Bacchi 2018:11). As I go on to explain in this section, this process has led me to rediscover the pursue of saving endangered languages as an act of *support* towards a diversity of voices in our collective identity.

One of the main issues associated with how languages are conceptualised is their

classification and recognition in society. Indeed, not all languages have equal status; or so people are led to believe. For example, if a language is recognised as the official language of a nation-state, this language, and consequently its speakers, will benefit from a prestigious status (Milroy 2001) within the given society. Conversely, all other languages spoken in the society – together with their speakers – are deemed inferior and thus discriminated against. This is true of multilingual societies (virtually all societies in the world) in which only one or few of its languages are recognised as official, as well as of varieties of the official language itself. The linguistic repertoire of Italy provides examples for both of the language ideologies just mentioned (or more on language ideologies, see for example, Dragojevic et al. 2013).

Indeed, from a historical perspective, Latin, the official written language of Romania, and therefore of present Italy, developed from a single language (between 400 and 800 CE) into several distinct languages over the following centuries (Wright 2016). These vernaculars are known as Romance languages and it is a variety of one of these languages, namely Tuscan, that became the national language of Italy, following its unification in 1861 (e.g.: Maiden 2013). This, in turn, demonstrates what Otheguy et al. (2015) refer to when warning that the idea of named languages are socially constructed is often forgotten.

So far, in this chapter I have been addressing Emilian and Esperanto as minoritised languages. Although most indigenous languages are spoken in multilingual contexts as the oppressed minority language, to which extent can Emilian and Esperanto also be considered indigenous and why should this matter? The definition provided by the O.E.D. (2018) states that to be indigenous means to be “native”, “belonging naturally” or “born or produced naturally in a land or region” – a label mainly used for aboriginal people and natural products. It is thus not surprising that native languages of Australia, Africa, and South America are often referred to as indigenous. The use of this term tends to be associated with the idea of an external oppressing people who through a historic, often forceful, development has become dominant over the pre-existing (thus indigenous) people.

However, Italian was implemented as the national language following the unification of Italy in what can be seen as a strategy to secure peace and alliance, rather than conquest and division, which followed a consolidated model of linguistic Jacobinism that became influential in the western world following the French revolution (Wright 2007) and that provided a model for linguistic nationalism in the 19th century (a similar historical account is however found in Japan and the birth of Japanese, see Heinrich 2012). Furthermore, because Italian is based on the variety of Tuscan spoken in Florence, it

can be considered indigenous to Italy in the same way as most other dialects of Italy that developed directly from Latin alongside it. The close relatedness of languages spoken across Italy may have helped disguise both the linguistic and cultural differences among its people and thus facilitated for the lack of interest in the dialects of Italy for so long (cf. the concept of “specificity” which is believed to be a driver for language vitality for the Ligurian variety spoken in Sardinia, in Toso 2021). Though by labelling the dialects of Italy as indigenous languages, we could enable a much-needed urgency to preserve them through the connotations associated with the word native, following Pennycook’s (e.g.: 2010) work, I argue for heritage to be used instead (cf. Chapter 8). I do this to conceptualise language as a local, social practice that forms part of a people’s heritage in the same way as any other cultural tradition, place, memory, and object.

Likewise, indigenous may be a problematic label to a language like Esperanto. While it may support the argument against the categorisation of Esperanto as an indigenous language, it is its very own neutrality (here meant as not traditionally affiliated to any specific ethnicity, nation-state, or political power) and flexibility that can serve as a blank canvas onto which speakers of different languages can translate their cultural capital. In this sense, Esperanto becomes a vector of cultural diversity and through its established community of both acquired and native speakers, it represents an ever-changing repertoire of multi-cultural, multilingual practices – a unique repertoire of its kind, arguably worth supporting and preserving. Because of such limitations, the concept of heritage as a term to refer to Esperanto and other minority languages (if not all linguistic practices) would seem once again more fitting.

By capturing the concepts of belonging and intimacy, heritage shifts the agency back to the individual and allows for both territorial and non-territorial speech communities to feel empowered by the idea of their linguistic practices to create, constitute, and perpetuate an identity worth preserving. As mentioned in Chapter 1.1 and further discussed in Chapter 8 and 9, language is strictly connected to our sense of identity and, in turn, to our wellbeing. In the latter chapters I link the concept of heritage in relation to Emilian and Esperanto and base my discussion on the assumption that, by virtue of being part of our identity, all languages are worth supporting.

2.4.4 Language Documentation

As discussed in section 2.4, Romaine (2008) argues that language documentation is one of three reactions to be expected from the institutions when confronted with issues of

language endangerment. A recent sub-discipline of linguistics, language documentation has indeed the potential to serve as an excellent strategy of language maintenance and revitalisation. With its primary aim of collecting and preserving linguistic data, language documentation can be treated as a practice of its own (Himmelman et al. 2006) which can be adopted by anyone working with and on any vernacular. Schultze-Berndt (2012:2064) points out that language documentation is both a process and a result aimed at producing what Himmelman et al. (2006:3) defines as a “comprehensive corpus of primary data which leaves nothing to be desired by later generations wanting to explore whatever aspect of the language they are interested in”. In order to achieve this, the corpus needs to resemble a “record of a language” which is both “lasting” and “multipurpose”.

While Himmelman makes use of these terms in a very specific way, the sociologist Harvey Sacks (1985:26) already describes the benefits of working with primary data for its lasting, reusable, and accountable nature. Taking a phenomenological approach (such as in Wittgenstein 1953), both consider language as a social practice worth exploring in its everyday forms; it is through what is “observable” (Himmelman), or “describable” (Sacks) that one can document and make sense of how a given speech community is organised. Anything that provides direct evidence of such observable linguistic activities can therefore be considered primary data, such as in any ethnographical fieldwork in which the researcher approaches the speech community from within (on the role of the researcher as a member of the speech community and its ethical implications I will discuss further in Chapter 5).

Given the ordinary nature of the activities, it is easy to see how a multitude of different scholars may come across, collect and analyse primary data of a language in their research, may they be anthropologists, historians, educationalists, or sociologists. By making these records available to others, the practice of documenting language can therefore serve a dual purpose for the researcher. On the one hand, the scholar can make use of their data for whatever investigation they are conducting and once shared, the data can then be used and checked by other researchers who will then be able to (i) contribute to the growth of the corpus and (ii) provide feedback to the contributor. In this sense, the corpus is an ongoing, ever-changing project which necessitates a multidisciplinary input in order to holistically reflect the language as culturally understood in its community. On the other hand, because these records must fulfil whatever objectives someone interested in the language may have, it follows that their format, once shared, should provide all the information the layperson may need to fully understand the data. This means that any record of a communicative

event the scholar may wish to share will need to be fully annotated and uploaded together with extra background information related to the language, the setting and the speakers.

More precisely, the beginning of a documentation coincides with the start of field-work during which the researcher/s will be collecting data directly from the speech community and by involving members of the studied community (Schultze-Berndt 2012:2065). It is essential that the researcher document the language by collecting communicative events (both written and spoken, spontaneous and elicited) that capture language use as it actually occurs and can be observed within the community, since these are what constitute primary data. For varied reasons, not all communicative events can be recorded; Schultze-Berndt (2012:2071) summaries three “main motives [...] (a) their [of the communicative events] accessibility to the documenter(s), obviously a necessary condition for documentation, (b) their representativeness of communicative events occurring in the speech community, and (c) their representativeness of the structural possibilities of the language in question”.

Once collected, the data will need elaborating through processes of annotation which will render it accessible to most. With spoken primary data, the process typically include a transcription, some sort of glossing (may it be morpheme-by-morpheme or other), a translation and the addition of metadata. Not only does this raises practical questions on what should be included as metadata but it also raises ethical questions on which language should be used for the translation of primary data. On the former point, Schultze-Berndt (2006) argues that, as well as a transcription and a translation, metadata should also include a contextual commentary and a grammatical annotation. As for the choice of a metalanguage, that is a language used to mediate between the documented language and the wider, general public, it is currently argued that English should be one of the languages used in the translations (Schultze-Berndt 2012:2078). However, given the need for a metalanguage which is easily accessible by most and free of official status in any nation-states, Esperanto would arguably be more suited for the task.

Crucially, for a documentation to truly reflect all cultural and linguistic aspects of a language and its speech community, the corpus will need to include speech collected from a wide spectrum of formality, speakers, and genres, as possible – a discussion on the issue around representativeness can be found in Seifart (2008). It is worth pointing out that even when a satisfactory amount of data is collected and shared, the documentation will not automatically help revitalise a language and, should no proactive actions be taken, the corpus runs the risk of becoming museumified. Language

documentation can only serve as a strategy to help threatened languages when the data offered in the documentations is accessed, retrieved, used and re-disseminated in the speech communities to create didactical materials, organise folkloristic events, inform language policies, or simply enrich the linguistic landscape of the community (see for example Ricento 2006).

The attainability of such monumental task can be seen as problematic and is certainly non trivial. While I will not attempt to better define the aim of language documentation nor suggest how its completion can or should be conducted, I wish to turn to “lasting” as Himmelmann’s additional key aspect for this practice. So far, I have discussed the core aim of language documentation as one dedicated to sharing primary data. Sharing materials through their use in publications is however not sufficient for the purposes of language documentation, given the limitations in terms of both space (quantity of data publishable in one publication) and the accessibility of these documents to a wider audience. As discussed in Trilsbeek & Wittenburg (2006), 80% of primary data collected by researchers on endangered languages is thought to be privately stored in precarious conditions. The mere act of documenting endangered languages as a practice of collecting data as an end in itself is therefore not enough to serve as a strategy of preservation. Through the affordances warranted by digital technologies it is of paramount importance that these materials be shared in archives that are accessible, organised, well-maintained, and user-friendly (for both researchers and the general public). Only by investing in efficient, well-organised archives can documentations truly be guaranteed to be *lasting*.

In this thesis, as a linguistic interested in researching the language of my own speech community, I will argue for the discursive practices of endangerment to be centred on the possibilities they foster in terms of identity-building resources. Whether it may be framed as cultural worth or as loss of identity-building resources, raising awareness on the current state of endangered languages can help increase academic attention and research output for the state-of-the-arts. However, it is through dissemination directed at the general public that real impact can be achieved. By documenting Emilian and Esperanto, I aim to offer researchers opportunities to collaboratively work towards capturing the essence of the languages and their speech communities. However, it is through the symbolic gesture of sharing my data and returning a summary of my findings to the communities that I aim to help with raising awareness and overcoming prejudice.

2.5 Conclusion

Given the co-dependence, the intricacies and interconnectedness of identity, language, ideology, place and belonging, it is now clear how the use of a linguistic autobiography can serve as an introduction to exemplify these dynamics. It is not only a useful exercise for the academic development of a junior researcher but also an undervalued genre of writing which should arguably be made more visible in academia. Crucially, the themes touched upon in both my linguistic autobiography and more generally in this chapter lay the foundations of my research and will therefore underpin and inform the entirety of this doctoral project. I now go on to describe my methodology in the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Having set out the main theoretical assumptions of this thesis in the previous chapter (Chapter 2), here I describe the overarching research design by discussing the methods employed in my data collection and the theoretical rationale as justifications to these choices. In order to avoid the blurry boundaries often encountered when coming across this terminology in the literature, I subscribe to the following three definitions: (i) the way in which, as a researcher, I conceptualised the project and executed it in its entirety is understood here as research design (Creswell 2017). A crucial component of the design is the collection of data. The ways in which data are collected for the purposes of research are referred to as methods (ii). Finally, the theoretical and practical rationale behind the decision-making processes that resulted in choices in favour for one or more methods rather than others is what is intended with the term methodology (iii).

One important distinction between the latter two terms is highlighted in Grüne-Yanoff (2021:5) who argues that “[m]ethodology is distinct from methods: it concerns the justification of method choice, and thus the evaluation of methods, but it does not concern the development, description or application of methods themselves”. In line with this, the methodology is what is discussed and presented in this chapter whereas the application of single methods is left to the relevant chapters (presented as self-contained journal articles) that will follow in this thesis.

The entirety of my research design is an outcome of a series of choices made either intentionally or unintentionally. This applies to the very starting point of the project – that is the ideas of what I wanted to research and the research questions I put forward in my research proposal – all the way to the results and the analyses (Crotty 2003). It is

the essence of the object of research and the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of how I set out to produce the knowledge about said object that I wish to address in the following sections. Here I aim to unpack these assumptions and explain how methods were selected on the basis of philosophical considerations for knowledge production; in other words my epistemological stance. The discussion will weave through key philosophical concepts for both historical contextualisation and present situatedness of the theoretical framework adopted. These considerations are not intended as exhaustive accounts of each philosophical stance discussed, but rather as analytical tools against which my standpoint, positionality and reflexivity have been shaped and helped situate the research outcomes of this thesis.

This methodology chapter will therefore not delve into the particulars of the model of triangulation that I developed for my study as that will be thoroughly addressed in the following chapter (Chapter 4). The discussion in Chapter 4 is presented in the form of a self-contained journal article as allowed by the format of this thesis and is therefore treated as a separate, yet closely connected, presentation of my methodology. I took this as an opportunity to further explore and outline my stance in this chapter which is structured as described in what follows. The discussion in section 3.2 will set out the philosophical assumptions that inform and contextualise the choice of adopting triangulation as a methodological framework needed to tackle all three research questions (section 3.3). Triangulation is introduced and defined in section 3.3.1. This is then followed by a brief justification of the single methods of data collection elected for this thesis in section 3.4.

3.2 Ontological and Epistemological assumptions: situating my research project

I first came across the terms ontology and epistemology during my second year of undergraduate studies when I took two modules from the Philosophy programme; one of which was dedicated to the topic of death through the reading of *Being and Time* Heidegger (1962). As argued by Large (2008), Heidegger is concerned with the ways in which we relate to the world and how these relations inform and explain our shared experience of it. This approach is of phenomenological nature insofar as it is a method of analysis which observes objects as they appear to us through our perceiving them (Large 2008:9). In other words, phenomenology is the study of the world as we encounter it. For example, my PC is available to me, therefore ready-to-hand, whenever I want

to turn it on and use it to write this thesis. However, if I were completely new to technologies and did not know what a PC was, I would look at it to try and figure out what it is and how to use it. In this case the PC would be present-at-hand because not available to me but only occurrent in my scrutiny of it (e.g.: Kaufer & Chemero 2015). This is also true of my experience of reflecting on what *al dialet* is. As I describe in my linguistic autobiography (Chapter 2), *al dialet* permeated my childhood in a ready-to-hand form but it was only when I started wondering what it actually was that it suddenly became unknown to me, ready-at-hand as if I had never encountered it before. That is when my real journey of discovery began.

Heidegger's approach to explaining how objects can be in the world (*ways of being*) is an ontological account of the world as it attempts to describe the nature of reality (e.g.: Varpio & MacLeod 2020). In this sense then some of the key theoretical definitions provided in the literature review in Chapter 2 are the ontological stances elected as assumptions through which the reality of minoritised languages, their attitudes, and their status in the world can be understood. In other words, these represent the choices I made when deciding how to conceptualise the objects of my research; choices that can therefore differ depending on the discipline, academic traditions, and other orientational dynamics that affect a researcher's development. While ontology is the fundamental aspect of the research process that defines what is real and what the nature of reality is (e.g.: Crotty 2003), epistemology is used to provide an account of knowledge, of how we know what is real, and what the process of creating knowledge is (e.g.: Sprague 2010).

It was during my time at the University of Liverpool, in a department that was not of Linguistics, surrounded by colleagues engaged in the most disparate research and theories that I was finally able to connect these philosophical understandings to my own stance as a researcher. First though, I had to unlearn.

Large (2008) warns that “[...] what is closest to us is also what is hardest to see precisely because of what we have learnt at school and university; whether consciously or not, which acts as a screen between the world and ourselves and distorts our experience” (p 4). Though not directly, Large is calling for a process of unlearning as a prerequisite of observing the world for what it is. As argued by Dunne (2016:13) this process “insinuates a kind of originality and invention, of finding something new and discovering something old within the new for the first time”. Building on the idea of “surprised thought” conceptualised by Nancy (2000), Dunne (2016:17) adds that “[t]o love thinking, to speak *philosophically*, means to love the surprise of thought. It means being in love with the unsettling *insistence* of unlearning” [*italics in original*]. Questioning our assumptions about the world is a process of wonder and of being

wondered; a labour of love that keeps us grounded in the unearthing of our convictions. It is an ongoing experience which, for me, entailed going through alternate stages of confusion and conviction.

As a young researcher it is important for me to know the paradigm in which my methods are historically situated so that I can better justify potential clashing of theoretical stances (e.g.: declaring a postmodern stance and adopting quantitative methods with a claim for objective truth) as well as to preempt consequential limitations. First, I unlearned what language was by discovering the different theories of language that have been argued, developed, acquired, revised, resisted, abandoned in the history of the discipline. Simultaneously I started to discover that there is no universal theory and no universal history, or what Bhabra (2007:5) defines as “the belief, implicit or otherwise, in the world historical significance of events believed to have developed endogenously within the cultural-geographical sphere of Europe”.

Through this journey, I have come to embrace an epistemology which questions the idea of objective truth, such as the empirical Cartesian idea of thought as our means to observe and test reality (e.g.: Jarausch & Coclans 2001; Allen 2020) or the positivist accounts of objective knowledge about the social world as linear entities (see for example Feigl 2013). While I support the use of quantitative methods as a mean to an end, I do not apply them to reduce social phenomena and produce essentialist claims (such as in Durkheim 1973). As argued in Maryanski & Turner (1991), among others, it was this essentialist approach to the social sciences to have provided the basis for structuralism to arise. As a shift in thought within linguistics, structuralism is based on the assumption that “experience is a system” (Bourdieu 1968:683) of empirical facts that can therefore be easily quantified. When it comes to language and more precisely to the Linguistic Unit proposed by Saussure (cf. Chapter 2), the methodological focus is on *langue* rather than *parole* – *langue* understood as a system of arbitrary relations between the signed and the signifier in contrastive distribution (e.g.: Hawkes 2003). As further argued by Bourdieu (1968:684), the implications of this systematic approach to social reality applied to language means forcing “a system containing the key to its own interpretation, and to draw from the facts themselves the code for unravelling their meaning”.

Bourdieu’s critique of the methodological flaws of structuralism is emblematic of the more recent turn in linguistics and the social sciences which now recognise the subjectivity in our conception of the world. Among many others, anaphoric statements such as Wittgenstein’s “Tell me how you are looking, and I’ll tell you what you will find” (cited in Laucken 1991:203), and Hanson’s “People, not their eyes, see” (2009:434) are

evocative of the nature of the shift in the narrative within the disciplines. The beginning of the turn can be traced to the early twentieth century when philosopher Popper argued that knowledge cannot be known in an absolute sense. Popper's assessment of positivism and more specifically of the verification/falsification notion (e.g.: Stokes 1998) paved the way to post-positivism and to hermeneutics. As explained in Nakissa (2019:22), "[h]ermeneutic theory is concerned with knowledge of other minds" and "draws attention to the concept of "action"".

It is the opening up of backgrounds (infrastructural and institutional) to dislodge the taken-for-granted assumptions we hold that hinder and influence our interpretation (e.g.: Ricœur 2008). It is to contextualise within time and period of the situated event and to question the analytical assumption that what people say can be used as a guide to what people do. For Dilthey, in particular, the focus is on our lived experience as one cannot grasp the essence of an experience but only a memory of it (e.g.: Dilthey & Jameson 1972). These new ways of looking at the relation between subject and object with a newly found focus on subjectivity¹ is what lies at the heart of qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic research and narrative research (e.g.: Lieblich et al. 1998) – methods which I elected for my study to purposefully account for these perspectives. Even though not strictly phenomenological in the traditional philosophical sense, these methodological approaches aim to observe and capture our lived experiences in the phenomenal world as always mediated and constantly interpreted.

These are the epistemological principles that I subscribe to together with other key theoretical and methodological developments that informed my study. Notably, Blumer (e.g.: 1986) posits the notion of symbolic interactionism whereby interactions take on different symbolic meanings depending on their role. For example, a language can mean different things to different people: it can represent familial ties to a speaker and a mere system of rules to analyse to a syntactician. According to Schütz (1944), we are social actors who make sense of social phenomena not as fixed objects but as situated, context-based and interpreted in meaning-making processes. This is echoed in the concept of the *biosocial embrace* which is the understanding that nature and culture shape how we problematise our research and therefore assume that the body is always situated in the local environment (Seeberg et al. 2020).

In relation to the discipline of linguistics, McNamara (2012) discusses a historical divide which coincides with Saussure's contribution to the field. On the one hand, the

¹This is not to say that subjectivity had thus far been ignored by philosophers and the disciplines but rather that the idea of subject underwent a process of deconstruction and was made anew (e.g.: Bellou 2013)

study of language understood as discourse and power relations developed within the humanities (such as Discourse Analysis) and more specifically within the philosophical movement known as poststructuralism. On the other hand, an account of language within the social sciences (i.e.: Applied Linguistics) developed in parallel without, however, following the same poststructuralist approach taken in the humanities but instead sticking to Saussurean structuralism until recently (McNamara 2012:473-4).

Through my undergraduate studies I had already internalised poststructuralist assumptions of language by studying Critical Discourse Analysis within the remit of Ecolinguistics. Through the latter, I developed an understanding of our social world as one that is deeply entangled with our environment in a web of intricate interconnect-edness. As I learnt to further situate my study, I also came to recognise this scholarly worldview as one in alignment with posthumanist thought (Ferrando 2020). Recognising my current research as falling within the remit of Applied Linguistics, I have now come to reconcile my pre-existing posthumanist inclination as something I operated by intuitively with the *modus operandi* consciously elected in this thesis. In conclusion, I position my research as both poststructuralist and posthumanist on the basis of what I have just explained. Likewise, my approach to truth is one which recognises the plu-rality of voices that constitutes it; one constantly in flux, subjective and situated (e.g.: Woods 1999). Precisely collocating my epistemological assumptions was a necessary exercise which ultimately led me to identify the best methods to answer my research questions. A theoretical explanation of the link between choice of methods and research questions and the clear outlining of the questions my research aims to answer is what will be discussed in the following sections before I move on to present triangulation as a systematic approach to the study of language attitudes.

3.3 Research Questions and Methods

As well as nurturing my intellectual soul, the process of learning through unlearning discussed in the previous section equipped me with the necessary skills to position my research in an informed and intentional way. It was this intellectual awakening that allowed me to own my theoretical assumptions and plan for my data collection by selecting methods in a way that reflects and best fits the needs and the goals of such assumptions. A first step in the selection of methods, I start from my research questions in line with that which Litosseliti (2018a:2) reminds us: “[r]esearch methods are inextricably linked with the research questions being asked, as well as with the broader research climate in which they are employed”. The questions have already

been introduced in Chapter 1 of this thesis, and are repeated here for the sake of clarity:

- 1) What is the current state of affairs of the linguistic attitudes and practices for Emilian and Esperanto? What are the differences and similarities across the two? [RQ1]
- 2) What can the findings from the Esperantist community tell us about efforts for language revitalisation in the context of Emilian and other historically marginalised languages? [RQ2]
- 3) How can a framework of interconnectedness practically help minoritised communities to reconnect with both language and their natural environment? [RQ3]

Lacking a hypothesis and leaving my research questions open to be driven by data means that my research is inquisitive in nature and exploratory in its application. This is furthermore supported by the formulations of all three research questions as open-ended interrogatives. By answering RQ1, I aim to fill a gap in the literature around the current linguistic behaviours of language use and language attitudes in the Emilian context. As for Esperanto, data from this community can be compared to what was discussed in the relevant literature in order to provide support and/or counter previous claims. By virtue of being a comparative study, findings will also be compared across the two speech communities to highlight meaningful similarities and differences.

It is within the interpretation of these commonalities and discrepancies in the comparative element of the study that RQ2 can be addressed. This is done with the intention to contextualise the findings in a wider theoretical scope. In other words, I re-evaluate my findings from a purely theoretical perspective in order to capture the underpinning dynamics at play in the language practices of the communities with a focus on what is proving effective in the Esperanto community but is lacking for Emilian. Given the granularity and complexity of both RQ1 and RQ2, a variety of methods is needed to capture different subjectivities on the same phenomena. In the following section I discuss why I chose to design a triangulation model as my mixed-method approach both as a theoretical contribution to the methodological toolbox of the study of language attitudes and as an experimental application to my own study.

Finally, RQ3 will be tackled separately to produce a positional stance on how interconnectedness can be embedded in any study that engages with a minoritised language. Chapter 9 is entirely dedicated to this research question. As I argue in the chapter, the discussion has a two-fold aim of contributing towards the documentation of the

language and the production of resources that can help the community reconnect with both language and local environment.

3.3.1 Mixed methods and triangulation

Methods can be defined as “techniques, approaches and strategies that scientists employ to perform their research. These methods can serve different epistemic goal, for example different versions of explanation, prediction or design” (Grüne-Yanoff 2021:3903). Within the scope of linguistic research, two overarching paradigms can be employed for the collection of data, namely, quantitative and qualitative (Litosseliti 2018b). Questions related to quantity, such as numbers, volumes, percentages, and frequency call for quantitative approaches which generally make use of surveys and experiments to produce models, graphs, and statistics (Bourgeault et al. 2010). However, when a researcher is formulating questions about the what, how, and the why a particular social phenomenon occurs, methods that can afford deeper and more contextualised observations are needed (Chai et al. 2021). These approaches are qualitative in nature as they deal with the interpretation of meaning-making processes in people’s lived experiences of the given phenomenon under study. As neat and compartmentalised as the overview of the two paradigms may sound, Miles & Huberman (1994) remind us that these seemingly diverging approaches sit on a continuum. Indeed, they argue, most linguistic studies make use of such hybridity and are neither completely quantitative nor qualitative but are indeed both, to varying ratios.

The use of mixed methods (that is the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods) is now common practice in the discipline of linguistics as well as in the wider social sciences and humanities (Litosseliti 2018b), and the benefits of these mixed approaches have been widely discussed by scholars such as Creswell & Clark (2017), Harrington et al. (2008), Litosseliti (2003), Greene et al. (1989), and Stubbe et al. (2003). As highlighted by Dörnyei (2007), this does not mean that researchers may pick and choose whatever method they want without scientific rigour, nor that they can create a model of integration without following a theoretically informed structure. In addition to this, Grüne-Yanoff (2021:3903) reminds us that “[s]cientific methods are heuristic in nature. Heuristics are simplifying, incomplete, underdetermined and fallible problem-solving rules that can nevertheless serve certain contexts better than truth-preserving algorithm”. If selected and integrated in alignment with the ontological and epistemological stances of the research project, mixed methods can prove to be more effective in uncovering layers of meanings, as well as optimising a study’s efficiency by

allowing to answer a wider range of questions and depicting a more accurate picture of the phenomena observed (Litosseliti 2018b).

Due to the complexity of phenomena under investigation in my study and the need to capture as many voices as possible to meaningfully fill the existing gap in the literature for Emilian, a mixed-method approach was deemed necessary. In order to combine the findings from different methods, I looked in the literature for best practices and came across the concept of triangulation. This methodological term is often used interchangeably with mixed methods despite originating and standing for different methodological assumptions. As argued by Flick (2018:74), “[m]ixed-method methodologists are interested in facilitating a pragmatic combination of qualitative and quantitative research, which is intended to end the paradigm war” between the two. Triangulation can too include the use of different methods, however what sets this approach apart from the mere combination of methods is its focus. Indeed, “[w]hile mixed methods research concentrates on and is limited to combining qualitative and quantitative research, triangulation is much more focused and concentrates on combining various qualitative approaches where the issue under study makes it necessary” (Flick 2018:94).

Building on and borrowing from Flick (2018), with the term triangulation I refer to a conceptual framework designed and advanced for systematicity in the methodology of a given field of research. Triangulations as methodological frameworks are designed to integrate analyses of data collected through a number of different methods, either multi-method (allQUAL or all QUAN) or mixed-method (both QUAL and QUAN). Triangulation originates from the social sciences as a methodological approach apt to overcome positional biases by extending the researcher’s range of understandings and by better observing social problems (Denzin 1970). Triangulation can comprise a selection of types of data, such as “natural sources” (e.g. found data), “objective indicators” (e.g. statistics), and “subjective” indicators (e.g. interviews) to be decided at the outset as a specific research strategy (Flick 2018).

Researchers can use this approach to perform “data triangulation”, “investigator triangulation”, “theory triangulation”, and “triangulation of methods” (Flick 2018:12-3). Whenever using the same methods to collect data from different people, at different times, places, contexts, etc, Denzin (1970) refers to this as triangulation of data. When research from different observers on the same topic is used systematically to overcome a single researcher’s bias, the approach is known as investigator triangulation. The analysis of the same data from different theoretical perspective instead gives rise to theory triangulation. Finally, when a combination of methods (even within the specific

method) is used to tackle a single issue, the researcher is conducting triangulation of methods.

I must also note that Flick's (2018) conceptualisation of triangulation revisited Denzin's (1970) in what he defines "systematic triangulation of perspectives". Following this model, all forms of triangulation should be adopted. Data should be therefore collected using different investigators, considering different theories, and adopting a variety of methods (Flick 2018:18). While there is a usefulness and purpose in all four of the triangulation forms, including in the study of language attitudes, I opted to develop a model of triangulation of data, theory and methods. This was due to the amount of time and resources that following an investigator triangulation would have entailed and which, as a doctoral researcher, I could not practically sustain. If interested, the reader is invited to consult Strauss et al. (1964); Webb et al. (1966); Glaser et al. (2017); Newby (1977); Louis et al. (2000); Flick (2022) for more on the other form here excluded.

In the field of linguistics, Baker & Egbert's (2016:3) edited volume is a collection of examples of how triangulation can be an instrumental framework to observe the results of two or more corpus studies. While the authors echo Marchi & Taylor (2009) in emphasising that a triangulation cannot guarantee objectivity nor increase the validity of claims, they argue that a triangulation of results can yield "more robust interpretation and explanations" (Baker & Egbert 2016:3). On the issue of objectivity, I wish to open a short parenthesis. Unless working in extremely small communities of, for example, 5 members, a project can never claim to be representative nor can its findings deemed exhaustive. Even though the focus of Baker & Egbert's (2016) collection of studies is specifically on the triangulation of the results of different studies, the editors do not offer a clear definition of triangulation, nor do they explain what this approach should look like in corpus linguistics. This is not surprising given that, even in the social sciences, mixed methods and triangulation are terms and concepts still underdeveloped from a theoretical perspective (Greene 2008). Following Flick (2018), I contend that triangulation can in fact serve as a systematic framework to yield that broader and more nuanced perspective that is needed in the study of language attitudes insofar that:

"Different perspectives can become concrete in analyzing knowledge (with interviews) and practices (with conversation analysis or observations), but also in analyzing subjective experiences of an illness (in interviews) and frequencies and distributions of that illness in the population (with epidemi-

ological and statistical methods). The aim of such a triangulation is less to confirm results but rather to include complementary (subjective experiences complementing the prevalence of an illness) or contradictory results (knowledge about vs. practices concerning health risks). A systematic triangulation of perspectives can be realized with several qualitative but also with qualitative and quantitative methods. It becomes systematic, once not only methods are combined but also when their theoretical and epistemological backgrounds are taken into account in the combination.” (Flick 2018:102)

Triangulation can be a useful framework to bring in different perspectives as well as different methodological approaches (Flick 2018). A push towards a more holistic approach in research is advocated for even in disciplines such as epidemiology for which generalisation is the golden standard. Adams (2013), for example, challenges the reliance on statistical analyses in disciplines that operate on the assumption that the human body can be objectively observed. Instead, Adams (2013:84) argues that for a methodological design to be robust, it ought to account for the granularity of our lived experiences world in their complexity, in their fluidity and informed by the cultural, social, and political layers they are entangled with. What Adams (2013) is trying to achieve in her chapter is to bridge the epistemological gap between health sciences and social sciences by offering an alternative framing of what can constitute evidence-based medicine.

Just as Adams advocates for the field of Medicine, in my methodology I focus on bringing the human body as a social actor back to the fore by highlighting the importance of qualitative studies, case studies and anecdotal data. Feeling the necessity to use triangulation as an apt methodology for the needs of my study, but lacking an existing model to follow, I set out to design my own prototype which I present and explain in detail in Chapter 4. In other words, this framework was purposefully designed to satisfy the epistemological needs of studies on language attitudes, and only experimentally applied to my research project in a second stage. The chapter constitutes the first of five self-contained journal articles in this thesis and is written as a theoretical contribution to the study of language attitudes. While in the article I discuss and justify the model in relation to its usefulness as a methodological framework from a theoretical standpoint, here I will limit the discussion to each method as briefly justified against the research question/questions that they were selected to answer. Details of how data were collected, numbers of participants, and other situational details related

to the single method will be laid out in the relevant articles which act as the following chapters in this thesis.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

As will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter 4, my triangulation model comprises the integration of three distinct methods apt to capture and observe the phenomena from different perspectives. These perspectives are based on the application of Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad terminology to Giles et al.'s (2006) model of communication ecology (this is done to bring the element of interconnectedness to the fore, in line with my epistemological stance). According to Giles et al. (2006), language attitudes can be understood as pertaining to three dimensions, namely, micro, meso and macro levels. As the authors point out, “[i]t is important to note that the levels of analysis [...] are *embedded* within each other, and that the relationships between levels are dialogic, not unidirectional” (Giles et al. 2006: 42) [italics in original]. Briefly put, the micro level represents an individual's connections with their family, friends, and other social networks they belong to. In accordance to Lefebvre's terminology, this level is re-labelled as *perception of language*. The meso level (now *representation of language*) can provide insights into the local space and how it affects day-to-day communicative practices at a local yet collective level. As aptly explained by Giles et al. (2006):

“First, at the meso level, the immediate social situation is conceived as a triumvirate of: (1) interpersonal networks of local residents, family, and friends; (2) local media sources; and (3) community-based organizations/-institutional information resources. The degree to which these nodes of the *storytelling network* are integrated can affect language attitudes with the information resources contained therein” (p. 45) [italics in original].

Finally, the macro level (Lefebvre's *lived language*) provides context in terms of time and space to the subjective and local levels by considering factors such as policies, power struggles, and historical events (Giles et al. 2006). In practice, data collected from the micro level can tell us about intergroup attitudes and beliefs, meso level data can add to this by providing context of “the immediate social situation” and “perceived cultural factors” (Cargile et al. 1994:214) whereas the macro level data can be used to explain how “the immediate social situation” has come about. It is also interesting how Giles et al. (2006) use the storytelling frame to explain the dynamics of language attitudes and beliefs at the different social levels. I would argue in favour of this frame

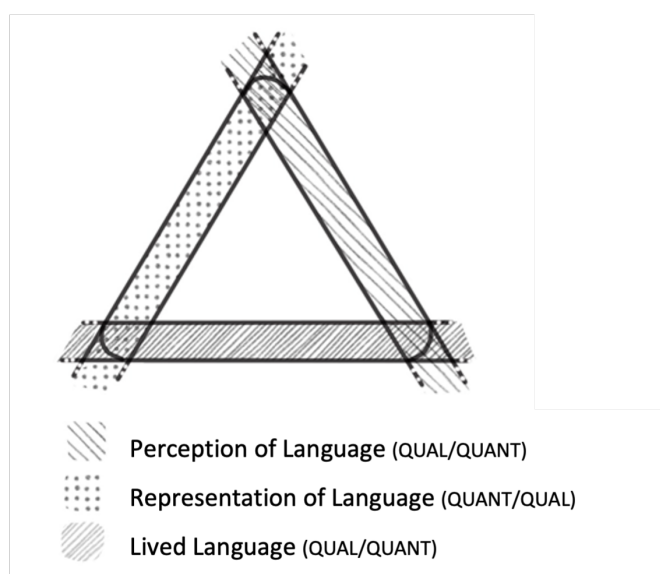


Figure 3.1: Triangulation model for measuring language attitudes

as it effectively captures the potential volatility of beliefs whilst also acknowledging how resistant to change they can be when deeply entrenched in the collective mind (refer to Garrett 2006 and Ianos et al. 2017 for more on the question of stability of language attitudes).

It is therefore paramount that each method in this triangulation model serves the purpose of capturing data from each social level/space. While both the micro/subjective element and meso-macro level can be observed and/or elicited by quantitative or qualitative methods, due to its nature the ethnographic dimension is expected to be studied qualitatively. This consequently means that the triangulation model here proposed can be mixed method as well as multi-method depending on the researcher's needs, theoretical assumptions, and practical judgements. The model was experimentally reconfigured to be applied to my research as I go to explain in what follows.

3.4.1 Sociolinguistic questionnaire

The subjective and micro level is examined using a sociolinguistic questionnaire. This method of data collection is consolidated in the study of language attitudes as it facilitates large quantity of data to be collected for both quantitative and qualitative analyses (for example Kircher & Fox 2019a). Survey responses will be analysed using statistics of both descriptive and inferential nature. However, in line with the poststructuralist and post-modern stance outlined in previous sections of this chapter,

inferential statistics are not conducted to posit general, sweeping statements about the speech communities of Emilian and Esperanto with the scope of producing models of prediction. Instead, statistical analyses will fulfil the aim of summarising and finding significant effects in language attitudes so that efforts for language revitalisation can be better targeted and planned for.

Inferential statistics are therefore taken as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The findings will be instrumental in answering RQ1 and RQ2 regarding the flourishing vitality of Esperanto and the current state of maintenance for Emilian. These, however, are taken as situated data produced by participants in the knowledge that they were expressing an opinion. In other words, the use of the sociolinguistic questionnaire is a way to provide a collective space to a multitude of voices, perspectives, and experiences. Data are treated as reported accounts of attitudes rather than direct observations of what it means to embody Esperanto and Emilian in the respective community.

3.4.2 Found Data

In order to fulfil the meso level perspective in Figure 3.1, a thematic analysis of online discursive practices in and about Emilian and Esperanto will be conducted on so-called found data. More specifically, relevant YouTube multimodal texts will be analysed and form the basis for a case-study in Chapter 9 of this thesis. The analysis will focus on the discursive representation of Emilian and Esperanto in Computer-Mediated-Communication in a similar fashion as what Cutler & Røyneland (2018) analysed in the Norwegian context. As argued by Giles et al. (2006), the micro level is embedded in the meso and consequently the findings from this method will corroborate and contextualise the results from the surveys in answering RQ1.

3.4.3 Diary for Research

The third and final method elected to collect ethnographic data is known as diary for research method (for example Nadin & Cassell 2006). For this approach, a small number of speakers of Emilian and Esperanto (the aim is to recruit five speakers from each) will be recruited to keep a daily diary of their use of the language during the day for two consecutive weeks. As well as recording their interactions in the language, participants will also be encouraged to reflect and make notes of their emotions related to their communicative events in the language and to write a short linguistic autobiography (cf. Chapter 2). While not strictly ethnographic, I argue that this is a practical

solution to capture autoethnographic data from the participant's perspective which can come in especially handy when fieldwork cannot be undertaken. This case-study will be discussed and analysed in Chapter 7 of this thesis and its findings will help inform results from the other methods in relation to RQ1 by providing insights from the micro level of lived language.

3.4.4 Triangulation of methods

The ways in which the findings from the Esperanto community can help other historically marginalised languages (cf. RQ2), will be addressed and answered in Chapter 8. This too is a self-contained publishable paper in which the most important findings yielded by individual methods come together in an overall analysis as the final step to fulfil my triangulation model. As mentioned in the introductory paragraph of this chapter, all methods and analyses are to be recognised as specific outcomes produced by the decisions, stances and contextual factors that directly pertain to me as a researcher. Positionality is therefore an aspect of my research that must be addressed and understood explicitly. This is done in Chapter 5 where I overtly articulate my positionality in relation to its effects on the studies undertaken for this thesis.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I provide a theoretical justification for my choices through my research. It offers a reflective account of the journey that brought me to contextualise the main decision-making processes from both a philosophical and personal perspective. The narrative is not only useful to the reader but also acts as a guide to ensure that my future choices can be compared and discussed against the stances here disclosed. Further considerations on my positionality will be discussed in Chapter 5 whereas a more detailed description of my triangulation model is what follows in the self-contained journal article which comprises the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Measuring attitudes: Adopting Triangulation as an Attempt to Square the Circle. Swipe up for More.

Hampton, J., 2023. Adopting triangulation as an attempt to square the circle. Swipe up for more. *Modern Languages Open*, 0(1), p.9. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3828/mlo.v0i0.450>

Using reflections on research conducted on the speech communities of Esperanto and Emilian, this article focuses on methods of data collection and participant recruitment in studies on minoritized languages whose vitality partly depends on the attitudes and ideologies embodied in the community. The article is divided into two self-contained yet closely related sections. In the first part, a model for triangulation as a methodological framework for language attitude research is outlined as a theoretical contribution to the toolbox of methodologies used in the field. The model proposes a research design that includes a qualitative/quantitative method at the micro level, a qualitative/quantitative method at the meso level, and an ethnographic dimension at the individual, subjective level. The second part of the article is a discussion of the practical and theoretical implications of using Instagram and its Story function as strategies for participant recruitment, dissemination, and data collection when travelling and fieldwork are not possible, such as during the period of Covid-19. The social media platform is here

presented as an opportunity to reach younger generations and therefore as apt for data collection for studies interested in language attitudes.

Keywords: Dialects of Italy; Emilian; Esperanto; language attitudes; minoritized languages; mixed-methods; triangulation; Instagram; Instagram Story; COVID-19.

4.1 Introduction

When it comes to the maintenance of historically marginalized languages, attitudes have a lot to answer for (Price & Tamburelli (2020); Austin & Sallabank (2013b); Sallabank (2013); Garrett (2010), just to name a few). The initial research focus on language shift and vitality was on social factors at the macro level, such as numbers of speakers, whether the language has official status, and other institutional language policies (e.g. Fishman 2006). More recently, attention has shifted towards micro factors at the local level (Giles & Marlow 2011). Moving away and beyond the assumption that beliefs and perceptions towards a language are mere distractions from the real issue at hand (O'Rourke 2011), the ideological dimension is now recognised as one of the necessary analytical lenses to understand the current state of a language. Beliefs are assumptions that we mature from our experience of the world in the context of our culture and society; when these beliefs are not just held by a few individuals but are instead shared by most people in a given group, they come to form an ideology (Stibbe 2021). It follows that on the topic of languages, language ideologies are systems of beliefs associated with language varieties and their speakers which are shared by a group of people, either consciously or unconsciously (Spolsky 2004). The observable emotions and discursive practices resulting from such ideologies are what is here referred to as language attitudes (Garrett 2007)(cf. 'language regard' in Preston 2011; Marten 2019).

On the effects of language attitudes on minoritized languages, Sallabank (2013:60-1) states that “[l]anguage attitudes and ideologies are associated [...] with language policies at all levels of society” and by understanding attitudes as a sort of disposition that is somewhat stable, we can identify it and measure it accordingly (ibid). On the question of stability, Ianos et al. (2017)¹ remind us that a change in attitudes requires a cognitive process of retrieval of evaluative information for which new attitudinal predispositions are formed. This indicates just how resistant to change attitudes are. Contrastively, Potter & Wetherell (1987) conceptualize attitudes as discursive practices which are un-

¹Building on Bohner & Dickel (2011) and Eagly & Chaiken (2007)

stable and volatile in conversational interactions. This, however, is resisted by scholars such as Garrett (2007), who argues that “our assumptions and expectations also form part of the context of our social interaction, and these are cognitive in nature, and language attitudes can be comparatively stable stereo-typed responses to community-level phenomena” (p. 120).

As dispositions informed by ideological discourse, attitudes are often taken for granted and acting as unconscious bias in a person’s evaluation of a language and its speakers. These evaluations do, however, come to the surface through, for example, behaviours and when overtly articulating arbitrary and often damaging opinions towards a language (Garrett 2010:1-2). Through mechanisms of elicitations, attitudes can be observed, collected, and analysed. As argued by O’Rourke (2011), the process of measuring attitudes is not perfect, but its limitations are not a justification for their exclusion from a linguistic analysis interested with the current and future maintenance of a language. Indeed, O’Rourke (2011) highlights the lack of a direct connection between attitudes and behaviour (also Sallabank 2013), while arguing in favour for a methodological approach that aims at capturing practices through the lens of language attitude (see also Baker 1992; Woolard & Gahng 1990).

In terms of methods, there are several approaches that can be adopted. Among these are, for example, found data—that is, data already available on the internet (McDermott 2019), focus groups (Price & Tamburelli 2016), and semi-structured interviews (Wells 2019). Attitudes can also be collected using empirical methods such as the matched-guise technique (Price & Tamburelli 2020) a technique especially useful for driving to the fore taken-for-granted assumptions that inform a person’s unconscious bias. The distinction between overt/explicit and covert/implicit attitudes is a theoretical assumption that permeates most sociolinguistic inquiries on the matter. Borrowing from social psychology, Vari & Tamburelli (2020) advance a definition of attitude awareness that incorporates automaticity as a key factor in distinguishing explicit attitudes from implicit attitudes.

Recognizing that speakers can be unaware of their own attitudes and of the origins and processes by which they formed them shows that “implicit attitudes are based on automatic operations, which require only scarce cognitive resources and limited time to process the attitude stimuli” (Vari & Tamburelli 2020:2). Crucially, the authors argue for the observation and measurement of implicit automatic language attitudes to be considered as predictors of natural language use. As just illustrated, data on attitudes can be unelicited and found, or it can be collected through elicitation in focus groups, questionnaires, interviews, and matched-guise experiments. Single methods can also

be combined in what are commonly known as multi-methods (a number of qualitative or quantitative approaches), mixed methods (a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches), and triangulation (respectively: Herrington 2014; Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017; Heesen et al. 2019). In the first part of this article, I present triangulation (Baker & Egbert 2016) as a methodology that can coherently bring mixed methods together and that is therefore a fitting model for the measurement of language attitudes in a holistic manner.

The discussion is theoretical and focuses on the comparative research I have been conducting on two minoritized languages, namely, Emilian and Esperanto. Here I will conclude that triangulation is an effective tool which fosters systematicity in the field of language attitudes as well as for drawing inferences on the vitality of a language. The second section will instead focus on a practical aspect of my data collection in the Emilian community. As a researcher based in a different country to that of the speech community that I was investigating, I found myself unable to travel for the planned fieldwork due to take place in Italy over the summer of 2020. Faced with new challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic², I experimented with different ways of collecting data for the administration of my sociolinguistic questionnaire. While cultural considerations of the speech community, such as trust and accessibility to new technologies, came in hand to plan for new strategies, the use of Instagram, as a last resort, proved to be surprisingly effective. The overall discussion is informed by the notion of trust and how this helped/hindered negotiation and relationship building on Instagram, and what this can mean for a researcher recruiting participants and collecting data on the platform.

4.2 Squaring the circle with triangulation

In my current research I aim to draw parallels between two very different, yet starkly similar language communities: Esperanto and Emilian. While the former is a so-called planned language³, born out of the creativity of a single individual, Polish ophthalmologist Ludwik Zamenhof, the latter is a Gallo-Italic language family, historically spoken in northern Italy (e.g De Cia & Iubini-Hampton 2020; Hajek 1997; Badini 2002). It is not within the scope of this discussion to delve into the different ways a linguistic code

²At the beginning of 2020 an outbreak of a new virus named COVID-19 led to a global pandemic which caused the imposition of international travel bans and the closure of the majority of businesses to control transmissions

³Esperanto is considered a planned language because it was put together by an individual rather than developing from a proto language. See Tonkin (1997) for a discussion on the blurred boundaries between natural and planned languages.

can or cannot be defined as a language. However, it is an agreed convention among scholars of Romance Linguistics to refer to the so-called dialects of Italy (part of the minor Romance languages; Lebsanft & Tacke 2020) as languages or language families. This also applies to Emilian as is due to the historical formation of these languages as independently developed from Latin (Ledgeway & Maiden 2016; Maiden & Parry 1997); in this sense, Emilian is a sister language of Italian but not one of its varieties. By references to Emilian in this article, the reader is to understand this as the group of Gallo-Italic varieties historically spoken in the Emilia region of Italy, which sits on a continuum with other Gallo-Italic varieties of northern Italy but not with Standard Italian (Berruto 1987; Sobrero et al. 1993).

In terms of commonalities, both Esperanto and Emilian share features that are common in most minority languages, such as small number of speakers—Esperanto is said to have just under 2,000,000 speakers (Wandel 2015) and Emilian about 440,000 (Ethnologue 2020); being reliant on a speaker's voluntariness for its maintenance; being spoken in bi-multilingual contexts; and being subject to social prejudice (Kimura 2012; Fettes 1996; Wood 1979). Despite such similarities, Esperanto seems to be doing better than Emilian in terms of its vitality (as defined by UNESCO in Moseley 2010). As put forward by Kimura (2012), the sense of intimacy within the Esperantist community, which is created by the aspect of voluntariness mentioned above, seems to be at play at both attracting speakers and fostering protectionist behaviour among its members. Emilian, on the contrary, lacks a sense of awareness (what I define as language erasure in Chapter 9) with many of its speakers oblivious to the fact that it is indeed a language separate from Italian. There are other differences between the two communities—for example, the idea of an Emilian speaker is associated with being rural and older, in stark contrast with the image of the young and global Esperantist. The disparities between the two speech communities are, however, not seen as analytical obstacles but as opportunities. They are in fact the driving reasons behind the choice to compare the two through the lens of language attitudes.

The goal of my research is to gain insight into the values, beliefs, behaviours, and practices shared by Esperantists about the language, so that as researchers we may learn what works well in the context of Esperanto, as a minoritized language whose vitality is seemingly thriving. This in turn will hopefully feed into ideas for revitalization efforts for Emilian and other similar speech communities whose status and level of maintenance are dangerously declining. As also argued by Blommaert (1996), comparative studies can be instrumental in capturing dynamics that might otherwise escape our attention when investigating a single language. In the case of minoritized languages and their

maintenance, a comparative dimension can be even more effective in deepening our understanding of what already works in a community and might therefore also work in others. Prejudice, as discussed above, is a shared feature of both Esperanto and Emilian. Members of both communities find themselves negotiating linguistic choices with mostly negative attitudes that portray their respective language as worthless and inadequate (Kimura 2012; Foresti 2010). Esperanto speakers still choose to maintain the language and pass it down through intergenerational transmission despite being aware of these negative perceptions in the wider society. Conversely, the use of Emilian—a language that has been for the most part erased from the community consciousness—is at the mercy of what Vari & Tamburelli (2020) refer to as automatic implicit attitudes.

The ways in which the different attitudes are embodied in the two communities became evident to me during my data collection over the summer of 2020. As I was disseminating my sociolinguistic questionnaire on language attitudes and use, I encountered two very different responses from members of the two communities. While Esperantists were more preoccupied with emailing me about the inaccuracies in the language that they had noticed in the questionnaire (also encountered and discussed in Fiedler 2002), Emilians—including a scholar in language acquisition—were reluctant to accept the labelling of the vernacular as a language. When grappling with convictions so profoundly entrenched in the collective mindset that even some scholars in the field fail to question them, one single methodological approach may not be sufficient to grasp and tackle some of the deeper dynamics at play. With this in mind, I planned for the sociolinguistic questionnaire to be only one of the methods that made up my research design. Researching two or more communities in a comparative study requires a widening of the methodological repertoire. Furthermore, the present triangulation model of mixed methods is designed to assess language attitudes from a holistic approach encompassing a multitude of societal and cultural facets of how language unfolds in context. By doing this, the overall study ultimately attempts to gain insights into the reasons behind the ever-growing vitality of Esperanto and how these can better inform revitalization efforts for Emilian and other minoritized languages. Though in different forms, social stigma is a shared feature of both Emilian and Esperanto. As such, ideological stigmatization of the two speech communities is a central component of my research, which includes the use of 1) a sociolinguistic questionnaire, 2) a diary component, and 3) a discourse analysis of YouTube rap songs in the two languages.

The use of a questionnaire is a consolidated sociolinguistic method in studies on language practices and language attitudes (Kircher & Fox 2019b). This allows the collection of quantitative data and its statistical analysis to serve as a broader con-

textualization for the study. The diary method (e.g. Nadin & Cassell 2006) is used as a way to provide an autoethnographic dimension (auto as in from the participant's perspective) to better understand the presence/absence of language maintenance at the micro level. As for the third method, a thematic analysis of the uses and representation of both languages on YouTube (Cutler & Røyneland 2018) serves to support the quantitative results derived from the questionnaires. Finally, underpinned by a willingness to contribute towards the documentation for both languages (for example Himmelmann et al. 2006), my methodology is intentionally designed to lend itself to collecting video and audio primary data with the intention of sharing these with a specialist archival platform, such as Endangered Language Archive (ELAR). The different methods are therefore conducted as components of a triangulation which acts as the overarching methodological framework. Though mentioned as part of a methodology in language attitude studies (Wells 2019; O'Rourke 2011), to the best of my knowledge triangulation is yet to be clearly defined as a methodological approach in this branch of the discipline. In this latter part of the section, I will attempt to do this.

4.2.1 Towards a definition of triangulation

Triangulation originates from the use of quantitative methods in the social sciences and was first outlined by Denzin (1970) as a methodological approach apt to overcome positional biases by extending the researcher's range of understandings and by better observing social problems. To summarize Flick's (2018) introduction to triangulation (based on Denzin 1970), researchers can use this approach to perform "data triangulation", "investigator triangulation", "theory triangulation", and "triangulation of methods" (Flick 2007:12-12). This is in line with the multi-method approach to research outlined in Brewer & Hunter (1989) who call for a combination of basic methods, such as fieldwork, the use of surveys, and experimental approaches. This is also advocated by Adams (2013) who, in her critique of the scientization of public health research, warns against the risks of pushing towards generalization, randomization, and experimentation as the golden standards of research. Even disciplines that are heavily reliant on statistical analyses, such as epidemiology, would benefit from challenging the assumption that the human body lives in a stable and firm world that can be objectively observed like any other scientific object.

Instead, a sound methodological design should aim to capture the nuances of the lived world as a moving, interconnected, complex object informed by all things cultural, social, and political (Adams 2013:84). A more holistic approach therefore seems

appropriate to capture a phenomenon as complex as language attitudes. However, triangulation is not the sheer act of combining methods and/or comparing results across methods, as it is often used as a term in the literature. Instead, I build on and borrow from Flick (2018) in using the term triangulation to refer to a conceptual framework designed and advanced for systematicity in the methodology of a given field of research. Triangulations in this sense are methodological frameworks designed to integrate analyses of data collected through a number of different methods, either multi-method (all QUAL or all QUAN) or mixed method (both QUAL and QUAN). In other words, triangulation is used here as a concept; a methodological proposition within which studies on language attitudes can operate systematically. This is the theoretical context out of which the triangulation model proposed and discussed in the following section was born.

4.2.2 A model for triangulation in language attitudes research

Following an inductive approach, I built on existing theoretical assumptions on triangulation (see section 4.2.1) and methods for observing and measuring language attitudes (see section 4.1) to design a methodological framework which can be used systematically in the field. In other words, this framework was designed on the basis of epistemological needs identified as common across studies of language attitudes, and only at a later stage was it experimentally applied to my research project. In line with this, the model for triangulation presented in Figure 4.1 is a theoretical contribution to methodologies in the field of language attitudes. Its purpose is to serve as a methodological framework for measuring language attitudes by aiming to capture a wider range of dynamics that are at play in these processes.

Giles et al.'s (2006) communication ecology model makes a particular contribution in this framework insofar as the conceptualizations of the different levels of observation for language attitudes are integrated to form a cohesive and robust design. This is achieved by theoretically combining Giles et al.'s (2006) model with Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad⁴. In line with this, the model in Figure 4.1 establishes a combination of three different qualitative and/or quantitative methods, each selected to satisfy a specific aspect of the model. A quantitative or qualitative element is used to observe language attitudes in their representational state (meso-macro level in Giles et al. 2006); a second quantitative/qualitative method seeks to assess how languages are perceived (micro level in Giles et al. 2006), and a final method—preferably qualitative—closes the

⁴My most sincere gratitude to the reviewer for suggesting this theory and terminology for my model.

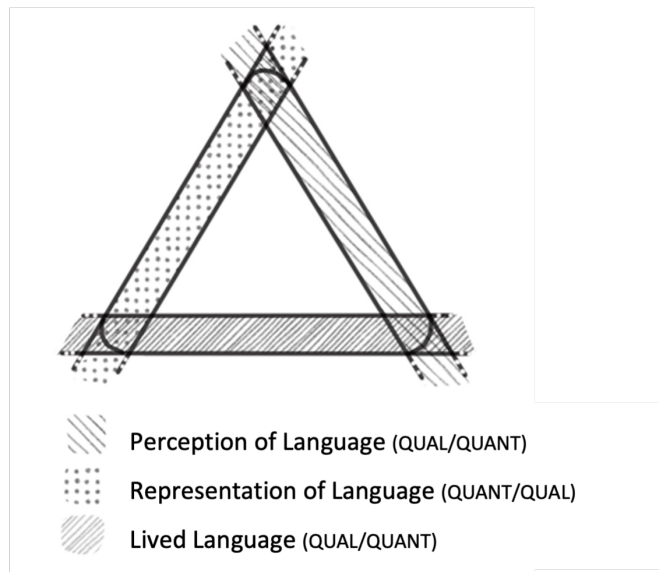


Figure 4.1: Triangulation model for measuring language attitudes

triangle by capturing ethnographic data as lived language. The use of different terms is a way to reflect the underlying assumption that these methods are to be conceptualized as different contributors to the overall analysis and, most importantly, that they can only provide a limited and situated insight into the complexity of what is really at play in the lived experiences of language attitudes.

To better explain the model here proposed, I will now briefly outline and justify the methods adopted in my own comparative research, and will do so by making reference to the different components in Figure 4.1. I must emphasize, however, that this is only for exemplification purposes, as I am aware that the range of different possible combinations of methods is much wider. As already discussed, a sociolinguistic questionnaire is a relatively common tool for data collection in the field of linguistics in general, as well as in the study of language attitude specifically. Written questionnaires, online-based especially, are very time-efficient tools, which allow for a large amount of data to be collected, measured, and analysed to produce datasets suitable for both qualitative and quantitative analyses (e.g. Dollinger 2012). Eliciting sentiments towards a language, its speakers, current uses in society, as well as linguistic tokens (of syntax, morphology, lexis, etc.), but also asking participants to state how often, where, and with whom they speak the language, if at all, are some of the uses of questionnaires. Data can then be analysed to gauge predictors of language vitality (quantitative analysis), if the language is still being used, by whom, in which domains, and where its perception in

the community currently stands (more qualitative). According to Giles et al.'s (2006) communication ecology model, this sort of insight can feed into my understanding of language attitudes at the micro level ("perception of language" in Figure 4.1).

The ethnographic dimension ("lived language" in Figure 4.1) is needed in order to reveal mundaneness through "an interpretative approach which studies the local and immediate actions of actors from their point of view and considers how these interactions are embedded in wider social contexts and structures" (Copland & Creese 2015:13). Given its inextricable tie to the local, the mundane and the experienced, an ethnographic analysis can serve as an instrument to observe language attitudes at the micro, individual level (Giles et al. 2006). The use of ethnographies can also be instrumental in examining local links to the macro level by looking, for example, at ethnographies of language policies (Hornberger & Johnson 2007). In order to capture the point of view of participants in the immediate localness of their language practices to reveal the unconscious behaviours of the community (see also "lived culture" in Canagarajah 2006 or "covert motivations" in Hornberger & Johnson 2007), ethnographies are normally conducted through fieldwork and on-site observations.

Here I contend that using diary methods (Milligan & Bartlett 2015) is also an ethnographic contribution and one that can be particularly beneficial when the researcher cannot personally conduct fieldwork. The diary method is often used in mixed-methods research as it adds richness, depth, and complexity to the results (Bijoux & Myers 2006). Indeed, by asking different participants to observe their own linguistic behaviour, to overtly reflect on their interactions over a period of time and share their autobiographical and autoethnographic notes with the researcher, datasets are created from the perspectives of different observers. The researcher then works on data produced directly by the participant through their interpretation and mediation of lived experience (hence "lived language"). These multi-voiced accounts effectively increase accountability and help fill gaps in the researcher's knowledge (e.g. Strauss et al. 1964; Wodak 2006).

The third component of the model calls for a perspective that zooms slightly out of the micro and local level; a task achievable by collecting data from the meso-macro level. This method can serve to shed light on "perception of language" (Figure 3.1), working on the assumption that "meso-level interactions influence how recipients evaluate a speaker's linguistic and extra-linguistic cues (e.g., accent and gestures) based on language attitudes" (Giles et al. 2006:177). The idea underpinning this argument is that as members of a community, we do not live in a vacuum but interact with others on a regular basis (i.e., our networks). These networks "are considered to be responsible

for introducing and reinforcing existing language attitudes” (Giles et al. 2006:177) and a method focused on such networks can therefore provide clues about how widespread the observable attitudes are within the speech community. One way to achieve this is through the analysis of representations, that is, the discursive practices at play in the meaning-making processes of specific identities which circulate in a given network. In the case of my research, an analysis of the ways in which Esperanto and Emilian are represented on YouTube was added. Moving away from observing beliefs and behaviour at the individual level, data was collected and analysed as discourse to gain an insight into how communication between local agents occurs and to gauge which attitudes are being reproduced and/or resisted. The analysis of YouTube content found in Emilian and Esperanto can inform our understanding of the collective uses and social roles of the languages in their respective communities, and of what Giles & Marlow (2011) refer to as sense-making. As argued by Røyneland (2018), computer-mediated data of this kind can enrich our understanding of how language, identity, and belonging are negotiated offline. For example, a higher number of videos in Esperanto about its use in child-caregiver interactions can indicate a positive attitude insofar as the language is perceived as valuable enough to be passed down through generations. On the other hand, since some of the most common uses of Emilian on YouTube are to tell jokes, create political satire, and other humorous scopes, the language is being represented as a mere vehicle for lesser-valued content and can therefore be seen as a reproduction of offline negative behaviours. Last but not least, this triangulation model requires a further and final analysis. This is the stage in the model that is normally referred to as triangulation in the literature. This step is necessary in order to draw from, support and/or question the findings from each individual analysis when taken as a whole, and to provide a more cohesive and nuanced, yet still limited overview of some of the dynamics at play in the formation and reproduction of language attitudes, in the hope that ways to counteract them can also be identified.

4.2.3 Adopting triangulation as an attempt to square the circle

For the reasons set out in section 4.2.1, this model was designed as a theoretical framework through which language attitudes could be observed holistically. Instead of regarding qualitative methods as mere static factors in an analysis of social nature, they are seen as a partial representation of the multi-voices of the subject that inhabits the social world; in other words, its variability (e.g. Blumer 1956). These voices should also be considered at the outset when designing and choosing methodological tools. Cul-

tural considerations at this stage can save the researcher time in the shorter but also the longer term, as they ensure that the tools chosen for collecting data are appropriate for the context, the participants, and the use itself.

Subscribing to Carter's definition of applied linguistics as "the application of linguistic theories, descriptions and methods to the solution of language problems which have arisen in a range of human, cultural and social contexts" (Carter 1993:3), I position my research within the discipline of applied linguistics as a social science (Sealey & Carter 2004). This in turn means that the considerations just discussed also apply to my research and were applied from the outset as I experimentally adopted the model in Figure 4.1 for my project. When selecting a model for my sociolinguistic questionnaire, for example, I opted for one that had already been used for other dialects of Italy. After modifying, adding, and deleting some of the questions in order to make it work for my focus and the two speech communities, a copy of the questionnaire was translated from Italian⁵ into Esperanto, and both were disseminated.

Despite making cultural and practical considerations regarding how to best modify the Esperanto version so that it made sense for the participants without compromising its comparability with Emilian, a couple of questions still seemed to trigger adverse reactions from some of the Esperanto members. Specifically, questions on whether Esperanto should be taught in schools ("Of course it should!", "It already is!", "Where else are people going to learn it?"), and places where Esperanto is spoken by the participant ("How can I speak it with my neighbour?", "I don't have friends from school who speak Esperanto") were revealed to be sources of such indignation, which is a telling sign of how protective this community feels towards the language. On the use of Esperanto especially, participants' reactions came across as ways to negotiate and justify their lack of everyday use of the language at the local level so that a potential analysis would not reveal Esperanto as a language incapable of fulfilling all needs. This would ultimately reinforce the stereotypical idea of Esperanto as an inadequate language, which members of the community are both aware of and constantly resisting.

The process of participant recruitment for the diary method reinforced the preliminary observation yielded from the questionnaire, with members of the speech community proving to be very reluctant to take part so as not to reveal the limited use of the language in their everyday lives. The consolidation of these observations would not be possible if the analysis were to be based on a single method of data collection, thus showing the importance of collecting data from different perspectives and jux-

⁵The questionnaire was not translated into Emilian for a number of reasons. The lack of a koine, for one, would have meant choosing one variety and potentially alienating speakers of all other varieties.

taping them to corroborate a coherent discussion on the findings. While I am yet to conduct the analysis of YouTube rap songs at the time of writing, the expectation is that this method will reveal underlying discursive patterns of what it means to be Emilian/Esperantist. As songs that play on widely understood references, the patterns unearthed by the analysis can potentially shed light on the more widely shared attitudes in the communities and further corroborate the findings from the other two methods.

I realize that time and resources are not always a given for researchers and that triangulation might therefore not be an option for some. This should not, however, hinder the advancement of triangulation approaches in the study of language attitudes. Instead, researchers can focus on one method/part of their study at a time, with the intention of eventually combining the findings through triangulation at a later point—as if working with “slices of data” in what will become “a multi-faceted investigation” (Glaser et al. 2017:65). At times, travelling and conducting fieldwork may be impeded by *force majeure*, and changes in the data collection methods may be needed (such as the use of the diary method to provide an ethnographic account as an alternative to fieldwork). This is also the central theme in the next section, in which I discuss Instagram stories as a very efficient tool for data collection during the period of the travel ban due to Covid-19.

4.3 The power of Instagram: swipe up for more on data collection

Lobe et al. (2020:1) remind us that “[a]lthough the COVID-19 pandemic is considered a “100-year event”, using diverse methods of connecting with research participants is as old as the field itself.” In the previous section I proposed a model of triangulation as a framework for observing language attitudes and outlined some of the benefits that the combination of methods proposed by the model can bring to research. The diary method was introduced as a valid alternative to collect ethnographic observations without travelling and conducting fieldwork. This is one of the limitations that sociolinguists, anthropologists, and other scholars are dealing with as they attempt to create and innovate ways to do fieldwork at a time of social distancing and travel restrictions. As a researcher who had planned fieldwork during the summer of 2020, I too found myself having to think of solutions and innovative ways of collecting data through the dissemination of my sociolinguistic questionnaire.

Being engaged in a study of a comparative nature, my considerations had to cater for the specific needs and characteristics of each of the two speech communities under investigation. Esperanto is a language whose speakers are scattered around the globe and who are therefore accustomed to finding each other through whatever technological means are available to them at the time. The collection of data using online spaces is consequently a practical and realistic idea. However, when it comes to a speech community like that of Emilian, whose average speaker is relatively elderly, likely to live in rural areas, and with limited technological access and skills (ISTAT 2015), the idea of gathering data using social media platforms is arguably over-optimistic.

As a member of the speech community, I am furthermore aware of the high levels of mistrust that permeate social life in the area. When it comes to this social phenomenon in Italy, the main issues found in the literature normally relate to marketing (e.g. Resta 2014), politics (e.g. Morlino & Tarchi 1996), and immigration (e.g. Sciortino & Colombo 2004) as well as intrapersonal relationships at the very local level. Indeed, only 22.2% of Italians would completely or somewhat trust a fellow citizen, a percentage that slightly increases to 26% when the question relates to fellow regional members (Albano 2002). Trustworthiness is a pivotal element of social organization, as it allows us to go about our everyday lives on the assumption that certain things and certain people can be trusted so that we need not question everything (Luhmann 2002). By making use of my personal connections through social media platforms as a computer-mediated alternative to face-to-face snowball sampling, I was relying on the trust that my personal connections offered, and for this to be extended through their connections when sharing my questionnaire with them.

In relation to the overall methodology, the same issue applies to the recruitment process for my diary method. The issue of trust is, however, slightly different. While the questionnaire method is expected to yield a high volume of responses (i.e., trust is needed to encourage as many people as possible to participate), the diary method relies on a handful of participants who are willing to put time and effort into keeping a diary for a period (i.e., the researcher must trust the participants' reliability and consistency). The third element, however, escapes this limitation as it relies on found data already existing on social media platforms, therefore mitigating the effects of my positionality as a researcher to the overall project. The combination of different approaches within a triangulation can therefore also prove helpful in minimizing the limitations related to specific methods when integrated with perspectives that come from different angles.

Despite these considerations, and using methods that normally work in other communities, after four weeks of untiring effort the tally of complete questionnaires for

Emilian had reached a very disappointing seventy-eight. After speaking to a few of my closest friends, it became apparent that the fear of being scammed online is very prominent among Facebook and WhatsApp users in the geographical areas under investigation (what I earlier referred to as diffidence and issues of trust, ISTAT 2015). In contrast, Esperanto speakers were very keen to help disseminate the questionnaire and many emails offering help were received during the process. This is not to indicate, however, that online scams and mistrust of new media technologies are not present in this community, but this may be so in a less problematic way. Due to the online language practices of the Esperanto community, remote participant recruitment both for the questionnaire and the diary method was successfully completed as expected. As explained, this was not the case for the dissemination of the Emilian questionnaire and what follows is therefore a discussion solely focused on this aspect of my data collection.

4.3.1 A story can change everything

Just as I was about to give up on my data collection for Emilian, I attempted one last approach. With very little hope and no expectations, I decided to send out a few more targeted messages on Messenger and to do the same with two Instagram profiles. Though I did not receive a response from either, I noticed a sudden and very sharp increase in the responses to the questionnaire in a matter of a few hours, which eventually reached 272 within the day. After realizing that one of the two Instagram accounts I had contacted had shared the questionnaire using the Instagram story function, I quickly contacted a third Instagram profile and asked them to upload the link to my questionnaire in their story. Once again, a flurry of responses started to come in and a total of 468 was finally reached by the end of the day. In Table 4.1, I summarize some of the analytics fed back by Instagram in relation to the interaction achieved through the two stories.

While response ratio is beyond the remit of this discussion, the nature of the accounts and their lexical choices in advertising the questionnaire is what I intend to focus on. *Æmilians* is an account whose primary function is to serve as an insta-dictionary of Emilian and its uses in the regional variety of Italian. The Instagram account also sells merchandise in the form of clothing and accessories with prints of Emilian nouns, verbs, interjections, and idiomatic expressions in the typical dictionary format. *Il Regaz di Bolo* (literally ‘The guy from Bologna’) presents himself as an account whose aim is to promote and valorize Bologna and its territory. Though not part of the profile description, *Il Regaz di Bolo* often uses Emilian in his Instagram interactions.

Instagram Handle	ÆMILIANS	Il Regaz di Bolo
Followers	63.9K	86K
Message in story	Guys if you have a few minutes and come from Modena or Bologna, we would be truly grateful if you could fill in the questionnaire that you can find by swiping up. SWIPE UP ⁶	At the University of Liverpool they are conducting a study on our dialect. Find ten minutes to complete the questionnaire ⁷
Clicks	1,419	715
Shared	15	9
Accounts reached	8,836	6,250

Table 4.1: Instagram Stories Analytics

Both accounts show clear links to the regional language and its identity, whereas their number of followers is an indicator of their popularity on the platform (De Veirman et al. 2017). Arguably their followers can be presumed to share an interest in Emilian culture and language. These features are also what informed my decision to contact the Instagram accounts in the first place and what ultimately changed the nature of the data collected. While my initial plan was to administer the questionnaires in person and therefore approach members of the Emilian community who still speak the language (i.e. older members), the dissemination of the questionnaire via Instagram Story attracted participants from a very different demographic.

Instagram is a social media platform that attracts users from so-called millennials or Generation Y (Aquino 2012) and younger, which meant that over 40% of respondents were aged 30 or under. This resulted in a change of direction in my data collection insofar as attitudes could now be observed to establish who still speaks the language rather than how many—a crucial point raised by Dorian (1982) as a way to emphasize the role of youth in language maintenance. In other words, to gain a better understanding of where the language is heading (i.e., whether it will survive or die out completely), it is more useful to look at the demographics of the people who still speak it—a principle that can be applied to attitudes as well as vitality. In this sense, the change of the quality in the data collected through Instagram can shed light on the current perception of Emilian in people aged 20–30, that is, people born between 1985 and 2010 (Gronbach 2008) and in turn inform better targeted decisions in the creation of language maintenance and revitalization efforts.

Instagram stories are a relatively new feature of the platform which launched in

2016. It allows the user to upload contents which are shared for a maximum period of 24 hours thus making it an elusive and ephemeral form of storytelling (Belanche et al. 2019). The transiency of temporal contents can create a sense of secrecy and intimacy (Velez 2014) as well as a sense of urgency which builds on the fear of missing out. By sharing the link to my questionnaire on their story, followers will have perceived the act in the same meaning making mechanisms that are at play in this context of interaction between brands/followees and consumers/followers. Instagram stories therefore acted as a marketing springboard which catapulted the sociolinguistic questionnaire into a world of intimacy, secrecy, urgency, equal status, and trust. Here I contend that the loyalty and trust that followers have for the two Instagram brands were automatically extended to the questionnaire, ultimately overcoming the issue of trustworthiness which hindered the data collection on other platforms, such as WhatsApp, Messenger and Facebook (on the efficacy of Facebook Wall vs Instagram see for example Belanche et al. 2019).

4.4 Conclusion

In the introduction I discussed some of the ways in which language attitudes are assessed in the literature. With its multitude of methods, the field seems, however, to lack a theoretical framework within which scholars can work systematically. With this in mind, the triangulation model proposed in this article is intended to contribute towards filling this theoretical gap. This article discusses two separate yet interconnected methodological issues. Both parts are presented and discussed with the purpose of contributing theoretically (the first) and practically (the second) to the field of language attitudes. In this sense, they are both discussed with the intent to be shared as part of the wider methodology in the field.

The section on the power of Instagram as a solution for participant recruitment may seem irrelevant to the practical adoption of the model presented in the first part of the article. However, I would argue that the experience was worth sharing both in its own right (as a way to expose fellow researchers to different ways of successfully recruiting at challenging times) as well as to illustrate one of the benefits of the model. When working within a flexible model such as shown in Figure 4.1, individual methods can be adapted to mitigate whatever obstacle is met by the researcher without compromising the overall goal. Although recruitment through Instagram proved successful in collecting a sufficient number of responses for statistical analyses, it changed the demographics of my sample population. If considered appropriate, I could have then

shifted the recruitment of the diary method to target older speakers. I decided against this, however, for the reasons explained in 4.3, and I felt confident that I was working in a robust and adaptable framework which allowed me to make choices driven by the needs of my research rather than the limitations of my research design.

The model in Figure 4.1 is presented as an abstract working reference for the study of language attitudes. As just discussed, it is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of the researcher and/or the speech community and sufficiently comprehensive to fulfil the task at hand. It is, however, only a starting point with its limitations and pitfalls—I write this in the hope that colleagues will decide to adopt it and improve it as they go. Systematicity, flexibility, and broadness aside, I would contend that the model in Figure 4.1 has a further and perhaps more important advantage. Indeed, I believe that its structure—strategically designed in the shape of a triangle—is the real asset of the model. The sides represent the three different methods adopted, which serve to observe attitudes from different perspectives. In a similar fashion to how the sides of a triangle comprise a continuous line, so do the dynamics of the social world that we live in. In this sense, the real advantageous aspect of using the model proposed here is the combination of the overlapping in the findings yielded, together with the wider reach attained through the use of different methods. By adopting this model, the researcher will gain access to language attitudes in their lived, perceived, and represented statuses. Though my research is in its final stages, it is currently incomplete. Yet some of the benefits of adopting this model experimentally for my project are already visible.

As discussed in this article, responses from the questionnaires were collected in numbers high enough to run statistical analyses and therefore draw inferences attributable to the wider population. This is an efficient way to gauge the situation at a glance, but can also lead to essentializing the issue at hand. Data from the questionnaires can provide immediate responses to some of my questions in terms of the percentage of respondents who use Emilian online, who would teach it to their children, and who use it every day. However, it is the diary method that can corroborate some of these findings and provide a more nuanced account of what may really be going on. Likewise, while I was able to collect data on explicit attitudes through the questionnaire, discourse analysis of rap songs is expected to reveal assumptions and taken-for-granted ideas of what it means to be a speaker of Emilian/Esperanto. In this sense data from this method can shed light on the more insidious attitudes in the community and support or contradict the findings from the other two methods. Either way, a more complete and holistic picture of the attitudes in Emilian and Esperanto communities will have been achieved in a way otherwise not achievable through the use of one or multiple,

disjointed methods. This shows how a triangulation framework can not only work to foster systematicity in a given field, but can also be a very effective tool for comparative studies.

Chapter 5

Positionality

In Chapter 3, I contextualised my methodology by interweaving in the narration the ways in which my journey of learning and unlearning helped me situate my study in a conscious and thought-through manner. As a social actor, living in a social world, I am constantly making decisions, using networks, relying on assumptions, and using heuristics to get by in my daily life. This equally applies to my activities as a researcher: the type of person that I am, the people that I know, and the places that I live in helped shape my research and are therefore an analytical component of the research itself. This was also touched upon in Chapter 4 where I discuss how my connections and my identity affected my strategies for data collection during a challenging time such as that of Covid-19. In this chapter I discuss the effects of these dynamics through a process of reflexivity and acknowledgement of my subjectivity. Building on Braidotti (2010), Tufi (2022) points out that a nomadic interpretation is necessary to produce a methodological counter discourse in which stories that usually go unheard can be voiced. This, however, can only be achieved by recognising both the role of the researcher's positionality and accountability when collecting data and producing knowledge, and the situatedness nature of these acts (Tufi 2022:250). When it comes to minoritised languages whose members' voices have been repressed and silenced as the very cause of their marginalisation, I see my duty as a researcher to acknowledge their part in the process as one of morality, too. I start by defining positionality from a theoretical standpoint to then delve into the manifestations of my presence in the study throughout its stages, from the design to the analyses of data.

5.1 Explicit Positionality

While positionality is now an established concept in the disciplines of critical qualitative health research (Vanner 2015), the concept can be traced back to the idea of epistemic reflexivity proposed by Bourdieu (for example 1990). Salö (2017:1) defines epistemic reflexivity as a processes that “offers the critical researcher the intellectual means to equip oneself with the necessary means to understand one’s naïve view of the object of study” and is therefore “also a pivotal driver for yielding better sociolinguistic research”. Nowadays, positionality is taught as part of the reflexive tools that researchers can adopt in order to explore their research through self-critique when wishing to recognise how the role of social dynamics of power affects the phenomena under study (Jacobson & Mustafa 2019). When considering positionality, a researcher is looking inwards in their own social identities in terms of, for example, their gender, social class, age and ethnicity.

As posited by Day (2012), these aspects of our social identity have a dual effect of both forming our worldview and informing others about ourselves. On the former point, Jacobson & Mustafa (2019:1) explain that “[t]he way that we as researchers view and interpret our social works is impacted by where, when, and how we are socially located and in what society. The position from which we see the world around us impacts our research interests, how we approach the research and participants, the questions we ask, and how we interpret the data”. The authors also build on Day (2012) and Finlay (2002) to highlight the importance of being explicit about our positionality as researchers. They argue that this can also fulfil a twofold scope as it allows us to reflect on, reveal and address power relations in our research while also facilitating the task of the reader in understanding the processes of knowledge production in our research (Jacobson & Mustafa 2019). Fundamentally, positionality expands our horizons for creativity in our analyses and theories and is therefore a research tool in itself (ibid). In line with this, I decided to use the map created by Jacobson & Mustafa (2019:3) to overtly articulate my positionality in the research process and developed my own social identity map. I initially sketched the map on a piece of paper to allow me to reflect on individual aspects of my identity and it is from these reflective processes that I draw throughout this chapter.

Indeed, as recommended by Jacobson & Mustafa (2019), this map should facilitate the researcher in their journey to identify key analytical reflections on their research. Although the map was modified to fit the situational dynamics of my research, it can only reflect a limited vision of what really went on during the research process.

This is because of the ever-changing nature of our social identities, how abstract these identities are, how difficult it is for us to effectively identify what is important across time and space, as well as the complexity of how our identities can affect the process (Jacobson & Mustafa 2019). As imperfect as it may be, this should not refrain us from reflecting on what we can; arguably, as with any other exercise, practice makes “perfect” – or at least as close as can be. The following discussion is based on the instructions proposed by Jacobson & Mustafa (2019) and is organised in this order: approach to research (design and preparation) in section 5.2, data collection and interaction with participants in section 5.3, and data analysis and interpretation of findings in section 5.4.

5.2 Approach to research (design and preparation)

The first consideration I feel compelled to make with regard to my positionality is the way in which who I am directly influenced my choice of languages to be investigated in my study. As someone who was brought up in the province of Modena and was exposed to the local variety of Gallo-Italian, Emilian seemed to be the obvious choice. This was further supported by the lack of academic outputs on this language family and the current endangered status of the language. However, it was the relationship that I had with my grandmother that first brought me to studying Emilian. She was a speaker of the language and brought me up as her own child from birth. Just as many of my participants declared to mentally personify the vernacular as a grandparent, I too associate the language to my main caregiver and conducting a study on Emilian is now a way to extend her presence in my life. In contrast, Esperanto is a language that I had first encountered at the age of 14. As an idealist teenager I felt compelled by its values and I instantly embraced it as a widening of my horizon, a way to get to know the world through its people, a way get away from the cultural isolation of my hometown.

Moving on, while aspects of one’s social identities such as race, ability, sexual orientation and alignment with birth sex were not at the fore of my study, I opted to keep them as aspects of my identity on the map for two reasons: firstly, these still apply to my research context albeit marginally, and secondly even though I may not see them as significant now, they may become more instrumental as I progress in my academic career. The most important consideration that can be made on these four factors is the unconscious privilege which has now become apparent to me during this reflective exercise. This is especially true of the decisions I made in relation to the questionnaire

and its survey format. Not only did I take for granted aspects of accessibility to take part in the survey but I also used othering language which alienated participants whose identity does not align with their birth sex.

The questionnaire (Appendix D and E) starts with questions on a person's identity in terms of age and sex and the latter only offered three options, namely, male, female, or other. I now understand that this is a way to collect data that reproduces binary norms and in my future data collections I will ensure that the field for gender be considerate of inclusivity. Ability is also a very important aspect to consider and reconsider. The length, wordiness and digital format of the survey meant that my own mother could not access it in the first place nor fully comprehend it once access had been gained. This is one of the downsides of independent access to questionnaire as the researcher is not physically present with the participant to mitigate the circumstances and something I will work on improving in future studies.

The recognition of my privileged status also emerged through considerations on my education as was briefly mentioned in Chapter 2. As someone who was born in the 1980s in Italy, I had access to free schooling up to the age of 18. This allowed me to gain a Diploma which in turn gave me access to university studies. I was the first person in my family to ever start an undergraduate programme; a decision that was not fully supported by my parents and which, in turn, led me to drop out within a few months of starting the course. It was only in my early 30s and after a few years spent living in the United Kingdom that I pursued undergraduate studies once again and continued into what is now my current doctoral programme. The most important realisation is the sheer privilege I have in being able to read, write and research something that I care about without having to carry out other paid work to support myself in the meantime. It is this freedom that allowed my mind to expand and grasp the current and historical context of Emilian. This is something that I no longer take for granted and has helped me communicate more effectively with other members of the community. Their misperception is now my clarity.

Language and languages also played a pivotal role in this stage of the research process. While I have full competence of Italian and therefore had no issues translating the questionnaire for the Emilian community (Italian was chosen so that all members of the community, regardless of their linguistic competence could take part), I had to rely on an experienced Esperanto speaker for the questionnaire aimed at the Esperantist community. This meant that I was not completely in control over the content of the questionnaire and had to trust a third party in translating the questionnaire, the effects of which will be discussed in section 5.3.

Perhaps intuitively, one might think that being a member of the community comes with its benefits. This is partially true insofar that some of the preparatory work needed prior to starting fieldwork, such as researching the field-site, building a rapport with the participants, and learning how to negotiate oneself in the community (Dimmendaal 2001; Crowley 2007), are already part of the researcher's understanding. This pre-existing knowledge can however lead the researcher astray in a false sense of security of knowing what to expect, thus potentially underestimate possible downfalls. Though I consider myself a speaker of Emilian, I do not tend to be recognised as one by other members of the community and this is due to a mix of factors, such as age (too young to be a speaker), gender (women are less expected to speak Emilian), and the level of active competence I have for the language (I fully understand it but speak it with errors and an atypical accent). This has led me to conduct interviews with participants in Italian in the past with unwanted effects on the communicative event. For example, older speakers would find it more difficult to keep up their conversation in Emilian and would naturally and unconsciously switch to Italian.

A parallel to this scenario can be traced to what I experienced during a language documentation workshop that I attended in Vienna in 2018. As part of our training to familiarise with *WeSay*, we were asked to work in small groups to build a dictionary of an endangered language using the software. In each group one attendee was expected to play the role of the speaker while others tried to elicit specific words for the lexicographic task. As I volunteered to act as the informant in my group, I realised just how surreal, and unnatural if felt to be speaking Emilian in front of peers and higher-ranking academics whom I had never met before. The formal setting, even though a friendly and accepting environment, made me question more than once how I was being perceived by others; as if speaking Emilian might have suddenly changed their opinion of me. I was surrounded by like-minded people interested in documenting minoritised languages and helping their communities through their work and yet felt overcome by doubts during the exercise.

This can only be a small testament to the life-long process of undermining that speakers of Emilian and other historically marginalised languages must go through on a daily basis.

5.3 Data collection and interaction with participants

In the process of my data collection, reflections and positional considerations can be drawn from my experience of administering the sociolinguistic questionnaires and re-

cruiting for the diary method (this is because my third method relies on existing data which did not require interaction with members of the communities). Within a couple of days of launching the surveys, emails from the Esperanto community started coming in; many offering their support and help for my study and others simply pointing out grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in the questions. The questionnaire was subsequently sent to another experienced Esperanto speaker for corrections and the updated version of the survey was relaunched within a couple of days. Only three emails were received from the Emilian community and all were to show support and excitement about the study. Reflectively, I can now see that I was putting myself through a lot of unnecessary pressure to present myself to the Esperantist community as a member and speaker of Esperanto. This, however, was not the case as I was still learning the language and struggled to communicate confidently with experienced members. When recruiting participants for my diary method I had the opportunity to change how I presented myself and be transparent about my competence in the language so that a more accommodating and considerate relationship be created with them. Although for this method I only interacted with five members of the Esperanto community, being open about my competence allowed for a more equal rapport to be established. This was especially helpful when interacting with participants who were still learning the language as it allowed them to be open about their level of competence too.

Gender seemed to be playing a role in the way that some participants related to me as a researcher. One member of the Esperanto community in particular took it upon himself to email me and teach me how data should be collected. He sent a detailed list of how a questionnaire should be compiled and warned me of how “bad” my survey was. This came across as an example of ‘mansplaining’ and is based on an intuition as a woman navigating predominantly male waters (in both communities). Unfortunately, there is not much I can do to change these perceptions as my name must be provided to participants for ethical reasons. It is nonetheless something that I will keep considering throughout the rest of my career.

A similar feeling was experienced when dealing with ‘experts’ of Emilian. I have not met another female colleague as of yet and the vibes I experienced seemed to lean towards the protectionist and gatekeeping kind. Finally, the fact that I am based in the United Kingdom may not be in my favour as I can be perceived as an outsider. On this aspect of my social identity, I believe the difference between my nationality and location coupled with the anglophone nature of my name can lead both Esperantists and Emilians to assume that I am British. The consequences of this tension are something I am still reflecting on but I believe it may have manifested itself in at least one

specific way by interacting with a pre-existing level of scepticism. In other words it compounded on the cynicism met in those participants who could not understand why I was interested in Emilian in the first place. Not only were they puzzled to be confronted with someone who is conducting research on Emilian but they also questioned why a foreign university would *pay* for it.

This reaction is not unique to Emilian however, and Gerdts (1998) warns linguists to prepare themselves to find members of the speech community less than interested in their research studies. The enthusiasm I felt towards the idea of giving academic attention to my under-studied Gallo-Italian variety was not shared by the participants. Instead, participants were taken aback by the fact that a university – therefore an institution – would find Emilian a valuable language to research and could not comprehend how, or if at all, their contribution could help. When the mere scope of the study is perceived so suspiciously it becomes even more difficult to convey the importance of contributing to it with their time. This manifested itself in both the difficulties encountered in administering my Emilian survey online (as discussed in Chapter 4) and the low number of participants I was able to recruit for the diary method. The discrepancy in levels of enthusiasm around my interest in Emilian brought me to question the intellectual value of my study. It was only when I came across the notion of language as heritage (discussed in Chapter 8) that a newly discovered purpose clicked in place.

The same ideological attitude towards Emilian, and many other dialects of Italy, that sees it as a non-language (as also discussed in Mithun 2001) and not worthy of academic attention because uneducated, also played an important, and alas detrimental role to the mechanisms of my data collection.

The recruitment of what Williams (2021) calls language technicians (cf. internal linguist in Ameka et al. 2006) is a strategy that can serve as a solution to some of the limitations posed by a researcher's positionality. By recruiting language activists – that is members of the community who are already passionate and invested in the cause of the endangered language – as language technicians, the data collection will be conducted by a third party who understands and speaks the language and already has cultural understandings of the community. This is particularly useful for researchers who are not L1 speakers of the language under investigation and can also help overcome other issues. For example, by using a technician who reflects the unmarked features of a speech community member, issues related to gender and age can be better negotiated.

The use of a language technician may also be beneficial in overcoming speakers' own prejudice of inauthenticity. Some participants initially exclude themselves as potential candidates for the research project because they consider their own variety as

not authentic enough. In this sense, social stigma can manifest itself both internally and externally to the language; speakers of the minoritised language can feel subject to judgement because speaking a lesser code (that is in comparison to the higher/national language – external) and also because speaking a lesser variety (that may be because they feel they do not speak the minoritised language as well as others – internal). While the first, external kind of prejudice may not apply to the Esperanto community, the internal judgement is a recurring theme amongst speakers of Esperanto. Beginners and those who have not mastered the language to high standards will sometime revert to their native language or a different *lingua franca*, such as English. This is known as *krokodili* (Fiedler & Brosch 2022), an act that is somewhat stigmatised in the community and that would be detrimental to the research if the researcher decided against the use of a language technician and collected data using Esperanto despite their lack of language competence.

5.4 Data analysis and interpretation of findings

The aspects of my positionality discussed in previous sections are what lie at the centre of what I brought to the metaphorical table of the analyses. This is especially true of my in-group/out-group identity whereby being a member of the Emilian community allowed me to widen the context within which results could be interpreted and being a learner of Esperanto served me with an understanding of how the language is learnt (from a European perspective), and what the global community does to maintain the language in both online and offline spaces. By spending time in Facebook groups dedicated to Esperanto, for example, I was able to witness some of the attitudes towards learners, prescriptive approaches to the use of the languages, as well as political and global events (such as the Covid pandemic of 2020). Likewise, I found myself empathising with many Emilian participants when analysing qualitative data which linked the language to a grandparent and regional traditions.

While these are important effects worth acknowledging and discussing, it is the latest step in my journey of self-discovery as a researcher that, I feel, really had an impact on the triangulation of results discussed in Chapter 8. In what I can only describe as becoming aware of my becoming (Etheridge 2022), it was during this final analytical process that I realised the shift in my beliefs towards Emilian. I was no longer holding on to the role of the saviour that I had inflicted upon myself (i.e., saving Emilian by creating resources which would educate the community that Emilian is in fact a language). Instead, I learnt to see Emilian as part of my heritage in a worldview

of interconnectedness where language is who I am in the same way as the woods I played in, the smells I tasted, and the adages I was told during my upbringing helped me build a sense of identity and belonging in those crucial years. As I discuss in Chapter 8, the concept of language as heritage can help the researcher find intrinsic value in their work even when lacking in the community. This was the case for me as the process helped come to terms with the conflict I had experienced between my enthusiasm for the language and the virtual apathy in the Emilian community. This awareness of my becoming is in line with a posthumanist vision of our being: a state of constant emergence of people, places, and objects (Braidotti & Bignall 2018). As a researcher I acknowledge this constant state of emergence in my research and can now recognise it through the pages of this thesis.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter expanded on the initial considerations discussed in Chapter 3.4 by tackling my positionality in a structured and organised way, as proposed by Jacobson & Mustafa (2019). Aspects of my identity such as gender, age, and nationality seem to have impacted my research design and data collection the most. It is a shift in my state of emergence which however characterise the findings. This shift allowed me to go full circle in my understanding of interconnectedness and freed me of some of the self-imposed limitations that I was bringing into my research. It is in this vision of flux and constant emergence that I encourage the reader to take in the discussions presented in the next chapters. These form the main contributions to my thesis and are all self-contained journal articles with the exception of the conclusion in Chapter 10. First I present the data from the sociolinguistic questionnaires from a quantitative perspective in Chapter 6 which is followed by my analysis of the YouTube rap songs in Chapter 7. Findings from all three methods are then discussed in Chapter 8 where an integrated model for language maintenance is proposed as a theoretical contribution towards the field of enquiry. Finally, in Chapter 9, I look at interconnectedness through an ecological lens and advocate for embedding strategies of reconnection in all studies which deal with minoritised languages.

Chapter 6

Measuring spaces and observing attitudes: a comparative analysis on Emilian and Esperanto

This paper provides a glimpse into the current state of the language attitudes surrounding two minoritised languages: Emilian and Esperanto. Emilian is a Gallo-Italic language family historically spoken in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy for which very little is currently known. Esperanto is seemingly maintaining the language more successfully than Emilian and can therefore serve as an insightful method of comparability. Data were collected through the administration of a sociolinguistic questionnaire designed to quantify current attitudes towards each language as well as the spaces each community uses to communicate in the respective language. The paper addresses two research questions: (i) is there a difference in the practices of language maintenance in the two communities, and (ii) is there a correlation between language use and explicit language attitudes. By adopting Multiple Correspondence Analysis as a technique for dimensionality reduction in conjunction with Bayesian linear models, the findings allowed us to propose two hypotheses, namely, that a positive correlation exists between competence and explicit language attitudes and that there is no difference between the effect of explicit language attitudes on language use across the two communities. Descriptive statistics show a stark difference in the ways Esperantists make use of the spaces available to them to maintain the language. The comparative element was furthermore instru-

mental in gauging a simultaneous understanding of the effect of language attitudes on language use in both groups. Overall, the findings can be taken with prudent optimism. Although Emilian is not being maintained actively in several spaces, this study suggests that it is still used in local spaces. Data from Esperanto show positive trends of language attitudes correlated with language use. This could ultimately mean that creating spaces in the community and attaching social functionality to Emilian could engender higher levels of language maintenance.

6.1 Comments for the reader on co-authorship

This chapter was co-authored with Dr Stefano Coretta (Senior Teaching Coordinator of Statistics, Linguistics and English Language, at the University of Edinburgh). The decision to co-author this chapter/article was taken on the basis of my limited technical skills on statistics. Due to our ongoing professional relationship as collaborators on other projects, Dr Coretta was the natural choice as a co-author on a paper whose focus is on quantitative analyses. All sections of this article with the exception of 6.4.4-6 are a product of my intellectual work. While Dr Coretta's contribution is on the design and presentation of statistical analyses (both descriptive and inferential), the ideas and instructions on the kind of tables, graphs and models needed for this paper were conceived by me. This was done in consultation with my co-author to ensure statistical robustness of my ideas.

6.2 Introduction

This paper provides a glimpse into the current state and future possibilities of speakers of Emilian, a Gallo-Italic language family historically spoken in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy for which very little is currently known (Foresti 2010). The research idea behind this paper was born out of necessity and is deeply linked to my positionality as a researcher. It is a necessity insofar that the state of Emilian is only presumed to be endangered (see for example Ethnologue) as no survey on the language group has ever been conducted (Hajek 1997). It is also the result of a rediscovery of my identity as a researcher and speaker of the language. Indeed, as someone who was brought up in the community I developed some competence of Emilian without ever realising that I was bilingual due to the established narratives around the language as a lesser variety of Italian. In this sense, the paper wishes to fill a gap in the knowledge on language

attitudes in the community as well as to provide an insight into the current state of active use of the language by its speakers (whereby active stands for interpersonal uses of language).

This study is part of my doctoral research project and forms one third of the triangulation model that I designed and discuss at length in my paper (Hampton 2023). The aim of the wider research project is to conduct parallel analyses on data from Esperanto. This speech community is seemingly maintaining the language more successfully than that of Emilian (Wandel 2015; Corsetti et al. 2004), and due to its shared characteristics with other minoritised languages, it has the potential to serve as an insightful method of comparability. Consequently the overall project is a comparative study which looks at data collected from both communities and does so in an exploratory way to understand what factors are at play behind the vitality of Esperanto. This is done in the hope that the insights from the Esperanto community may be used to better inform practices of language revitalisation in other minoritised communities such as that of Emilian. For the remit of this paper, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses are conducted on data collected through the administration of a sociolinguistic questionnaire designed to quantify current attitudes towards each language as well as the spaces each community uses to communicate in the respective language.

In line with this, the focus of this study is on Emilian. Esperanto is functioning as a baseline in this sense and the contribution that this study will make to our understanding of the Esperanto community is therefore an added bonus. The goal is to identify trends of language attitudes and language use across the two communities so that they may inform efforts for language maintenance and revitalisation for Emilian and other minoritised languages. With this paper I aim to answer two research questions, namely, is there a difference in the practices of language maintenance in the two communities and is there a correlation between language use and explicit language attitudes. A theoretical overview of attitudes and their definition is provided in the next subsection which is followed by a brief discussion of what is known about the vitality of Emilian and Esperanto. Section 6.4 describes the sociolinguistic questionnaire administered to both language communities, the methods of dissemination and the number of responses yielded. A justification for Bayesian statistics as the elected form of inferential statistical analysis for the study is presented in the final subsection which leads to the unveiling of the results (section 6.5), the discussion (section 6.6) and finally to the conclusion in section 6.7.

6.2.1 Attitudes and where to find them

A very powerful statement on the role of attitudes in our lives comes from Okri (1996:21) who argues that “[s]tories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories that individuals or nations live by and you change the individuals and nations themselves”. The quotation is also found in Stibbe (2015) who builds on this to define *Stories-we-live-by* as cognitive structures shared across a culture which impact how people think, speak and behave (Stibbe 2021:6). In other words, values (here used interchangeably with attitudes) are heuristics which shape our worldview both at the individual and collective levels and can therefore inform our everyday behaviours. It also follows that when tasked with the responsibility of bringing about change around issues such as the climate crisis (as seen for Stibbe), social inequality (e.g. racism), and linguistic justice, as is often the case in language endangerment, behaviours can be tackled at the level of attitudes (Sallabank 2013). This is in line with the current literature from psychology and its emerging field of research around attitude change. Maio et al. (2018) explain that attitudes can be understood in their simplest form as our likes and dislikes which operate as a driving force in life when we seek the things that we enjoy and actively avoid those that we dread. According to Maio et al. (2018), it is the evaluative aspect that we form towards an object at the level of cognition, affect, and behaviour that characterises attitudes.

These processes can happen at two different yet overlapping levels. Attitudes can be observed at the microlevel in terms of the personal values that shape our individual thoughts and choices; these are referred to as explicit attitudes around which individuals normally have some form of awareness. Conversely, implicit attitudes are formed independently of personal values and instead are susceptible to the status quo in the culture (Maio et al. 2018). In this sense, they act below the level of consciousness meaning that an individual’s stereotyped response to a language or a speaker is often independent of that individual’s awareness of it. This is because implicit attitudes are a reflection of widespread representations of social groups and of deeply rooted biases in the given culture, and their observation can therefore provide insights and predictions on future societal changes (Charlesworth & Banaji 2021). Crucially, implicit attitudes are so embedded in the collective mind that they can inform a person’s worldview around their own in-group and even shape it to their disadvantage. The rootedness of implicit attitudes in society is so deeply seated that they can be observed to form similar trends across the population regardless of age, gender, and race (ibid) and can therefore account for the divergence between a person’s values and their actions.

Irvine (2022) reminds us that in the history of the theory of language ideology there is a difference between “language ideology” as located in the background, and therefore operating unconsciously, and “linguistic ideology” as located at the fore in the form of explicit ideas and conscious judgements. This maps neatly onto the theoretical definition of explicit and implicit attitudes just provided by combining the concept of ideology.

A further characteristic of implicit attitudes which sets them apart from explicit attitudes is their stability - a topic of interest also debated in the literature on language attitudes. According to linguists such as Garrett (2010) and Sallabank (2013), attitudes are cognitive dispositions which are somewhat stable and measurable due to their social role in informing our interactions and in perpetuating stereotypes. Acting as heuristics they operate often unconsciously but can be observed through people’s overt behaviours and discursive practices towards specific languages and their speakers (Garrett 2010). Sallabank (2013) and O’Rourke (2011) argue that these behaviours are the kind of social phenomena that can be elicited to observe and measure attitudes: an aspect of a language now considered necessary when assessing its vitality and endangerment state (Giles & Marlow 2011). Crucially though, Sallabank (2013) and O’Rourke (2011) also warn against the assumption that a link exist between a person’s attitudes and their behaviours. This poses as a non trivial problem when wishing to gauge the state of an endangered language through the lens of attitudes with the aim of acting on the results to drive societal change. Charlesworth & Banaji (2021) further elaborate on this and explain that despite being relatively adaptable to immediate changes, implicit attitudes have a tendency to return to their initial state after some time, but are also capable of durable change.

I contend that these overt performative and discursive practices are in fact explicit language attitudes and that in order to gain an insight into the cognitive mechanisms that affect language behaviours (such as choosing to maintain and speak a language) attention must be extended to include and elicit implicit attitudes, too. Inspired by the so-called “implicit revolution” (Charlesworth & Banaji 2021:851) in social psychology, linguists such as Vari & Tamburelli (2020) argue for implicit language attitudes to be used as a predictor of trends in language behaviours in studies on minoritised languages by adopting eliciting methods such as Implicit Association Tests and the matched-guise technique (see also Price & Tamburelli 2020). When dealing with the task of helping to change trends in favour of minoritised and endangered languages, attitudes can no longer be left out of the analytical toolbox. While implicit attitudes can be instrumental in the assessment of current social trends and their future prediction, explicit attitudes

are equally important as they can better inform the interpretation of the analyses by adding a holistic and contextual account.

It is therefore paramount that studies concerned with these speech communities account for this ideological aspect and keep on building on each other to capture a picture as complete as possible. As a first study of its kind on Emilian and certainly as a first comparative account of Emilian and Esperanto, the data presented and discussed in this paper can only do so much. The aim is to simply present our findings in the hope that they may serve future studies to build a more detailed account on Emilian and to show the utility and versatility of comparative studies in the field of language endangerment. In line with this, the discussion will include propositions of hypotheses to test as a way forward.

6.3 Emilian and Esperanto

Even though anecdotal, what I described in 6.2 of my experience with Emilian can bring a small, initial insight into how the language is lived (Pennycook 2017) in the community. A lover of languages, I grew up in Emilia Romagna and considered myself monolingual with Italian being the only language I thought I knew proficiently. In this sense, my parents too were monolingual¹ and so was my maternal grandmother and her daughter, my aunt, who looked after me in the first few years of my upbringing. Nevertheless, in my childhood household another means of communication was used; one that was simply referred to as ‘the dialect’². Everyone in the house spoke it freely to one another and even to me. I, however, was forbidden from speaking it back as I was told that it would hinder my job prospects in future. Obediently I stopped speaking it, and so ‘the dialect’ remained this familiar yet unidentified entity in my mind for several years until I embarked on my undergraduate degree and studied about the so-called minor Romance languages (Heinemann 2020). That was the moment when I finally understood that ‘the dialect’ is in fact a local variety of Emilian: a Gallo-Italic language family which developed from Latin alongside Italian (for a detailed summary of how these languages came into existence in the Italian context see Blackwood & Tufi 2015). This effectively renders Italian and Emilian sister languages therefore meaning that the latter is not a variety of the former and should not be confused with the regional varieties of Italian spoken in Emilia Romagna (for an explanation on the difference in

¹Together with bilingual, these are ideological labels which I do not intellectually subscribe to but are instead deliberately used just to illustrate my point

²A term which historically sits in opposition to ‘language’ due to its lack of a standardisation process (Blackwood & Tufi 2015)

the Italian context and for an in-depth discussion on the issue around the terminology, see Tamburelli & Tosco 2021; Foresti 2010; Loporcaro 2013; Hajek 1997).

This moment was a process of unlearning and rediscovery of my childhood, my heritage, and my identity and one which deeply changed my attitude towards Emilian to the point that I built a whole research project around it. To share such a personal account is not only to overtly situate my positionality as the researcher in this study and my wider research, but it is also to provide anecdotal and therefore empirical evidence of the state of Emilian and of the role of awareness in our behaviours³. The lack of awareness around what Emilian is meant that I was deprived of the opportunity to understand myself as a bilingual individual. Crucially it prevented me from forming a judgement in terms of whether or not I wanted to speak it and claim it as mine. To use a term coined by Rampton et al. (2018), it took away my chance to fully shape my “sociolinguistic citizenship” by which I mean the repertoire of linguistic resources at my disposal and the social, political, cultural and economic rights that come with each (cf. Freeland & Patrick 2004). Comments from the questionnaires which will form qualitative analyses in the third and final stage of my triangulation model can provide an impressionistic account and seem to support my experience. The language used by some participants does indeed reveal ideological narratives around Emilian as a non-language, not worth learning, backwards, and whose place belongs in the past (for a discussion on the idea of backwardness versus the aesthetics of Italian, see Blackwood & Tufi 2015; Tufi 2013).

In contrast, data collected from the Esperanto community show that speakers are aware of Esperanto being a fully-fledged language worth learning. This is perhaps intuitive enough given that Esperanto is not historically linked to any one community or place in the world. Instead, it requires a person’s conscious effort to acquire it as a second language, thus implying that the individual is already aware of its status as a language. This is because Esperanto is a so-called planned language created by a Polish ophthalmologist named Zamenhof in 1887; not too dissimilar to the way in which Hebrew (Wood 1979; Versteegh 1993) has come about, for example, with the difference of being non-ethnic and non-territorial. What is however quite interesting is that Esperanto is also estimated to currently count around 1,000 first-language speakers (Corsetti et al. 2004). Out of an estimated speech community of roughly 2,000,000 speakers (Wandel 2015), Esperanto was chosen as one of the means of communication for intergenerational transmission in at least 1,000 caregiver-child settings. Inter-

³See D’Agostino (2007) for a compelling discussion on the topic of linguistic autobiographies and their contribution to sociolinguistic endeavours

erational transmission is a key aspect in the assessment of the vitality of a language (Lee & Van Way 2016) and it is therefore a telling sign of the status of Esperanto as a language that is faring better than other minoritised languages. In the case of Emilian, for example, it is possible to measure its population to approximately 3,000,000 inhabitants (ISTAT 2015), but very little else is known on the actual status of endangerment despite language atlases such as UNESCO and Ethnologue firmly classifying Emilian as endangered.

This is perhaps the main difference that sets apart the two language communities and the reason why they were chosen to be studied comparatively - one to help the other. This is possible due to the features that are instead shared across the two communities and which allow them to be classified as minoritised languages. Indeed, as discussed in Kimura (2012), the Esperanto community is characterised by being relatively small in size, by having a high percentage of older speakers, by being spoken in multilingual contexts, and relying on the voluntariness of its members to survive. These are all features also present in the Emilian community together with the issue of social stigma, or contestedness (Tamburelli 2021). While Esperanto has to deal with issues around its authenticity as a language which is considered fake and parasitic (Gobbo 2021b), the authenticity of Emilian is contested on the grounds of not being a real language, but a lesser version of Italian. Even though there already is a body of literature on Esperanto and its vitality, to the best of my knowledge there are no studies of similar nature on Emilian. For this reason, this study focuses on explicit attitudes and spaces of languaging (Juffermans 2015) as a way to account for the everyday practices through which Emilian is still “enlived” (Hohr 2013; Pennycook 2017).

6.3.1 Studies on Language Attitudes in Emilian and Esperanto

As just mentioned above in section 6.3, the body of academic literature around the two languages seems to be greater for Esperanto than it is for Emilian. While it is true that several books and book chapters exist on the latter, these tend to be generic accounts of Emilian, such as its history (Foresti 2010), its diachronic development from Latin (Vitali 2008, 2020), and some descriptions of its grammar (including of its syntactic, morphological, phonological features) (Hajek 1997; Lepri & Vitali 2007). Even though limited, the descriptive literature on Emilian is certainly a starting point, whereas when it comes to empirical studies on Emilian, its varieties and its speakers, there seems to be a real void. The same applies to studies on language attitudes in the context of Emilian. Interestingly, the same is also flagged by Tonkin (2015:186) for Esperanto,

stating that “relatively little is known about linguistic interference (surely an obvious topic for the researcher), code-switching or -mixing, or conversational gambits”.

Yet, since then the literature on Esperanto seems to have advanced with several studies conducted in recent times depicting a picture of what might be happening in this community. As early as 1987, Edwards & MacPherson set out to conduct an experimental study on attitudes towards constructed languages and found that academics were more reluctant to consider the teaching and learning of Esperanto compared to students who appeared more enthusiastic about the language. The authors conclude that this might have to do with the level of education of academics and their understanding of the limitations associated with artificial languages.

Level of education seems to be an important factor in the community of Esperanto as something also noted in Puškar (2015). Indeed, this study looked at the Esperantist community in Croatia and found the demographic of this community to be generally older and well educated with issues of attitudes relating to “artificiality, rigidity, lack of euphony, chauvinism, a belief in its own logic, too many synonyms and homonyms” (p. 336). Puškar (2015) also found issues “[c]oncerning the movement” in terms of “too many people of the same type; unprofessional, fanatical and aggressive members; [...] the fact that non-Esperantists are often not acquainted with Esperanto at all or are highly prejudiced about it, often considering it artificial, marginal, sectarian, snobbish, weird, ideal, unnecessary and unreal etc” (p. 336).

A summary of some of the key studies on language attitudes in the Esperanto community is discussed in Stria (2017) who concludes that “the ideologies behind Esperanto are a primary factor in shaping the speech community. The speakers’ common beliefs and values lay the grounds for in-group (rather than international) communication and the feeling of belonging to a community. Consequently, Esperanto becomes a tool of self-identification” (p. 157). The close relationship between attitudes and identity is further supported in Fiedler & Brosch (2018), whereas the problematisation of traditional tools for the assessment of language vitality and the aspect of contestedness in and around the Esperanto community (unauthentic and parasitic, see above) are discussed in Gobbo (2021a) and Gobbo (2021b), respectively.

While to the best of my knowledge there are no studies on language attitudes or language vitality in the Emilian community, some parallels and contrasts can be drawn with Esperanto by looking at the findings of studies conducted on other minor Romance languages in the Italian context. Investigating the domain of social media and attitudes towards regional languages in Italy, Masullo et al. (2021:251) conclude that younger speakers still feel a sense of belonging towards their variety and index their

membership to this in-group through the use of tags, and do so as an act of reclaiming. The connection between identity (both at the individual and group level) and regional language is also documented in the study conducted by Šantić (2016) (a Master's thesis) which highlighted how the regional language is used as a “we-code” in bilingual contexts such as that of Fiuman in Rijeka, Croatia. With perhaps the exception of vindication, both Esperanto and the regional languages of Italy would appear to fulfil similar roles of indexing group membership and belonging at the personal level.

Stigma towards the regional language as inferior to the national counterpart is reported in Giacalone (2016) with reference to the snobbery portrayed by Sicilians towards the Sicilian language. Similarly, in their doctoral thesis, Marsano (2021) conducted a matched-guise experiment in Trento and found aspects of status and competence to be associated with Italian guises together with politeness and open-mindedness. Interestingly, Marsano (2021) noted a counter-trend towards young speakers, thus opening up trajectories for future studies. Alfonzetti (2014) also draws similar conclusions in the Sicilian context when looking at the role of attitudes in practices of code-switching, and noting that, despite still being partly associated with low education, regional languages are undergoing a process of re-evaluation by entering the written repertoire of young speakers (p.29-30). A less recent doctoral thesis by La Sala (2004) found a match between the maintenance of Sicilian and positive attitudes towards the language with responses from participants overtly resisting the idea of backwardness usually associated with the use of Sicilian. Overall, despite differences in the nature of stereotypes, both speakers of Esperanto and the regional languages of Italy have to deal with social stigma.

These findings will be considered again in light of our results in section 6.6. First, however, we describe our methodology and present our analyses in the following two sections.

6.4 Method

6.4.1 Sociolinguistic questionnaire

As mentioned in section 6.2, this study looks at the results yielded by a sociolinguistic questionnaire which forms one of the three different methods of data collection undertaken in my doctoral research. This is in line with the experimental application of the triangulation model that I designed at the onset of my research project by building on the definition of triangulation proposed by Flick (2018). In my paper (Hampton

2023), I discuss the triangulation model at length which, put briefly, is designed to facilitate researchers to observe and measure language attitudes from three different levels, namely, perception, representation, and lived experience (based on the spatial triad discussed in Lefebvre 1991). The model is therefore conceptualised as a theoretical tool which can be applied consistently and systematically across the study of language attitudes. In this sense then, it is not meant as a method in itself, but as a general framework which needs to be adapted according to the needs and properties of the speech community under investigation. My doctoral project follows this approach by also measuring attitudes and spaces through the use of a diary and by looking at the negotiations of the Emilian and Esperanto identities in rap songs - this is in addition to the sociolinguistic questionnaire discussed in this paper.

As so little is known on the vitality of Emilian, I set out to design a sociolinguistic questionnaire that could capture as much information as practically possible around the uses of the languages in their community (we refer to this as ‘active competence’ and ‘active spaces’ whereby active stands for all uses of language between two or more speakers). Instead of addressing a research question in the form of a hypothesis, the questionnaire was put together with the idea of exploring the situation from a broad and detailed angle. The use of a questionnaire for data collection is an established tool used in sociolinguistics which originates from dialectology (Dollinger 2012). It is indeed an efficient tool when large numbers of data are needed within a given amount time to run analyses of both quantitative and qualitative nature. As a doctoral student engaged in time-sensitive research, the use of the questionnaire seemed ideal and was elected for these reasons.

The first seven questions of the questionnaire (see Appendix D and E) are of demographic nature and used as a warm-up exercise to lead into the next four questions on childhood languages. Participants are then asked questions about their competence in the target language. This is achieved by asking participants to self-assess their competence in understanding, speaking, reading and writing in the target language and to select all spaces and contexts in which they use the language (a table is used with options such as “with friends”, “at the local cafe”, “with my school teachers”). Different media of communication are then introduced whereby participants are required to state whether they watch television and/or they listen to radio programmes in the language, if they use the language on social media, and so on. This first part of the questionnaire is used to count spaces of use; that is both for speaking/writing and listening/reading. In the second part of the questionnaire, questions aim to elicit data on attitudes. Questions include whether the participant likes the target language, if they

would teach it to their children, and whether they agree with the idea of the language being taught at school. As overt questions which target the individual's beliefs, these are questions eliciting overt attitudes.

In a context of very little information already available, I would argue that an account of the overt attitudes in the Emilian speech community is a good starting point to inform better practices for the revitalisation of the language. Given the lengthy nature of the questionnaire, not all results are discussed in this paper. Instead, the focus here is on quantitative data whereas some of the questions that yielded qualitative data will support and substantiate the results from the diary for research method which will be published separately. Specific questions and scoring systems are explained in section 6.4.3, whereas what follows next is an account of the actual data collection and the effects the global pandemic has had on the original plans.

6.4.2 Data collection during a pandemic

The target population for Emilian was people of all ages⁴ who reside in Modena or Bologna, and those who simply spoke the language for Esperanto. Due to the difficulties anticipated in recruiting participants, the goal was to collect a minimum of 100 responses for each community with the expectation of reaching more Esperanto speakers than of Emilian. For the latter, initially the plan was to undertake fieldwork in the Emilian provinces of Modena and Bologna over the summer of 2020. Following the Covid-19 outbreak and the consequent restrictions on international travel and social distancing, I had to revert to remote methods of data collection. Given the nature of the Esperanto community as one spread across the globe, a computer-mediated approach to the collection of data already seemed apt at the outset and did not need amending.

An online format of the questionnaire had already been prepared in the form of a survey ready to be sent out to my networks and through channels such as Amikumu, Facebook, and WhatsApp. However, for the speech community of Emilian an in-person approach seemed more suited. This is because, as reported by ISTAT (2015), the average speaker of Emilian tends to live in rural areas, be of relatively old age, and have limited access to technologies. To capture the vitality of Emilian in terms of who still speaks the language, I felt that I needed to travel and find these people in person. Had I gone through with the initial plan, it is reasonable to believe that I would have ended up with questionnaires filled in by the expected sample population, that is people in their fifties and older, and mostly male. Instead, because of the constraints imposed

⁴Ethical approval was obtained through the University of Liverpool

by the pandemic, the questionnaire for Emilian was also turned into an electronic survey to be disseminated through personal networks and social media channels in the same way as for Esperanto.

As I explain in my paper (Hampton in print), the dissemination of Emilian proved to be very challenging. While the Esperanto survey yielded a satisfactory amount of responses of 154 within a couple of weeks, the tally for Emilian seemed stuck on sixty - despite the many efforts employed to widen the dissemination. The decision to contact two Instagram accounts resulted in a decisive turn. Both accounts create content related to Emilian and the local identity. With 60,000 to 90,000 followers each, these had a much wider reach that I could ever achieve on my own, and as soon as they agreed to share my participant call as a story, the tally quickly reached a total of 434 responses. Collecting more than 400 responses for Emilian was unexpected and overturned the imbalance in the data I had anticipated, thus resulting in data sets that are now larger for Emilian rather than Esperanto.

The intervention of Instagram on my data collection had two other main effects on the overall study. First, due to the average Instagram user as someone who belongs to Generations Y and Z, the sample population now has a large proportion of respondents in their teens and twenties. This is a silver lining to the disruption created by the pandemic as in hindsight I feel I should have tried to pursue a survey which included the younger generations. After all, to understand whether a language has a future we should look at its present rather than its past. The second advantage of disseminating the questionnaire via Instagram story is connected to the way Generations Y and Z navigate the platform in a brand/client sort of capacity (Aquino 2012). Indeed, within this relationship followers learn to trust brands and their content - a necessary step to convince people who do not know me to invest their time completing a lengthy survey without fearing that they are being involved in some sort of digital scam.

Despite testing the survey on five people as a form of pilot study,⁵ it was only after closing the surveys that I realised that the questionnaire was too lengthy and can therefore feel satisfied with the responses collected. All in all, I feel the data collection for both communities was sufficiently successful and the results presented by my co-author, and later discussed by me in the following sections, can be a meaningful contribution to our understanding of the vitality of Emilian and Esperanto.

⁵A pilot study was conducted for the Esperanto questionnaire following which translation-related issues were addressed

6.4.3 Questions and scores for analyses

As anticipated in section 6.4.1, here I provide a summary of the questions captured in the analyses and a description of how scores were calculated. Overall, the Emilian questionnaire (Appendix D) comprised 39 questions of sociolinguistic nature and an additional section which elicited the translation of five sentences from Italian into whatever variety of Emilian the participant is competent in. The data from these translations do not form part of this study and will be used in future studies – in the spirit of open research and language documentation, these data are available and will be uploaded to a open data repository. The Esperanto questionnaire (Appendix E) did not include a translation task and only contained 35 questions⁶. These core 35 questions were broken down into sub-questions for a total of 175 data fields.

The questions used for both descriptive and inferential analyses are the following, divided by thematic:

1) Demographics - Gender, Age, Profession, Family Languages. These were open field questions which were coded manually.

2) Attitudes - How participants would rate a stranger who speaks Emilian/Esperanto on eight different levels labelled (i) Trustworthy (ii) Refined (iii) Kind (iv) Intelligent (v) Friendly (vi) Familiar (vii) Educated (viii) Diligent. This was out of a Likert Scale from 1 to 5, whereby the higher the score, the more favourable the judgement.

3) Understand competence - This is simply based on how the participant responded to the question “Do you understand spoken Emilian/Esperanto?” out of five different levels: (i) No (ii) A little (iii) 50/50 (iv) Well* (v) Very well*.

4) Speaking competence - As above, this is simply based on how the participant responded to the question “Do you speak Emilian/Esperanto?” out of five different levels: (i) No (ii) A little (iii) 50/50 (iv) Well* (v) Very well*⁷.

5) Read and write - Coding for a positive answer to the question “Do you read and write in Esperanto/Emilian?”

6) Space Types - Participants were asked to tick “yes” or “no” depending on whether or not they passively/actively⁸ use the target language in a range of different spaces.

⁶The four questions missing from the Esperanto questionnaire were specific to the Emilian context: (i) Are you a commuter (ii) Do you use Italian words when you speak Emilian (iii) Which variety of Emilian should be taught in schools (iv) What does it mean to be a city person/a mountain person.

⁷*These were coded as Good and Very Good, respectively in the analyses.

⁸The differentiation between active and passive is not based on ontological assumptions about what constitutes active vs passive knowledge of language such as writing vs reading, rather it is a pragmatical categorisation of the uses of language which are considered to be of interest in this study and that is language used between two or more people.

These have been coded into five spaces types, namely:

(i) Physical for interactions with family members, friends, neighbours, school friends, teachers, university friends, partner, acquaintances, colleagues, strangers, priest, doctor, at the pub, at the market, at the shop, at school, at university, at work, at church, in public offices, and other; (ii) Press for literature, newspaper, teaching, flyers, other promotional materials, and other print. Each of these were further split into “read” and “write”; (iii) Virtual for texts, emails, on the Internet, Facebook, WhatsApp, other social media, and other. Each of these were further split into “read” and “write”; (iv) Media for watching TV and listening to the radio; (v) Other for anything else.

7) Active Spaces - Based on the space types just described, this score is the total of all active spaces that each participant reported to use the target language in. That is all physical spaces and all types of press and virtual spaces in which the respondents reported to write in the target language. This score was created to gauge the level of active use (interpersonal use of language) and gain an insight into the potential differences between the two language communities.

6.4.4 Overview of statistical analyses

Statistical analyses were chosen based on the exploratory and hypothesis-generating nature of the study. Because of this aspect, we do not focus on hypothesis testing, but rather on estimating the effects of different predictors on variables of interest. This move is in line with recent discussions about the drawbacks of blindly relying on p -values for statistical inference (Wagenmakers 2007; Munafò et al. 2017; Scheel 2021) and in light of the so-called ‘replicability’ and ‘generalisability’ crisis (Yarkoni 2020), whereby results from previous research cannot be replicated even under virtually identical conditions. Moreover, greater attention is given to the distributions of the investigated effects, rather than on point estimates such as means, which are less informative when statistical power is taken into account (Kirby & Sonderegger 2018).

In the following sections my co-author will describe the details of data processing used to calculate a unified measure of attitude and provide the reader with a brief introduction to Bayesian analyses.

6.4.5 Unified measure of language attitude

As described above, language attitude was assessed through scoring of a set of qualities, included in the questionnaire in the form of 8 adjectives: educated, intelligent, diligent, friendly, kind, trustworthy, refined and familiar. Participants were asked to express

their opinion about speakers of Emilian and Esperanto (respectively for each participant group) by rating each quality on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 whereby the higher the score, the more positive the judgement.

To model the effect of attitude on language competence we decided to reduce the complexity of the attitude data, so that we could obtain results that are simpler and easier to interpret. This is a particularly helpful solution, since the 8 qualities would have to be entered as individual predictors in the model, hence increasing the number of parameters to be estimated.

A useful technique for dimensionality reduction is Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), which reduces a set of categorical predictors (like Likert scales/scores) to a few continuous numerical dimensions. This method is conceptually similar to a Principal Component Analysis (PCA), although it is applied to categorical data (while PCA is used with numeric data). The dimensions obtained with MCA are a numeric summary of the categorical predictors, and the original scores of the latter can be reconstructed from the values of the former. In other words, by using the values of one dimension, one can obtain the original scores of the categorical predictors.

The main scope of a MCA is to reduce many categorical predictors to one/two dimensions so that the latter can be used in modelling instead of the many categorical predictors (in this study, those would be the 8 qualities mentioned above).

We ran an MCA on the language attitude scores of each quality, across the entire data set (i.e. including both Emilian and Esperanto data). Note that language (Emilian vs Esperanto) is not included in the MCA, because the aim is to obtain dimension scores that can be interpreted equally across both languages. We used the `MCA()` function from the `FactoMineR` package (Lê et al. 2008) in R (v4.1.3, R Core Team 2022).

The MCA outputs a set of “dimensions” which can take different values. Each combination of quality and attitude score is given a specific value for each dimension, so that the original scores and the dimension values are equivalent (i.e. they convey the same information, although on two different scales). The dimensions are ordered in such a way that the first captures the most variance of the data, the second dimension captures the second most variance, and so on. Figure 6.1 illustrates the first dimension (henceforth D1) and which D1 value each Likert score for each quality is assigned to. The x -axis shows the range of D1 values, while on the y -axis there are the 8 qualities from the questionnaire. For each quality, points of different colour and size mark the D1 score for each Likert score (1 to 5). For example, a Likert score of 1 for trustworthy corresponds to a D1 score of about -2.1. A Likert score of 1 for intelligent, instead, corresponds to a D1 score of -2.8.

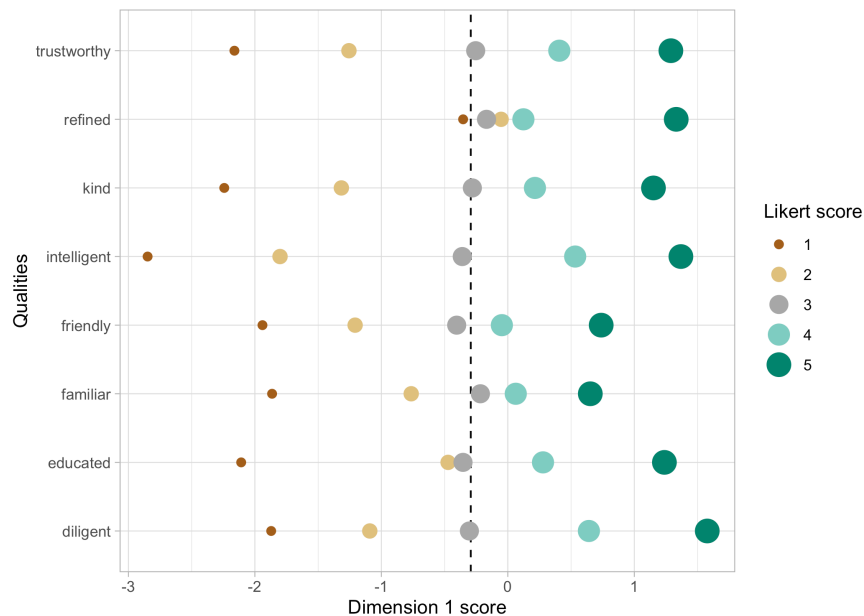


Figure 6.1: Dimension 1 scores of each Likert score (1-5) of the 8 qualities in the attitude questionnaire, as obtained from a Multiple Correspondence Analysis. A higher Dimension 1 score corresponds to a higher Likert score, i.e. a more positive attitude.

As it can be seen from the figure, overall higher D1 scores correspond to greater attitude Likert scores across all qualities. This means that with D1 scores we can capture the scores from all qualities. Note that this characteristic of D1 is coincidental and not to be expected with any other data set. However, we can exploit the fact that there is a good match between D1 and Likert scores to our advantage, and use D1 scores as a predictor in statistical models in lieu of the Likert scores of each quality.

6.4.6 Bayesian linear models

While a thorough explanation of Bayesian statistics would be beyond the scope of this paper, we provide here a layman introduction (for a more in-depth treatment, see Nalborczyk et al. 2019; Etz et al. 2018; McElreath 2015; Kruschke 2015). Throughout the paper, we use Bayesian linear models to explore the effects of a set of factors on the level of competence in understanding, speaking, reading and writing Emilian and Esperanto, as reported by the participants through the sociolinguistic questionnaire.

The output of a Bayesian linear model includes, for each effect, a probability distribution which indicates the probability over a range of values, conditional on the data and the model specification. This probability distribution is known as the *posterior*

probability distribution of the estimated effect. One way of summarising the posterior is to use so-called credible intervals, or CrIs. A CrI is a range of values from the posterior that includes a specific percentage of the entire posterior. Commonly, 95% CrIs are used: these can be interpreted as the range of values that covers 95% of the posterior. In other words, one can say that, based on data and model, the real value of the estimated effect lies within the 95% CrI, at 95% confidence or probability (note that this interpretation is different from that of a classical 95% confidence interval, although the latter is usually mistaken for the former).

Another important aspect of Bayesian linear models is that they allow the researcher to embed prior knowledge into the model in the form of probability distributions of the estimated effects. These probability distributions are known as the *prior* probability distributions, and they are generally formulated based on expert knowledge or previous studies. The model then updates those prior probabilities using the provided data to generate the posterior probabilities. A common approach to prior probability specification is to use so-called weakly informative and regularising priors. These are priors that partially nudge the estimated effects towards 0, thus reducing the unwanted effects of influential outliers or small sample sizes. In this study we used weakly informative priors for all the models. More details are given in the respective parts of the Results section.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Descriptive analyses

The demographics of respondents based on gender, age, profession and family languages for both Emilian and Esperanto is captured in Table 6.1. At a glance, there are several differences between the two communities. For gender, three Esperanto participants identified as non-binary and transgender, and none from the Emilian community. The Esperanto group is heavily skewed by a dominance of male respondents, whereas there are more female participants for Emilian. Arguably due to the effect of Instagram, a quarter of all Emilian participants are aged 20 or younger and nearly half between the ages of 21-40. The Esperanto group is more evenly distributed across the three higher age groups with only 5% of respondents aged under 21. It is a well-known fact that Emilian speakers tend to be older and the low incidence of responses from people aged 60+ can be explained by the digital means used for administering the questionnaire.

This did not however seem to have impeded reaching older Esperanto speakers.

Table 6.1: Demographics of Emilian and Esperanto participants

Gender					
	F	M	O		
Emilian	269 (62%)	165 (38%)	0		
Esperanto	32 (21%)	118 (77%)	4 (3%)		

Age					
	0-20	21-40	41-60	60+	
Emilian	109 (25%)	191 (44%)	106 (24%)	28 (7%)	
Esperanto	8 (5%)	39 (25%)	53 (34%)	54 (35%)	

Profession					
	Skilled	Unskilled	Student	NIW	NA
Emilian	95 (22%)	138 (32%)	152 (35%)	138 (10%)	3 (1%)
Esperanto	62 (40%)	21 (14%)	20 (13%)	21 (3%)	47 (31%)

Family languages					
	Mono	Mono other	Multi	Multi other	NA
Emilian	2 (1%)	261 (60%)	112 (26%)	57 (13%)	2 (1%)
Esperanto	1 (1%)	91 (59%)	33 (21%)	29 (19%)	0

Differences in the distribution of age in the communities is also reflected in the demographics of profession whereby the majority of Emilian respondents are students (compared to 13% for Esperanto). With 40% of Esperanto participants classifiable as skilled workers compared to only 22% of Emilian respondents, there seems to be alignment in the sample population with trends in the wider literature showing that a relative high proportion of Esperantists are well-educated individuals. The one demographic that appears to be very similar across the two communities is the number of languages spoken in the family during upbringing. As can be expected, only 1% of respondents in each community grew up in monolingual contexts where only Esperanto or Emilian was spoken, whereas the majority (around 60% for both groups) was brought up in a monolingual environment where a different language was spoken (mostly Italian in the Emilian group). One in five Esperanto respondents and one in four Emilian participants were exposed to the respective language during childhood in multilingual contexts.

Table 6.2: Demographics of Emilian and Esperanto participants with at least 50/50 competence in understanding and speaking

Gender					
	F	M	O		
Emilian	160 (62%)	100 (38%)	0		
Esperanto	28 (19%)	112 (78%)	4 (3%)		

Age					
	0-20	21-40	41-60	60+	
Emilian	63 (24%)	113 (44%)	62 (24%)	22 (9%)	
Esperanto	6 (4%)	36 (25%)	48 (33%)	54 (38%)	

Profession					
	Skilled	Unskilled	Student	NIW	NA
Emilian	61 (24%)	80 (31%)	88 (34%)	29 (12%)	2 (1%)
Esperanto	60 (42%)	20 (14%)	18 (12%)	2 (1%)	44 (31%)

Family languages					
	Mono	Mono other	Multi	Multi other	NA
Emilian	2 (1%)	157 (60%)	70 (27%)	29 (11%)	2 (1%)
Esperanto	1 (1%)	82 (57%)	33 (23%)	28 (19%)	0

Table 6.2 summarises the participants who declared to understand and speak the target language at least 50/50 by the same demographics as above. This table can provide an insight of who speaks the target language (or at least has potential to be a user of the language) based on the sample population. Interestingly, the percentages by demographics in the Emilian community do not vary much, if at all, from Table 6.1. This means that the demographic profile of the Emilian sample is the same as those who within the group declared to have at least 50% of competence in the language. These responses are from a group with a higher number of women, of people aged between 21 and 40, who are mostly students or work in unskilled roles, and 60% of whom grew up in monolingual contexts where Emilian or Esperanto were not spoken.

In terms of spaces, Figure 6.2 shows the distribution of spaces of language use in the two groups. Here we counted all the spaces that participants confirmed to use the language in their everyday life - we did this by simply counting the percentages of ‘yes’

out of the maximum number of possible spaces provided in the questionnaire. Physical spaces include all interactions with people (friends, family, partners, doctor, priest, etc), as well as public places such as the pub, market, shop, school, and church. Press comprises all literature, newspapers, teaching resources and promotional texts either read or written in the language. Media is for watching TV and listening to the radio in Emilian/Esperanto. Using the target language in texts, emails, WhatsApp, and social media is captured as virtual and materials for reading and writing not clearly described in the labels provided in the questionnaire were counted as ‘other’.

The graph visualises the data from the two groups independently of each other meaning that proportions and width of density for each space type is relative to the language group and cannot therefore be compared directly with the data set from the other language. Notably, it is the Esperanto community who declared to use the language in greater numbers (the wider the violin shape, the higher density of responses in the given range of proportion). This shows that a very small number of Emilian participants reported to use the language in any of the domains. The median (white dot in the graph) – for all domains but physical – sits at zero. Put simply, this means that even though several people expressed to use the language up to 100 per cent of all possible spaces, the median is in fact zero. As for Esperanto, it is the virtual domain that leads as a space of languaging in the community with media, press, and physical respectively lagging behind.

6.5.2 Statistical modelling overview

The following sections present the results of statistical modelling. We start by reporting the results of the models fitted to the self-reported competence levels in (1) understanding, (2) speaking and (3) reading and writing (R&W) Emilian and Esperanto. Following that, we present the modelling results of the passive and active competence scores, calculated as described above (see section 6.4.3). In both cases, we want to assess whether language attitudes towards Emilian and Esperanto show any statistical relationship with the participants’ linguistic competence.

6.5.3 Self-reported competence levels

Understanding According to a Bayesian linear model with self-reported levels of understanding as the outcome variable, language attitude measured as Dimension 1 of the MCA (see section 6.4.5) is positively correlated with levels of understanding Emilian ($\beta = 0.43$, $SE = 0.12$, 95% CrI [0.20, 0.66]) (cf. Figure 6.3). For every unit increase in

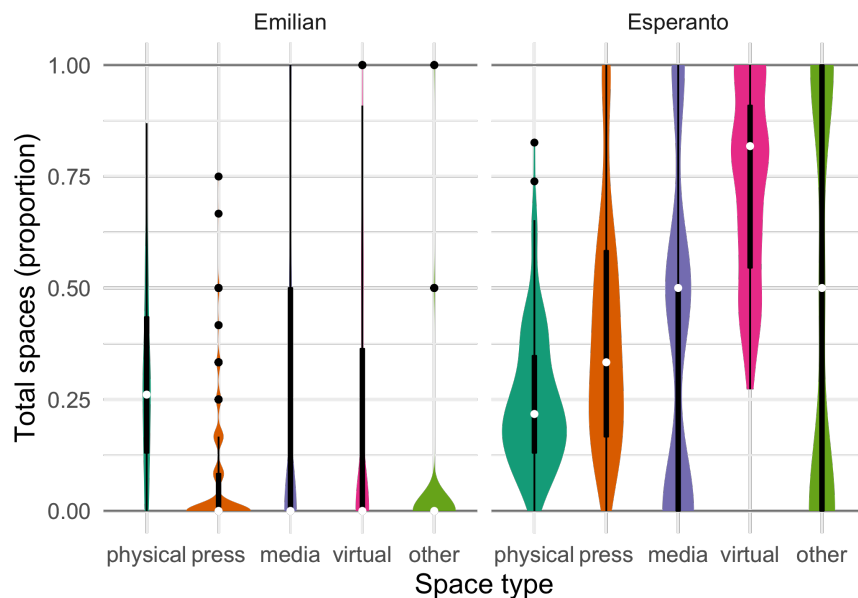


Figure 6.2: Proportion of number of spaces by space type in Emilian and Esperanto. Proportion values are calculated for each respondent.

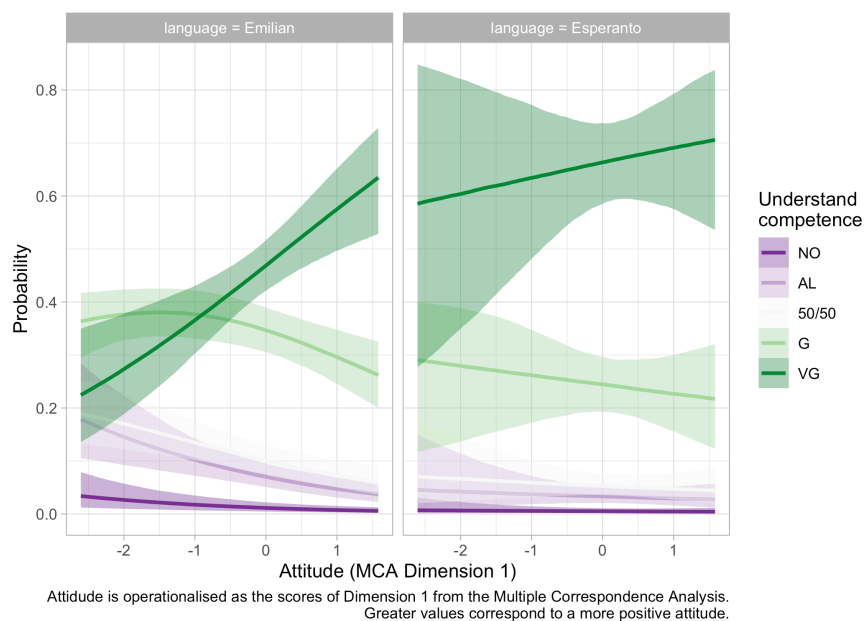


Figure 6.3: Relationship between respondent's attitude towards Emilian/Esperanto (as Dimension 1) and cumulative probability of each level of the understanding competence, as reported by the respondents. Based on the output of the Bayesian linear model fitted to understanding competence levels.

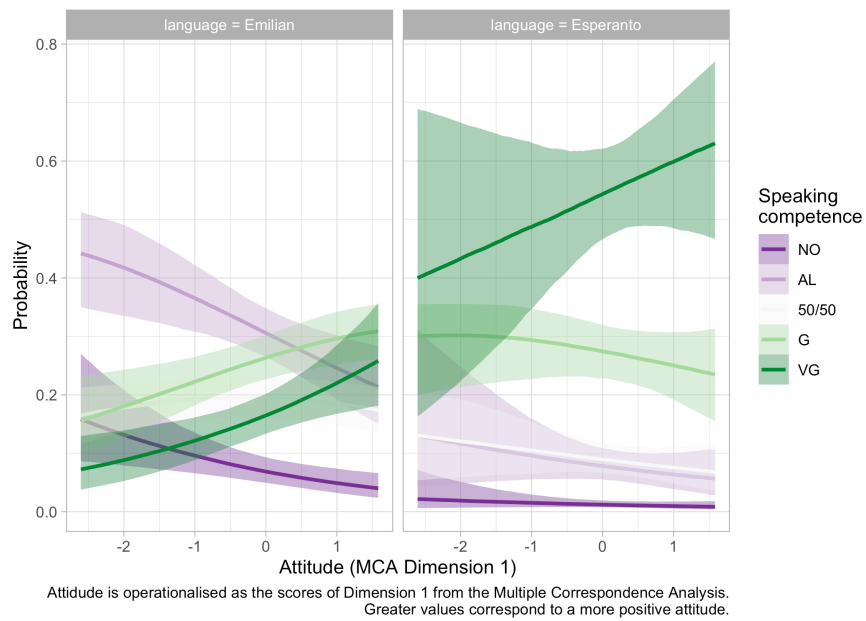


Figure 6.4: Relationship between respondent's attitude towards Emilian/Esperanto (as Dimension 1) and cumulative probability of each level of the speaking competence, as reported by the respondents. Based on the output of the Bayesian linear model fitted to speaking competence levels.

Dimension 1, the odds of greater levels of understanding Emilian increases by a ratio of 1.22-1.66 (22-66% increase), at 95% confidence. In other words, the more positive the attitude towards Emilian, the higher the self-reported ability to understand it.

Relative to Emilian, the effect of Dimension 1 on levels of understanding Esperanto is 56% lower to 22% higher, at 95% probability. At a lower confidence of 70%, the effect is 43% to 0.4% lower than that of Emilian. Thus, based on the available data and the chosen model specification, we cannot confidently argue that the effect of Dimension 1 in Esperanto is different than that of Emilian, although there is a 70% probability that it is lower (i.e., the correlation between attitude and level of understanding Esperanto is less strong).

Speaking According to a Bayesian linear model with self-reported levels of speaking as the outcome variable, language attitude measured as Dimension 1 of the MCA (see 6.4.5) is positively correlated with levels of speaking Emilian ($\beta = 0.36$, $SE = 0.12$, 95% CrI [0.12, 0.60]) (cf. Figure 6.4). For every unit increase in Dimension 1, the odds of greater competence in speaking Emilian increases by a ratio of 1.13-1.82 (13-82% increase), at 95% confidence. In other words, the more positive the attitude towards Emilian, the higher the self-reported competence of speaking it.

Relative to Emilian, the effect of Dimension 1 on levels of speaking Esperanto is 45% lower to 42% higher, at 95% probability. At a very low confidence level of 40%, the effect is 22% to 0% lower than that of Emilian. We thus cannot make any confident statements regarding the difference in the effect of attitude on speaking competence of Esperanto nor whether the effect exists at all in this language.

Reading and writing Based on a Bayesian linear model fitted to the read/write competence, language attitude has a positive effect on read/write in Emilian ($\beta = 0.45$, $SE = 0.14$, 95% CrI [0.18, 0.73]). Specifically, the odds of being able to read/write Emilian are 1.2-2.1 times higher every unit increase of Dimension 1, at 95% confidence. Since all Esperanto speakers responded with “yes” to the read/write question, we have not included these data in the model.

6.5.4 Active spaces scores

According to a Bayesian linear model fitted to the binned version of speaking competence (low = no/a little/fifty-fifty, high = good/very good), higher scores of active spaces are positively correlated with the probability of high speaking levels in Emilian ($\beta = 0.66$, $SE = 0.10$, 95% CrI [0.47, 0.85]) (cf. Figure 6.5). For every unit increase in

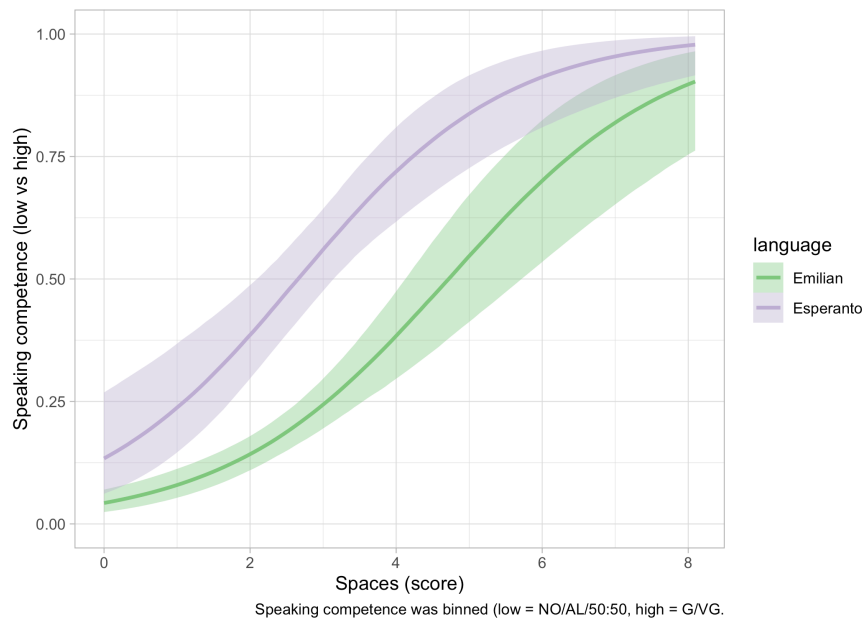


Figure 6.5: Relationship between number of linguistic spaces and speaking competence (binned as low vs high). Based on the output of the Bayesian linear model fitted to binned speaking competence.

spaces score, the odds of high competence in speaking Emilian increases by a ratio of 1.6-2.3, at 95% confidence. In other words, the higher the proportion of active spaces selected, the higher the probability that participant chose “good” or “very good”.

Relative to Emilian, the effect of active spaces scores in Esperanto is 24% lower to 44% higher, at 95% probability. While there is evidence for the effect in Esperanto, we are not able to make statements regarding the difference in the effect of active spaces scores between the two languages.

6.6 Discussion

Having briefly described our analyses in the previous section, I now go on to contextualise the findings in relation to the two research questions set out in section 6.2. This discussion then leads onto the formulation of two hypotheses for future studies before moving to the conclusive remarks in section 6.7.

The summary of data captured in Figure 6.2 shows that Esperanto speakers reported to be much more active in their use of the language than the Emilian counterpart. This therefore directly answers the first research question “Is there a difference in the

practices of language maintenance in the two communities?” and does so in an insightful way. Indeed, while it was expected to find a higher proportion of use in the physical spaces for Emilian (as a language confined to the most familiar domains), the median suggests that even those who use the language in these spaces only do so in a quarter of all physical spaces surveyed by the questionnaire. The median in the Esperanto group is not that different, lagging behind by just a couple of percent points. This is an interesting finding showing that Esperanto – a non-territorial language – is being maintained locally nearly as much as a heritage language such as Emilian. Or rather, Emilian is only being maintained in the physical spaces as much as Esperanto. Even in virtual domains – said to be increasingly used by young speakers of historically minoritised languages (for example Masullo et al. 2021) – Emilian respondents have reported very low usage with a median equal to zero. As expected, the virtual sphere was reported as the more active space by Esperanto speakers.

Moving on and looking at our inferential analyses, the findings suggest that there is indeed a correlation between language use and explicit language attitudes (second research question). This is however only a partial statement. Of the four models discussed, three showed a positive correlation for Emilian whilst being inconclusive for Esperanto (cf. understanding in section 6.3, speaking in section 6.4, read and write) whereas the fourth on active spaces (cf. section 6.5) returned a correlation for both language groups, but could not confirm a difference in the effect across the two. Although only providing a partial answer, these findings can be helpful in their own right. First, they are a reminder of the usefulness of comparative studies. This is especially true of the findings produced by our descriptive analyses, but it also applies to the comparative data on active spaces.

While we cannot confidently argue for the presence of a difference in the effect of active spaces across Emilian and Esperanto in our data, the evidence suggests that an effect be true for both language groups. This means that a person is more likely to use the target language actively when their beliefs about the language are of positive nature. While I do not contend that attitudes are a driving force for language maintenance, these findings suggest that they go hand in hand.

On the basis of the above, I propose two hypotheses for future studies:

(i) A positive correlation exists between competence and explicit language attitudes in the speech communities of Emilian and Esperanto. Should this hypothesis be tested and confirmed, it would corroborate the findings discussed here for Emilian and strengthen the weak evidence gathered for Esperanto. Ultimately this could be used to inform efforts for language revitalisation by encouraging a focus on changing attitudes

around the language.

(ii) There is no difference between the effect of explicit language attitudes on language use across the Emilian community and that of Esperanto. To achieve this, a larger survey sample would be required and data should be analysed using Bayesian statistics. This is because the Null Hypothesis which underpins the frequentist approach cannot be tested, but only rejected, whereas the Bayesian approach allows us to do so. If such future studies were to suggest absence of differences, then it would be reasonable to assume that the creation and promotion of more social spaces and roles for Emilian in the community would help the cause of language revitalisation efforts.

Overall, the findings discussed in this paper can be taken with prudent optimism. That is to say that although Emilian is not being maintained actively in several spaces, this study suggests that it is still used in some measure among people in local spaces. Reasons to be optimistic come from the Esperanto community where positive trends of language attitudes were seen to be correlated with language use. Taken with some due prudence, this could mean that creating spaces in the community and attaching social functionality to Emilian could engender higher levels of language maintenance. Furthermore, as explained in Blackwood & Tufi (2015), the life and death of regional languages has been a topic of debate since the 1960s. Depending on context, speakers and location, these languages are still giving signs of life with usage spanning across a wide range of domains: from oral to social media and even literary contexts. Crucially, Blackwood & Tufi (2015:23) argue that the linguistic landscape of Italy “has been characteristically and increasingly multilingual insofar as new language actors have also contributed to the construction of the public space [...] in processes of place-making and -marking”.

A similar account comes from Tufi (2013:148): “in the wake of new forms of emancipation that date back to the 1960s, in Italy as elsewhere, a renewed ethnic awareness laid the foundations for claims that have focused on the re-evaluation of a person’s linguistic specificity as the privileged symbol and carrier of local identity. The comeback of local varieties and minority culture, however, was embraced more enthusiastically in those Italian regions which had become more affluent, and therefore more confident, such as the areas in the north-west and the north-east of the country.” Despite benefiting from a more positive outcome, the regions were not immune to the systematic stigmatisation of regional languages as backward and primitive (*ibid*). As already discussed, a similar process has also affected Esperanto which, however, does not seem to be hindering its vitality. Whether that be in defiance or taken in its stride is not clear. Future studies could focus on the aspect of stigma comparatively between Esperanto

and other historically minoritised languages to better understand what is at play.

When discussing findings stemming from explicit attitudes, it is also worthwhile to remember that despite not providing a picture of wider societal beliefs, they can tell us a partial yet valid account of how individuals perceive languages and their speakers. This is because in the origins of the term, ideology was conceived as a partial truth insofar that an ideological worldview was simply incomplete by virtue of ignoring alternative views (Irvine 2022). By creating more spaces and through the implementation of awareness campaigns, the goal would be to expose community members to alternative stories of what the regional languages are and what they can become.

An example of the tangible impact that the promotion of awareness can have on attitudes and – more importantly – on actions comes from the North East of Italy. Kumar (2018) show how art festivals in the Slovenian and Friulian linguistic communities of Udine encouraged more people to use the regional languages in public, thus changing their trajectories of use and vitality. The link between language and social functionality is further highlighted by Irvine (2022), stating that language learning is grounded in everyday practices through bodies, the places we enlive and its culture. In this sense, language is emplaced (Blackwood & Tufi 2015) as an aspect of our social life that cannot be observed in a vacuum. Likewise, efforts for the revitalisation of a language should arguably be as holistic as practically possible to ensure an organic development of its processes.

6.7 Concluding remarks

As an exploratory study which aimed at contributing towards the current intellectual void around the level of language attitudes and language maintenance of Emilian, the findings do not come without their limitations. On the one hand, the results were sufficiently comprehensive to answer both research questions with strong evidence showing a positive correlation between language maintenance and explicit language attitudes. On the other hand, the trends yielded by two of the models on Esperanto were too weak to draw conclusions. This, however, was not the objective of the study which aimed at shedding some light on the situation around Emilian. The comparison between Emilian and Esperanto achieved its intent insofar that it allowed descriptive statistics to show a stark difference in the ways Esperantists make use of the spaces available to them to maintain the language. The comparative element was furthermore instrumental in gauging a simultaneous understanding of the effect of language attitudes on language use in both groups. This was a key finding which informed the formulation of one of

the hypotheses proposed in section 6.6.

Given the focus on explicit attitudes in this paper, it would be worthwhile to run matched-guise tests and other experimental studies which test for implicit attitudes. Finally, I hope that the findings of this study will engender future enquiries which aim to test the hypotheses it generated and stimulate curiosity over Emilian as a language community that urgently needs all the attention it can get.

Chapter 7

“wRapping” traditions into modernity: the negotiation of Emilian and Esperanto identities in YouTube rap songs.

Hampton, J. “wRapping” traditions into modernity: the negotiation of Emilian and Esperanto identities in YouTube rap songs.” *Modern Languages Open*, [under review].

Emilian is a language family historically spoken in northern Italy which is considered endangered mainly due to the shift towards Italian and the current lack of intergenerational transmission. The focus of this paper is on the construction of the Emilian identity in online spaces and more specifically on the representation of what it means to be Emilian in rap songs found on YouTube. This study stems from my doctoral research project and forms part of the triangulation model that I designed following an explorative approach. The overarching project aims at assessing and comparing attitudes and language use of both Emilian and Esperanto. The latter was chosen as a minority language whose vitality and number of L1 speakers is steadily increasing and its insights may therefore be used to inform better revitalisation efforts for other languages at risk. For this reason, the analysis presented in this paper has a parallel focus on similar data found for Esperanto. Narrative archetypes, enregisterment and metadiscourse are applied as analytical tools to the linguistic choices of lyrics to unravel and expose how

values and attitudes are negotiated in the construction of identity in both language communities. The discussion is informed by relevant literature on digital polylinguaging, broadly, and on hyperlocal language revalorization, more narrowly. The results will shed some much-needed light on the modern communicative functions that these “old fashioned” languages can serve younger speakers to inform the creation of revitalisation efforts that are in line with the needs and interests of the younger generations.

7.1 Introduction

The advent of the digital space as a platform accessible by many has brought about opportunities for minoritised languages to claim a new domain (for example Soria et al. 2013; Belmar & Glass 2019; Moring 2013; Cunliffe & Herring 2005). This is particularly significant for the so-called endangered languages of the world for whom a new domain of use can make a difference to the future maintenance of the language. In this paper, I analyse the language used in the lyrics of two YouTube hip-hop songs, one sung in the Emilian variety spoken in the province of Modena, called Modena Gang, and one in Esperanto, titled Samideano. The aim is to capture how the identity of the artist as a member of the speech community is represented in the lyrics, and how the function of rap music fulfils the main communicative objectives of the songs. As both songs are available on YouTube, the digital space afforded by the platform provides opportunities for the artists and their languages to reach a wider, global audience. I take inspiration from studies conducted in the similar contexts, such as Cutler & Røyneland (2015), Brunstad et al. (2010), Røyneland & Jensen (2020), Opsahl & Røyneland (2016), and Røyneland (2018) in multilingual Norway, Moriarty (2019) in Irish classrooms, Ridanpää & Pasanen (2009) in the Inari Sami community, and Simeziane (2010) on Roma rap in Hungary, to analyse how the issue of language attitudes interacts with the political nature of rap music to tell stories of identities and belonging.

This study is part of a broader research project which compares language attitudes and practices of language maintenance in the speech communities of Esperanto and Emilian. Emilian was chosen as the main language I grew up hearing in my childhood, thus placing my positionality at the core of the research design and of the interpretation of data. Emilian is a Gallo-Italic language family historically spoken in the geographical area roughly corresponding to the western side of the modern Italian administrative region of Emilia Romagna (Hajek 1997). As a language family that developed directly from Latin, Emilian can be considered a sister of Italian while lacking official status,

a standard orthography and not being taught in schools (Foresti 2010). Despite being commonly known as *dialetto* (Italian for ‘dialect’), Emilian is not a regional variety of Italian but rather the heritage language whose speech community has historically occupied this area of Italy (for example Foresti 2010).

Esperanto was selected as a fellow minoritised language which boasts an increasing level of vitality and is therefore in stark contrast with that of Emilian. This is despite Esperanto being a so-called constructed language, the existence of whose global community depends entirely on people’s voluntariness (Kimura 2012). Esperanto is thought to have up to two million L2 speakers¹ worldwide and around one thousand L1 speakers² (Gobbo 2021b). Conversely the vitality of Emilian has never been assessed and is only assumed to be endangered (for example, Ethnologue). The trend is partly due to the shift towards Italian which has been taking place over the past sixty years and has seen the confinement of the use of Emilian to the most familial of domains (Tufi 2013). This sociolinguistic phenomenon is known as *dilalia* (Berruto 2018) and differs from diglossia insofar that both languages are used in these less formal domains. It is plausible to assume that the competition with Italian even in the homes and on the streets is now rendering Emilian virtually redundant.

The overarching research project within which this study sits comprises three different methods of data collection to observe language attitudes and practices at the level of the perception of language, the representation of language, and lived language (this is based on Lefebvre’s spatial triad and is outlined in detail in Hampton in print). According to this model, the analysis presented in this paper focuses on the representational dimension by providing an interpretation of how the identity of the Emilian and the Esperanto speaker are negotiated in the lyrics of the two hip-hop songs under analysis. The fact that these songs belong to the genre of hip-hop is key to the unpacking of my analyses. This is because rappers engage in their music to tell true stories which are tied to their local environment as a form of protest (Stuckey 2017).

Stuckey (2017) provides historical background of rap music as a medium for social resistance and criticism and how hip-hop arrived in Europe at the end of the 1980s. The author conducted interviews with local hip-hop artists in the territory of South Tyrol, where a local variety of Austro-Bavarian is spoken, and analysed data thematically. One of the comments that is particularly telling comes from an artist called Challack who resists the idea that minoritised languages are used just for jokes and that they are therefore spoken by less intellectually capable people (Stuckey 2017). In line with

¹Learnt as a second language

²Acquired during childhood

Dyson (2006), Stuckey (2017) analyses Challack's comment to reveal how "a vernacular may inherently carry a message of subtle protest against the standard, and perhaps dominant, society" and how, in turn, "using vernaculars in rap also enhances hip-hop's subversive and resistance character". In other words, the use of the regional language indexes a specific type of language ideology which goes against that status quo and is in itself part of the speaker's language policy (Leone-Pizzighella 2019; Spolsky 2004) which is performed as social action in the form of discourse.

This conscious recognition that hip-hop artists attribute to rap music as a politicised form of protest and resistance will partly inform my analyses in section 7.4. What follows in section 7.1.1 is an overview of how speakers make use of their linguistic repertoire in Italy both at the local and higher level to provide some of the theoretical background driving my interpretation in the Emilian context. Likewise, the analyses of the song in Esperanto will be partially informed by the political context within which the language was created, as explained in section 7.1.2. Data collection and methodology are described in section 7.2, followed by an outline of the theoretical tools chosen for the analyses in section 7.3. The conclusion in section 7.5 finally wraps everything up and provides a contextualised summary of the findings and main considerations.

7.1.1 The hyperlocal practices of resistance in the polylinguaging of Italy

To understand the context within which the song *Modena Gang* is to be analysed, it is important to take a step back and look at the wider sociolinguistic dynamics at play. In the previous section, I introduced Berruto's concept of *dilalia* and briefly discussed how Emilian is now thought to be solely spoken within the domestic walls and in the most informal of social contexts alongside the use of Italian. While we do not have studies that focus on the current situation in Emilia Romagna, papers such as Alfonzetti (2017) can provide an insight into what is happening in the rest of the Italian territory where other Romance languages are spoken alongside the national language in a similar context to that of Emilian. Alfonzetti conducted a mixed-method study to observe the use of Sicilian among young speakers and concluded that the language serves as an identity-making function to its speakers in a fashion that resembles what Vandekerckhove and Britain define as "functional expansion" (Alfonzetti 2017:5).

Based on Alfonzetti's findings, Sicilian youths make use of their regional language alongside Italian and other languages to index a multifaceted identity which is simultaneously regional, national, and global. This specific interpretation of the linguistic

practices of youngsters in Sicily is afforded by the concepts of *polylinguaging*, *translinguaging*, and *metrolingualism* among others (Pennycook 2017). While they may differ slightly in their lexical appearance, these terms share the core theoretical assumption of accounting for the complexity of the sociolinguistic dynamics within which languages are currently spoken as a result of mobility. This, in turn, offer speakers a wider variety of linguistic tools to choose from in their communicative practices (Alfonzetti 2017).

Furthermore, Alfonzetti noted how Sicilian is used as part of polylinguaging as a phenomenon mostly unbeknownst to the speakers who acquire specific fragments of the language through their membership of peer groups. This is in line with other studies conducted in Europe where the revival of local languages is increasingly gaining popularity as part of cultural practices “such as music, theatre, cartoons and above all in computer-mediated communication mainly (but not exclusively) among younger speakers” (Alfonzetti 2017:437). This renewed interest may seem like a glimmer of hope in what would otherwise be a bleak future for these languages. However, Alfonzetti argues that this level of fragmented polylinguaging is not sufficient as a single means of language maintenance and, instead, a more localised and consolidated effort needs to be in place to ensure the survival of individual regional languages.

It is often the case that the revitalisation of the regional languages of Italy finds itself caught up in political discourse where it is instrumentalised as a populist tactic (for example Perrino 2013). However, not all actions taken towards the promotion of the use of regional languages at the local level are institutionally-driven. There are indeed local actors who engage in practices of revitalisation and awareness as a form of activism. Leone-Pizzighella (2019), for example, brings an analysis around local activism in the context of the Venetan language. In the author’s study, data were collected from local activists who use the hyperlocal discourse of food to link the function of indexing provenance, identity, and ideal lifestyle that people already associate with local culinary traditions to the regional language.

Crucially, these local actors operate in a way that makes the “reclaimed language accessible to people who aren’t necessarily interested in language revitalization *per se* [by] [...] (1) situat[ing] this reclaimed language in a participatory medium and (2) [...] us[ing] this medium to tell stories that their listeners can identify with” (Leone-Pizzighella 2019:16). This is something that can be arguably achieved and facilitated through rap music as I aim to demonstrate in the analyses in section 7.4.

7.1.2 The Esperanto Manifesto

As already mentioned in section 7.1, Esperanto is known as a so-called constructed language by virtue of being created by a Polish ophthalmologist named Zamenhof in 1887 (for example Korĵenkov 2010). However, since its conception the language has been gaining an increasing number of speakers all over the world to the point that it is now recognised as a fully-fledged language (Stria 2017). Based on principles such as the existence of a speech community (Stria 2015), the alignment with a set of features that is argued to characterise human language, together with its survival on voluntariness, sense of identity, and little intergenerational transmission, Esperanto can be classified as a minoritised language in the same way as Welsh, Galician, and Emilian (Kimura 2012).

Given its relative success of being spoken by millions of people globally, scholars such as Gobbo (2021b) go as far as declaring it the “most relevant International Auxiliary Language (IAL) in history”. While going into the merit of this claim is beyond the remit of this paper, it is nonetheless a testament to the vitality of the language and its community. Moving away from the established labelling of the collectiveness of speakers as a “speech community”,³ Gobbo (2021b:248) defines it as a “community of practice” which “in virtue of a shared practice [...] not only builds a shared experience among the group members but also shares a commitment to understand the experience itself”.

The shared commitment to understand the experience is partly informed by the principles set out in the Manifesto of Rauma which attempted to spell out the essence of the Esperanto culture as “a vehicle for a sense of belonging” (Gobbo 2021b:261). The interpretation of the Manifesto saw the emergence of a split in the community whereby some members were more focused on seeing the language achieving its status as the global second language (this achievement is known as Final Victory) while others engaged in the creation of an Esperanto culture (ibid). The dichotomised vision of the community was finally rejected in 2012 by the then-younger generation of Esperanto speakers who proclaimed to be invested in both objectives. The ideological clash in the Esperanto community and the idea of the final victory will be revisited in section 7.4 to inform my analysis of Samideano. In the following section I provide a brief outline of how data were selected and collected.

³For example, Kerswill (1994:24) who defines it by the existence of an “agreement on the ‘social meaning’ of various linguistic parameters”

7.2 Data and methodology

As discussed in section 7.1, this study sits within a larger project which compares Esperanto and Emilian by observing attitudes from three different perspectives (Hampton 2023). The scope of this study is to observe attitudes from the level of representation by taking an emic approach and analysing data that come from and are produced by members of the community. For this task, I decided to use so-called found data, that is data that already exist as created for a different purpose than that of the research and which need only finding (for example, Baljekar 2018). This decision allowed me to collect data that were produced independently from my research interests and therefore somewhat limits the input of my positionality on the creation of the data.

YouTube is an increasingly popular platform for entertainment and offers opportunities for young artists to reach million of views and ultimately attain fame. It is therefore an ideal place to find songs sung in the target language as it provides a window onto the world’s biggest stage. After searching for ‘Esperanto rap’ and ‘rap modenese’ (‘Modenese rap’) on YouTube, a total of two suitable songs were found for the first, and three for the second. Samideano was chosen over the other song, Esperanto-Senegal by Boozy Bouzot, because of its title (i.e., because it made reference to the membership label of the Esperantist community) likewise Modena Gang was selected instead of the artist’s other songs, namely, Giaroun and Ghirlandeina because of its mention of the Modenese community in the title.

Modena Gang is by Tobia Poppi (alias Tobi1) and is available at:

youtube.com/watch?v=8J9jz9VpUsI&list=PLK3XhosW3tqyEaKnTnfF

Samideano is by Igor Wasilewski and can be found at the Label’s website:

www.vinilkosmo-mp3.com/en/pop-rock-hip-hop-electro/eterne-rima-158/1-samideano-159.html

I purchased Igor’s album and downloaded it on my device through which I was able to access the lyrics. The transcription of Samideano (cf. Appendix F) reflects the exact structure of stanzas and verses, and spelling as what is provided by the artist when purchasing his music. As for Modena Gang, the music video has subtitles embedded which is what I used to create the transcription of the lyrics (cf. Appendix F). This variety of Emilian does not have a standard orthography and can therefore be written freely by its users. I decided to be faithful to Tobi’s choices and kept the lyrics as they appear in the music video, including spelling inconsistencies and grammatical inaccuracies. Given my intermediate competence in Esperanto and my more advanced knowledge of Emilian, I was able to translate both songs into English. This acquired

(Esperanto) and existing (for Emilian) knowledge of the languages and their community form part of my positionality as a researcher, and had a bearing on my interpretations in terms of the cultural connections that I was able to make between lyrics and the wider context. After looking at the lyrics, I selected three theoretical tools to help me unravel the main meaning-making processes of interest as described in the next section.

Initially, the plan was to interview both artists and include these as part of my data together with the comments left by YouTube users in response to the videos. I have been in contact with Tob1 for several years and while keeping in touch about my study he had also sent me his undergraduate thesis where he discussed the role of Emilian in his life. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, my data collection slowed down and in the meantime Tob1 moved away to embark on a postgraduate course. For this reason, he was no longer available to participate further in my study and I had to abandon the idea of interviewing the artists. Likewise, it did not seem viable to analyse the comments on YouTube given that of the 29 comments left for Samideano and of the 97 published under Modena Gang most are to simply congratulate the artists.

7.3 Theoretical toolbox

In order to plan my analytical process and choose the tools that I was going to need, I spent some time carefully reading and re-reading the transcripts of the songs, jotting down notes, and making sense of what I was reading until I had a mental image of what I was going to unravel. I allowed the initial idea of what the two songs were trying to say to pull me towards the linguistic features that seemed more obvious to then let those guide me further and make connections both within and across the songs. After identifying the main components of the texts that appeared of relevance, I then went on to label these meaning-making processes as *enregisterment*, *narrative archetypes*, and *metalinguistic commentary* which I discuss in this section. It is through these theoretical concepts that I was able to develop an analysis of my interpretation of the songs which could account for some of the complexities enacted by the artists and, in turn, being informed by the sociolinguistic contexts that permeates the communities as discussed in section 7.1.1 and 7.1.2.

7.3.1 Enregisterment

Within the theoretical framework of *indexicality* – according to which a sign (for example a word, a facial expression, or an item of clothing) takes on a socially recognised

meaning by virtue of co-occurring with it (Johnstone 2016) – enregisterment can be defined as the “processes and practices whereby performable signs become recognized (and regrouped) as belonging to distinct, differentially valorized semiotic registers by a population” (Agha quoted in Johnstone 2016:633). The term enregisterment derives from its basic root word *register* which, in turn, stands to mean “a set of linguistic forms linked with and constitutive of a context” (Johnstone 2016:633). As explained by Johnstone, enregisterment is a process that involves an object being linked to a specific meaning by a group of people and which is informed by beliefs of ideological, interactional, and historical nature (ibid).

I use the concept of enregisterment in my analysis to look for the elements of the process just mentioned to help me reveal the type of identity performed by the artists in each song. This means that images, words, phrases, and even whole sentences are identified in the lyrics, and their videos, as objects of enregisterment to reveal the meaning attributed to them by the artists. Crucially, this will in turn help me unearth some of the underpinning beliefs and attitudes produced in the texts. To understand whether these beliefs are resisted or simply reproduced, I analyse the narrative structure of the songs as I explain next.

7.3.2 Narrative archetypes

Due to the applied linguistic nature of this study, it may be natural to instantly think of narratives as defined in Labov & Waletzky (1997:28) as “any sequence of clauses which contains at least one temporal juncture”. While this definition is used in similar narrative archetype analyses (such as Sanders & Van Krieken 2018), in this paper I deploy narrative analysis as conceptualised within the Jungian archetype theory according to which archetypes are patterns and images that act as templates which inform our worldview. They are “elemental forces that play a vital role in the creation of the world and of the human mind itself” (Tsai 2006:649). Narrative archetypes feed on the “human inclination to communicate via stories” (Sanders & Van Krieken 2018:1), they reside in our “collective unconsciousness” (p. 2), and through repetition they allow people to recognise classic story structures and form an opinion on the characters (Green et al. 2019).

Such is the repeated exposure to these patterns that they become “story-schemas [...] that help to guide interpretations and expectations of characters, their narrative roles, and what they are likely to do over the course of the story” (Green et al. 2019:100). As explained by Sanders & Van Krieken (2018:2), “archetypes can be *event*, such birth

and initiation, *figures*, such as the hero and the trickster, or *motifs*, such as the apocalypse and the deluge” [italics and typo in original]. Although thought to be universal, narrative archetypes are culturally reinforced, thus meaning that their expression may differ across cultures (ibid).

While archetypes are present in stories as the underlying template informing the interpretation of events, they are not to be confused with the practice of storytelling. Instead, “storytellers draw on the language, signs and symbols of their culture to provide meaning through stories” (Kelsey 2021:332). Given their universality, narrative archetypes can be used to analyse a multitude of texts, from branding in marketing (Tsai 2006), to future scenarios (Lee 2021), fiction (Green et al. 2019), and all the way to music (Almén 2003). In this paper I follow Kelsey’s (2021) approach and scrutinise the language in the lyrics of Samideano and Modena Gang to reveal the *what* and *how* of narrative, with the ultimate goal of untangling how the artists use enregisterment to put their main message across.

7.3.3 Metalinguistic commentary

As a third analytical tool in this paper, I finally focus on the metalinguistic commentary offered in the lyrics. Røyneland (2018:153) defines metalinguistic comments as “language about language, where evaluations of correctness and purity, language policing, legitimacy and authenticity, and expressions of connections between language use and identity, are explicitly or implicitly made”. Jaworski et al. (2012:3) argue that “metalanguage can work at an ideological level, and influence people’s actions and priorities in a wide range of ways, some clearly visible and others much less so”. “Metalanguage matters to sociolinguistics” because “it is in the interplay between usage and social evaluation that much of the social “work” of language – including pressures towards social integration and division, and the policing of social boundaries generally – is done” (Jaworski et al. 2012:3).

Although brief, the analysis that I draw from the few excerpts available in the songs will contribute to the overall interpretation of the data by further corroborating the analytical considerations discussed around narrative archetypes and enregisterment. These are important comments that can offer an insight into some of the language attitudes resisted and perpetuated by the artists, what problem they are trying to fix, and what social function the language is fulfilling in relation to their identity.

7.4 Analysis: sitting on the same bench with granddad in Piazza Duomo

This analysis is interested with the semiotics of rapping as a means to communicate the artists’ story and in interpreting the story narrated in the lyrics. As previously discussed in section 7.2, the texts (here used in its widest sense to also include images) are analysed using the theoretical concepts of enregisterment, narrative archetypes, and metalanguage. The first section of the analyses focuses on rapping as a communicative practice which contributes to the creation of meaning in the songs, while the second part, that is section 7.4.2 and 7.4.3, is dedicated to the analysis of the lyrics in terms of their structure and sociolinguistic content.

7.4.1 Rapping in solidarity and in distance

Both Samideano and Modena Gang are marketed as either hip-hop or rap music by their respective artists. The album *Eterne Rima*, which contains Samideano, is labelled as rap and hiphop on the author’s website, whereas Modena Gang is described as “Modenese rap” as part of its title on YouTube. Samideano presents itself as a typical hip-hop song which starts with a sung rhyming chorus, shifts to rapped verses in rhyme (AA, BB, BCB, and other patterns), and directly puts the artist in a dialogue with the listener. The use of first-person as part of the narration is one of the main features of rap music as it culturally originates from the practice of storytelling (Keyes 2004).

Rap music traces its origins from African American music and is characterised by “stock lyrical topics and tropes shared by performers and understood by both musicians and their audiences, many of which makes sense only in the contest of a given genre” (Stoia et al. 2018:332). Due to racial political matters, in the 1980s musicians started exploiting the resistive nature of hip-hop culture to explicitly challenge institutions, such as the police and governments, thus giving rise to the dangerous and violent image that this genre is popularly known for (ibid). To be recognised as rap artists, musicians are expected to perform authentically through an auto-biographical style which is executed as a form of acting in what Quinn identifies two particular archetype characters, namely, “the “badman” and the pimp/trickster” (quoted in Stoia et al. 2018:335).

In this section I demonstrate how first-person narration is used in Modena Gang and Samideano together with some of the main tropes of rap music. I do this by drawing parallels across the two songs and highlighting contrasts which underpin the main

performative strategies in the lyrics. This is not done with the intention to provide an in-depth analysis of the text. Instead, I focus on the forms of dialogue, as in conversation, created by the artists at a higher level to reveal how distance and solidarity in their relationship with the audience are enacted. A more detailed analyses of linguistic choices will follow in section 7.4.2 and 7.4.3 to build on the analysis presented here.

Modena Gang exhibits several features from rap discourse. For example, Tobi refers to himself in the third person, uses swear words and other key words such as ‘gang’ and ‘friends’ (the latter both in Emilian and English), makes a reference to free-styling and reproduces typical short sentences like ‘Yeah, yeah I’m back’, ‘Come on’, and ‘So, listen carefully’. These short sentences fulfil a multitude of functions including establishing a dialogue with the listener and, within that, affirming the artist as an authoritative and powerful interlocutor (see, for example, Richardson 2006 for a more detailed discussion of the features that characterise Hiphop discourse).

In the first stanza, Tobi creates an atmosphere of anticipation and excitement which is construed as pre-existing to the song in his dialogue with his friend, Cappi, and the audience (cf. Table 7.1). The author presents himself as someone whose return had been requested all the way from the Emilian-Tuscan border (i.e., Sestola⁴) and whose new song is going to exceeds people’s expectations. Cappi and Tobi are about to give the listeners what they have been waiting for (i.e., a song in Emilian) by bringing balance to the music repertoire of the city which is seemingly under the influence of trap music.

The use of the second singular person when addressing the listener is expected in rap music as it recreates the conversational setting of a dialogue. In Samideano the dialogue is between the artist and the listener who is assumed to be a fellow Esperantist (i.e., *samideano* meaning comrade but more literally member of the like-minded people group [translation my own]). Through a series of rhetorical questions in the chorus, Igor wonders if the listener is waiting for Esperanto to win (cf. Final Victory in section 7.1.2) and therefore puts himself in a dynamic of solidarity whereby both artist and listener are pondering on the future of Esperanto. The rhythm is slow, the melody is not very complex, and the dialogue is presented as an internal thought process as reflections on his experience of what it means to live as an Esperantist.

The dialogue created by Tobi differs quite substantially to what just described for Samideano. The lyrics in Modena Gang contain imperatives which demand attention and allow Tobi to perform paternalistic acts towards the listener. While he refers to the

⁴This is a very popular destination for skiing in this part of the region and also one of the most known and furthest of rural places within the province.

Table 7.1: Modena Gang: Stanza 1

EMILIAN	ENGLISH
Sè, sè, a sun turnè	Yeah, yeah, I’m back
Mo sè sta chiet, mo sè dai	Yeah, calm down, yeah come on
Oh Cappi... mo second te...	Hey Cappi... what do you reckon...
Gl’in prout chelor??	Are they ready, this lot??
DAI	COME ON
Cappi prepèra la ciclo ch’ag e di putein	Cappi get the bike ready coz there’s some kids
Inzéma al tricilo ch’i fan trap	On the tricycle who’re playing trap
Me sun turnè perché i’m an ciamè cun la sirena	I’m back coz they called me with the siren
Dall’altopiano Sestola	From the upland Sestola
E tot i ragaz ed Modena i în chè c’aspeten	And all the kids of Modena are there waiting
Na traza in dialet et voilà	For a track in dialect and voila
Ma te t’al se che chè, nella città,	But you know that here, in the city,
LA QUALITA’ LA PORTA TOBI1	QUALITY IS BROUGHT BY TOBI1 [ITA]

gang as his friends, he is telling the listener that he does not care about what they want despite professing to have delivered on their expectation of realising a new ear-splitting song. The relationship does not appear balanced with Tobi welcoming the listener to join the gang as a friend, and therefore as his equal, while also acting with authority and superiority, ordering the listener to ‘give it a rest’ and ‘listen carefully’. The visual content of the videos uploaded for each song provides support to this analysis. The video for Samideano is of Igor on his own, sitting on a bench, in a world of predominantly grey colours, slow movements and solitude whereas that for Modena Gang is dynamic, busy with shots of Ghirlandina (the bell tower of the Duomo, the main cathedral in Modena), and drone footage of the city centre with people walking by (this was done to overcome the restrictions in place at the time due to the Covid pandemic).

Igor’s strategy draws in the listener/viewer via a sense of empathy and solidarity while Tobi’s video and music are seemingly centred around the aspect of popularity. Both artists make use of symbolism in the landscape in their music videos. The bench on which Igor sits and mentions in the lyrics symbolises solidarity and inner reflection whereas the city centre shown in Modena Gang is a place for socialising and sharing ideas. In the following section I analyse the language in the lyrics in more detail to

further elaborate on these initial considerations.

7.4.2 Narratives of rebirth and quest

After discussing how the artists make use of dialogue to place themselves either on the same level as the listener (Samideano) or seemingly above them (Modena Gang), I will now go on to analyse what archetypal narrative is underpinning each song. As seen in section 7.3.2, archetypal narratives can be analysed to reveal the cognitive schemata which we unconsciously recognise to fill in the information between two or more events (Green et al. 2019). Understanding what archetypal narrative is at play in the two songs can provide further insights into the emotional framing within which the artists packaged their story. This is going to be further corroborated with the help of enregisterment and metalinguistic comments in the latter part of this section.

Starting with Samideano, I have already discussed how this song resembles a process of inner reflection in which Igor is both alone (as also mirrored in the music video) and in the company of the imaginary fellow Esperantist/s. To reveal the narrative structure of Samideano, the main events must first be identified. The song has a strong focus on the theme of final victory related to the ideological split which emerged following the Manifesto of Rauma (cf. section 7.1.2) and due to which a proportion of Esperantists (here used as defined by Wood 1979) identified the activity of the community as one engaged with ensuring Esperanto becomes the only international language of the world. Within this context, the final victory would ultimately work in synchrony with the wider aspirations of creating a fairer, more equal, and more peaceful world supported by a global community of Esperantists. Reflecting on this, Igor speculates that Esperanto may have already won but that due to the ways in which people (i.e., fellow Esperantists presumably) decided to act, this victory has not been reported, portrayed as such, nor communicated quite enough. This, Igor states, does not matter because he is contented with the friends that he has been able to make via the use of Esperanto and, perhaps more importantly, because the world is unable to change no matter how hard one tries or even fights.

Through the appreciation of the socio-cultural context within which the idea of the final victory has come to be, I feel confident identifying this as one of the main events in Igor's narrative. With the final victory standing as an ideal to pursue which is ideologically informed and imposed by peers, Igor's decision of not partaking in this action and instead settling with what he already has, comes to resemble a narrative archetype of rebirth and transformation underpinned by a revolution. Under this analysis, it is

the inner reflection performed through the dialogue with the imaginary comrade that reveals itself as an act of rebirth.

By starting off his Esperanto journey, acting as a true Esperantist and pondering on the value of its final victory, Igor made friends all over the world and realised that he does not need to pursue this ideal to give purpose to his membership of the community. Instead, he finds purpose in the experience of making connections across the globe, and simply speaking the language – because he wants to. This rebirth is an act of rebellion against the prescriptive conceptualisation of being an Esperantist and one of resistance in the face of the prejudice and loneliness that he encounters when speaking Esperanto.

Even though subtle, the narrative structure of *Samideano* is relatively straightforward insofar that it is one identifiable interpretation of the focal events in the lyrics. When analysing *Modena Gang*, I realised that the lyrics run across two parallels – or rather, two intertwined narrations. As explained above, the song opens with some typical language of the hip-hop discourse through which the artist creates anticipation and affirms their authority with the listener. The first two stanzas and the following chorus are what I would define as ‘noise’ as they simply reproduce the tropes of rap discourse by welcoming the artist on stage, describing the plan to sort out the rival gang (the kids who play trap), and presenting *Modena Gang* as a group of friends who throw stones (a reference to one of Tobi’s other rap songs *Giaroun*, ‘Stone’), sit on top of the lions (these are Roman sculptures which sit outside of San Geminiano’s Cathedral, also known as *Duomo* of Modena), and play pool to have fun. While this creates a sense of camaraderie which is also present in *Samideano*, it is done in a carefree and exuberant way. In *Samideano*, friendship is discussed in terms of values and goals whereas being part of *Modena Gang* is about having fun, and partly so in mischievous ways.

This narrative of unruly camaraderie in *Modena Gang* is however a mere vessel for what I consider to be the real message. In other words, Tobi is making use of rap discourse to disguise his true intention, and that is teaching *Modena Gang* something very important. In the third stanza (cf. Table 7.2), Tobi admits that he wants to teach *Modena Gang* that there is no need to talk badly and using words such as ‘snitch’, ‘bitch’, ‘weeda’, and ‘dessert’. All of these are loan words which, with the exception of ‘dessert’, are typical of rap discourse even in the Italian genre. However, ‘knife’, ‘money’, and ‘brother’ – also lexical items frequently used in rap music – are kept in Emilian. When Tobi refers to the act of talking badly, I am inclined to deduce that he is referring to the language of rap (drugs and violence) as well as the mere use of foreign words. He is taking a purist approach to language policy to then go on to bemoan that he is being serious, and that speaking dialect is not easy but the only way to get the

Table 7.2: Modena Gang: Stanza 3

EMILIAN	ENGLISH
Dounca, ascoltamo bein:	So, listen carefully:
Mè a sun chè e a fag c'al lavor chè perchè mè	I'm here doing this thing because I perchè mè
A voi insgner a la Modena gang Ch'an gh'è brisa bisagn ed ciacarèr mèl ch'an	Want to teach Modena gang That there's no need to talk badly coz
M'in ceva gninta di snitch e cultel	I don't give a fuck of snitch and knife,
Di bitch e dener, di te o to fardel, di weeda e dessert	Of bitch and money, you or your hitches, of weeda and dessert
Ch'a voi sul druver al mic	Coz I only want to use the mic
Per dir a Modena e a tôt i so fiô ch'ag è Tobi sul beat	To tell Modena and all its children that Tobi goes with the beat
Ag avî da capir! L'é na storia séria e parlèr	You must understand! It's serious and speaking
In dialet al n'è menga po facil	dialect isn't easy
L'è l'ônica via per ferem sculter da ueter	It's the only way to get you to hear me
Ragaz ch'a pinsèe ai vistî nôv	Kids who care about new clothes

Table 7.3: Modena Gang: Stanza 10

EMILIAN	ENGLISH
Per tramander un lavor: La tradizioun ed la zitè... ch’ag avam in dal cor	To transmit something: The tradition of the city... which we carry in our heart

attention of the audience.

It is in the tenth and final stanza (cf. Table 7.3) that the aforementioned conflict between not caring about the listener’s wants and delivering on their request becomes clear. This is where Tobi reveals his mission to keep on transmitting the tradition of the city, and that is to keep speaking dialect. Tobi is therefore making use of rap music and its power to get through to the youths of Modena to deliver this important message. Put simply, this type of narrative reflects the quest archetype as Tobi sets himself the task (a quest) of keeping the tradition going. A quest is normally enacted when there is a problem that calls for a solution. While the solution may be easily identifiable – albeit through the interpretation of metaphors – as the act of encouraging the people of Modena (Modena Gang) to speak dialect, the problem is not clearly spelt out.

Using the same metaphor of tradition which Tobi uses to refer to dialect, it is possible to interpret some of the verses in the fourth stanza (cf. Appendix F) as the problem to solve. In this stanza, Tobi complains about the lack of values displayed by the youths who seem to only care about new, expensive clothes, and seeking useless jobs. The concept of tradition goes hand in hand with that of principles and values. Within this metaphor it is possible to deduce that in order to save a generation which lacks values and direction, the championing of traditions is a necessary measure.

7.4.3 Enregistering ideals in Esperanto and Emilian

So far, my analyses bring me to two seemingly different yet overlapping interpretations of the songs. In section 7.4.1 the performative function of dialogue in the lyrics was under scrutiny and revealed how empathy and solidarity are central to Samideano, while in Modena Gang the focus is on image and being popular. Both are common performances found in the discourse of hip-hop music, but while the narrative analysis presented in section 7.4.2 further supported the initial interpretation of Samideano as a song about solidarity and, within that, the rebirth of a new form of membership, Modena Gang revealed itself as a quest.

This quest is not about what Tobi makes it out to be in the first stanza (i.e., showing up the kids playing trap music) but it has to do with keeping the tradition of speaking Emilian alive. In this sense then, the rap discourse exhibited in Modena Gang is not a means in itself, as it is for Samideano, but a means to a different end. That is, Tobi is purposely making use of a meaning-making practice which is popular among the youths to deliver a message which is typically seen as old-fashioned and unpopular. Modena Gang is really just a Trojan horse, pretending to be the ear-splitting track everyone was waiting for but actually serving as an opportunity to reach the target audience and expose them to the solution that they did not know they needed.

I will now go on to show how some of the language used in both songs is done in a way that reflects the widespread understanding of who the typical speaker of Esperanto and Emilian is. I analyse these linguistic practices through the concept of enregisterment and couple this with some metalinguistic considerations which are afforded by the lyrics. This final aspect of the analyses will complete the picture by providing a representational element of who the artist is embodying in their narrative and ultimately who the ideal speaker of each language is.

The lyrics of Samideano are considerably shorter than those of Modena Gang and it is therefore understandable that fewer items for the analysis can be found. Nonetheless, Igor's linguistic choices are rich of instances of enregisterment, such as *samideano* ("comrade"), *ĉu vi laboras por pli bona mondo?* ("are you working for a better world?"), *familia rondo* (family circle), *bona homo* ("good person"), *amiko/j* ("friend/s"), and *nenia muro* ("no walls"). These linguistic items make reference to some of the principles promoted in the Prague Manifesto (Gobbo 2021b), such as creating a democratic world by embodying the values needed for the creation of a better society and ultimately acting as a good person.

To live accordingly to the ideals of the Esperanto movement, as set out by its founder, means to come together in a global familiar circle (Gobbo 2021a), attending local and international congresses, and valuing a multilingual and multi-ethnic world through one language and one community. In this sense, joining the Esperanto movements frees you of barriers (no walls) and grants you membership to a global citizenship.

The lexical items listed above make clear reference to the Esperanto discourse and therefore offer themselves as opportunities to either be perpetuated or questioned and resisted. This is especially important in a context such as that of a rap song where, for directness and flow, language needs to be economic and to the point. This is also evident in the lyrics of Modena Gang where Tobi uses noun phrases such as *ciclo* ("motorbike"), *putein* ("children"), *arnés e i trapèl* ("tools and knick-knacks"), *trapel*

e zavai (“rumble-bumble”) *zugam a biliard* (“we’ll play pool”), and *tôt i so fiô* (“all its children”). Not only are these less-known words of the Emilian variety of Modena – understanding them would index close exposure to the language – but they are also the typical words used by Emilian-speaking grandparents.

This is further supported by the following verse:

‘la ginta ch’la salteva i fos per la lónga e spint dla voia ed deres da fer ed in quelc mod saveres cuntinter’ (people who used to jump ditches lengthways and pushed by the desire to work hard and somehow make do)

It is well known in the area that older people complain about the younger generations for not working as hard as they did in their youth. To tease them, they would say that, at their age, they used to jump ditches length-ways. This is a literal translation of what can only be interpreted as a person who can do the impossible to overcome problems. This idea – and ideal – of tireless perseverance is echoed in the second part of the coordinate sentence which goes on to further elaborate on describing these people as hardworking and able to make do. These are widespread traditional values in the community of Modena which are however in stark contrast with how Tobi describes his peers.

While in Samideano Igor uses enregisterment to show membership to the Esperanto community as an equal, Tobi uses it to act as the typical speaker of Emilian: a granddad. He does so by using the stereotypical phrases an Emilian-speaking old person would say and, perhaps most importantly, he does this whilst performing an act of reprimand (1-2):

1. ‘dounca, ascoltamo bein’ (so, listen carefully)
2. ‘dag mo un tai’ (give it a rest)

In their study on the use of Ladin in caregiver-child interactions, Fellin (2001:50) shows how the regional language is perceived as being more authoritative and serious than Italian as it is used for speech acts such as “ordering, threatening, scolding, and disciplining”. This function is also an enregistered aspect of Emilian and of which Tobi is making use (either consciously or unconsciously). Under this light, Modena Gang can be read as a song which is about a young man, embodying the identity of the typical speaker of Emilian telling off his grandchildren for not following the traditions they are working hard on transmitting.

A final consideration goes to the metalinguistic commentary found in the lyrics of both songs. These are listed below (3-7):

3. *‘Me a sun ed Modna, a ciacar in dialet’* (I am from Modena, I speak dialect)
4. *‘A volte dicono Tobi parla italiano, allora stavolta ti rispondo chiaro, I say what I want, this is my slang, lo slang ed tota la Modena Gang!’* (Sometimes they say Tobi speak Italian [ITA] So this time I’ll be clear [ITA], I say what I want, this is my slang, the slang of the whole Modena Gang!)
5. *‘T’en cata gninta ed boun, al vocabulari in dialet l’e’ la ginta’* (You won’t find anything good, the dictionary of dialect is the people)
6. *‘e parlar in dialet al n’e’ menga po facil’* (and speaking dialect isn’t easy)
7. *‘Multaj homoj miras kial mi Esperanton parolas, la klarigo estas simpla: mi tiel volas’* (Many people wonder why I speak Esperanto the explanation is simple: I want to)

Excerpts 3 places one’s provenance from Modena on the same logical level as speaking dialect, as if the latter were an assumption deducible from the former. Being from Modena therefore becomes something that goes hand in hand with the use of the regional language and, presumably, should not be questioned because natural and simply the way things should be. This nonchalant representation of the self as a young person from Modena speaking dialect is however in stark contrast with reality. This is referenced in excerpt 4 where Tobi makes use of English to rebel against the expectations that people have on him speaking Italian, and reclaims dialect as a form of slang. The reclaiming process starts from the self and goes on to expand and include all of the people in Modena, thus rendering this slang a badge of belonging; the in-group language which grants membership to its speakers.

In true Esperantist spirit, Igor never sways away from Esperanto (using words and phrases from other languages is frowned upon and known as *krokodili* in the Esperanto community as described in Fiedler & Brosch 2022) but what he says in excerpt 7 is very similar to what just explained for 3 and 4. Once again, the scene is set up by introducing a stigmatised judgement on the artist’s choice of speaking the language, this then leads on to the answer which is packaged as a frustrated and simple truth: they do it because they want to. Voluntariness is arguably a shared feature of all minoritised languages, including Esperanto (Kimura 2012), and the frustration expressed in these similar verses can be interpreted in two ways. The first, and perhaps more obvious, is that the musicians are annoyed for having their choices constantly questioned and judged. The second is what I speculate to be a more latent frustration at play and that is a form of resentment towards others who do not follow suit.

The Esperanto movement can be classified as a form of activism which promotes world peace. Likewise, a young artist singing in protest of modern times and in favour of traditions is, in itself, an act of activism. As activists, both artists may perceive the lack of change (Emilian) or slow change (Esperanto) as disheartening, and mature resentment towards their fellow community members for not taking action. Despite coming with its challenges (cf. excerpt 6), resentment seems to be even more prevailing when all it would take is to simply want to do it (as both musicians make a point of). In this optic, both songs can be interpreted as acts of resistance. Samideano opposes the essentialisation of the ideal Esperantist who focuses over ensuring the language becomes the only *lingua franca*. Likewise, Modena Gang is about rebelling against societal norms (stigma on dialect and modern values) and the status quo through the pretence of promoting traditions to ultimately reconnect with the older generations who embody this cultural knowledge (cf. excerpt 5). Ultimately, this brings me to interpret the role of both artists as one of heroic nature within their respective archetypal narrative of quest and rebirth.

7.5 Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyse two rap songs which discuss identity and membership of a minoritised community of practice. This was done with the intention of revealing how the musicians make use of rap discourse to put their story across, and how, in turn, that contributes to their meaning-making strategies. Through the lens of narrative archetypes both artists can be seen as heroes who share similar aims but are on different journeys. The analysis of Samideano revealed coherence in the structure of the narrative and its content whereby Igor’s hip-hop song exploits the resistive nature of this genre to reject the idealistic vision of the Esperantist as someone who is solely focussed on reaching the final victory. This form of resistance is historically and ideologically contextualised in the discussion to argue for an interpretation which sees this rebellion as a rebirth of Igor’s experience. The lyrics are rich with enregistered language of the Esperanto community and are used to reproduce the ideals of the status quo criticised by Igor. The narrative archetype underpinning the musician’s story is not one of defeatism but of transformation – the rebirth of his identity as an Esperantist.

The analysis of Modena Gang embarked on a slightly more intricate journey. Tobi follows the discourse of rap to seemingly complain about rival gangs. However, the analysis revealed that the real objective for the resistance is in fact the lack of direction and values that his peers seem to be embracing as part of modernity. Through this song,

Tobi is performing a speech act of reprimand towards his peers. He does so by using the enregistered language of an Emilian granddad and by telling his grandchildren off for not keeping up speaking the language. The archetypal narrative lying underneath is one of quest which sees Tobi on a mission to ensure the traditions of the city are kept alive.

Modena Gang makes use of rap to wrap up a message about tradition and does so by giving it a modern twist. This works in two ways: rap becomes a bit more traditional (banning bad language), and dialect is portrayed as modern and relevant; a language whose usability goes beyond the practices of tradition. Wrapping tradition into modernity is a tongue-in-cheek statement that I purposefully chose as part of the title to reclaim the connotation that these languages have of being old fashioned. The use of the languages adds to the rebellious function of rap and does so in a way that allows for the musicians to reach their target audience. A digital platform such as YouTube further enhances their reach and instantly renders the hyperlocal global whilst elevating “its status and broaden[ing] its indexical fields” (Eckert quoted in Leone-Pizzighella 2019:85).

The very presence of a rap song in Emilian on a global channel such as YouTube can act as a novelty which appeals to youths. This is something that Tobi exploits to reach his peers. He does this to claim a digital space for the language and to put his controversial message across – in a similar way as local language activists operate in Veneto by linking the connotations of traditional food to Venetan (cf. section 7.1.1). Rap discourse is used to “tell stories tied to the local environment” (Stuckey 2017:25). Both musicians adapt their story to speak a truth with which their listeners can identify as members of the same community. By doing so they are able to convey their attitudes towards the language as something highly valuable. Igor values it for its social function as a means to make friends all over the world, whereas Tobi portrays Emilian as a valuable vessel of cultural knowledge and tradition.

This emic approach to the study of language attitudes and practices of maintenance in Emilian and Esperanto show how the inclusion of young community members is essential to the creation of revitalisation efforts that are in line with the needs and interests of the generation. While there is still a lot of work to be undone and redone, the presence of local actors engaged in language activism is a signal of hope and something that should arguably be embraced in academic cooperation. Likewise, the research presented in this article conveys the importance of comparing minority language with Esperanto which, despite its successful appearance, deals with similar issues of stigma and disregard.

Chapter 8

Triangulating Data on the Attitudes, Competence, and Use (ACtUS) of Emilian and Esperanto

Pulling together the results from three different methods of data collection and analyses across two minoritised languages – namely, Emilian and Esperanto – this paper addresses language attitudes and language support from a perspective of interconnectedness. Findings are discussed to show the current state of language maintenance of the two languages together with the language attitudes that surround them. Both languages boast positive connotations of community-making, intimacy, and sense of belonging. The temporal trajectory is however in stark contrast across the two, with Emilian seen as stuck in the past versus a forward-looking image for Esperanto. Language as heritage is proposed as a solution to inform efforts for language support while the comparison between the two data sets allow for an in-depth discussion which leads to the conceptualisation of ACtUs as an integrated framework for language maintenance in a white, European context.

8.1 Introduction

In this paper I triangulate the results from three different studies conducted on Emilian and Esperanto in an attempt to gauge the current language attitudes and language use in the two communities. The data and analyses presented and discussed here are the final step of an overarching triangulation model adopted as a research design at the outset. As I will explain in section 8.3, the model comprises the following three different methods of data collection: a sociolinguistic questionnaire administered as an online survey, diary for research method, and found data in the form of two rap songs published on YouTube. Through each method, data were collected and analysed as studies on language attitudes and maintenance in their own right. This was done to observe linguistic behaviours from three interconnected perspectives, namely, how language and its speakers are perceived, how they are represented, and how language is lived.

Esperanto and Emilian are the two language communities under investigation in this comparative study. Emilian is the name given to the Gallo-Italic language family historically spoken in the geographical area which roughly coincides with the region of northern Italy known as Emilia (part of Emilia-Romagna) (Vitali 2020). As a member of the community, this language was chosen because of importance to me personally and as a researcher. Despite being known as a dialect – crucially even so in the relevant literature (see for example Maiden & Parry 1997) – Emilian is a sister language of Italian, Spanish, and all other Romance languages, having developed directly from Latin (Ledgeway & Maiden 2016; Grassi et al. 1997; Foresti 2010). As stated by Hajek (1997) in 1997, Emilian lacked, and still lacks, a survey of its vitality and, as such, it is only estimated to be endangered due to the shift to the use of Italian even in the most familial of domains, such as at home and on the streets (see for example *Ethnologue* and *Endangered Languages Project*).

Esperanto is a so-called constructed language which was developed and launched at the end of the nineteenth century by Polish ophthalmologist Zamenhof with the intention of seeing it become the main auxiliary language in the world (Kiselman 2008). Given the level of success that this language obtained in gaining an estimated number of 1,000 first-language speakers and around 2,000,000 second-language speakers (Fiedler & Brosch 2018; Pereltsvaig 2017), together with its similarities with other minority languages (Kimura 2012), Esperanto was chosen as the second language in the comparison. The aim is to compare the linguistic practices of the thriving community of Esperanto with those of the increasingly declining Emilian community, to answer the

following research questions:

- 1) What is the current state of affairs of the linguistic attitudes and practices for Emilian and Esperanto? What are the differences and similarities across the two? [RQ1]
- 2) What can the findings from the Esperantist community tell us about efforts for language revitalisation in the context of Emilian and other historically marginalised languages? [RQ2]

The triangulation of results across the three methods is presented in the first part of the analysis section. This is followed by the second and final section in which I develop an integrated model for language revitalisation centred around attitudes, competence, and use, named ACtUS. I do this while addressing both research questions, by packaging up the main findings from the comparative study, and as a contribution to our understanding of the dynamics at play in the endangerment of minoritised languages in a European context of internal colonisation.

8.2 Theoretical background

Before moving onto the methodology in section 8.3 and the analysis in section 8.4, I now provide the theoretical context within which I designed the project and interpreted the data collected for the overarching study. Instead of offering an overview of the theoretical concepts adopted to analyse data, here I focus on the underpinning ontological and epistemological approaches to the broader issues of language which informed the study. I start by justifying how this study can be of valuable help from both a practical and scholarly perspective, by conceptualising language as part of our interconnected environment, and then zoom in on the more nuanced dynamics of language ideology and linguistic citizenship.

8.2.1 Language as heritage

As a comparative study focused on attitudes around two marginalised languages, this study can be thought to pertain to the field of inquiry of language endangerment. Going into the specifics of how language endangerment, language maintenance and language revitalisation can be defined according to different perspectives and parameters is beyond the scope of this study. I do, however, acknowledge the ongoing debates around the use of this terminology and subscribe to the definition provided by

Sallabank (2013:2) for endangered languages as those languages “with a dwindling elderly population of traditional speakers”, and in combining language revitalisation and maintenance under the umbrella of *language support*. According to Marquis and Sallabank (cited in Sallabank 2013), language support is “an overarching term for the support (encouragement, assistance, funding) of any activities that promote the use of an endangered language, including preservation and development (which are themselves contested terms)” (Sallabank 2013:10-11).

Although the author preempts the contestedness of the terms used in the definition of language support, Sallabank’s mention of “preservation”, as an activity arguably needed for the promotion of endangered languages, is a metaphor that maps onto the discourse of heritage. In the field of heritage studies, heritage was initially defined as anything that is “culturally durable” (Howard 1994), and more recently re-elaborated to more nuanced definitions, such as heritage as “one social imaginary used by people to define identity in relation to ideas about the past” (Ashley & Frank 2016). Nonetheless, in this optic heritage is still conceptualised as something to do with the past that needs preserving and protecting. This vision is rooted in the fields of archaeology and anthropology which first informed and helped give rise to the discipline of heritage studies (Waterton & Watson 2013).

Using the terminology of preservation for the issue of language endangerment is one of several ways in which scholars justify the reason why endangered languages should be actively supported in an effort to gain speakers and domains of use. I too subscribe to the link between language and heritage but do so through the lens of interconnectedness as argued by Harrison (2015a). Building on Rose (2011) and Rose & Robin (2004), Harrison (2015a) reframes heritage as “connectivity ontologies” which he defines as “modalities of becoming in which life and place combine to bind time and living beings into generations of continuities that work collaboratively to keep the past alive in the present and for the future” (27).

Furthermore, Harrison (2015b) draws on the “idea of heritage as an assemblage”; the latter defined as “heterogeneous groupings of humans and non-humans” (306) by Harrison but first introduced in posthumanist philosophy by Deleuze & Guattari (1988). This way “the hierarchy of relationships that exists within modern Cartesian thinking” can be flattened by focusing “on the ways in which things and people are involved in complex, interconnected webs of relationships across time and space” (ibid). It is within this theoretical framework that I build on Harrison’s assemblages to understand language *as* heritage and “not only as something carried forward (like baggage) but also as an integral aspect of an individual’s everyday life and worldview” (Eaton &

Turin 2022:796).

To conceptualise language as heritage in a relational view of interconnectedness allows me to provide meaning to the endeavour of researching a language in a context of *language erasure*. As I discuss in Hampton (2022), I refer to language erasure as those sociolinguistic contexts in which the language is somewhat maintained despite not being consciously acknowledged by its speakers (this seems to be the case for Lombard and Piedmontese too, as discussed in Soria 2015). For Emilian – and specifically for the varieties of Modena and Bologna¹ – this can be observed in the way in which speakers believe that their regional language is a mere bad version of Italian. Due to the fact that it is not thought to be a language, in the same way as French and English are, Emilian is not considered as something that *needs* maintaining to survive.

When the lack of awareness prevents speakers from seeing their ancestral language as something valuable and worth passing on into the future, it can be very discouraging for a scholar engaged in efforts of language support. However, by understanding language as heritage, and as a dynamic “enactment of everyday life” which is “lived and embodied” (Eaton & Turin 2022:799), even in contexts of language erasure researchers can find intrinsic value in engaging with the community. While an emic approach can provide insightful evidence for how the community perceives the language (i.e., not a language), an etic perspective allows the researcher to observe the ancestral language as part of a person’s range of opportunities to create and embody specific meanings, identities, and sense of belonging.

I argue that this conceptualisation also transcends the dualism between language and dialect which so deeply entrenches the context of Emilian (cf. section 8.1). By focusing on Emilian as part of the heritage of the community (with an emphasis on the future, rather than the past), efforts for language support can be spent on reinforcing an existing idea instead of forcing the unlearning and re-learning of what Emilian is. As explained in Foresti (2010:v), the regional languages of Italy have historically informed the transmission of wisdom throughout the generations in terms of societal norms, values and beliefs, the semiotics of the world, local understandings of weather patterns, and even the names for plants and animals. To understand language as heritage is to go beyond the assumption that language is a vehicle for transmission – rather, it is heritage itself. In the case of Emilian, it follows that in order to support the language it would require to promote it as a traditional activity already successfully maintained in the community – adding an extra layer of culture to be transmitted. The same

¹I specify this as other areas of the region may present different degrees of awareness, such as Piacenza where the local authority has been promoting the use of the language.

can be argued for Esperanto. Instead of perceiving and portraying Esperanto as a vehicle to transmit the culture of the movement (as advocated by some Esperantists and as discussed in Chapter 7), with its enactment at a global level the language can be reconceptualised as embodiment of the world's heritage.

Language as heritage is not just a useful concept to provide motivation to a researcher, but it is also the theoretical grounds for which a triangulation model was deemed necessary as an attempt to capture the interconnectedness of our relations with ourselves, others, and language. In other words, it is a way to reflect the assemblage of language so that it may be unpicked within a wider context. Harrison (2015b:307) explains that thinking of heritage – and therefore language – as an assemblage:

“not only helps us to understand the way it operates at the level of both material and social relations, but also helps us to focus our attention on the particular constellation of power/knowledge effects that it facilitates, that is, the relationship between heritage and governmentality. [...] These devices and texts are arranged and assembled in precise and identifiable ways, the study of which allows their capacity to control and regulate behaviour, and the various networks of agency in which they are distributed, to be better understood”.

In line with this, I now go on to explore the role of ideology as a form of power dynamic which can inform the linguistic behaviours of the two communities under investigation.

8.2.2 Language ideology, policy, and attitudes

As Mari Jones puts it in the preface of her edited volume on endangered languages, “[l]anguage policy and planning is where linguistics meets politics” (Jones 2015:xiii). Crucially, Jones continues, “whatever choices are made and implemented by language planners will be done in conformity with a particular set of beliefs and principles which [...] are not necessarily shared by the speech community” (ibid). According to Bugarski & Hawkesworth (1992), *language policy* has to do with the ideologies and beliefs that underpin language planning in a sort of symbiotic relation where one feeds into the other (Jones 2015). Schiffman (2006) elaborates on this to expand the scope of language policy to include not just “the explicit, written, overt *de jure*, official, and “top-down” decision-making about language, but also the implicit, unwritten, covert, *de facto*, grass-roots, and unofficial ideas and assumptions, which can influence the *outcomes* of

policy-making just as emphatically and definitively as the more explicit decision” (112) [*italics in original*].

Leone-Pizzighella (2019:74) goes one step further in stating that “language ideology *is* language policy [...] insofar as discourse [...] *is* social action” [*italics in original*]. The author provides the example of how the ways in which people position themselves in relation to their interlocutor informs how they behave in the conversational setup. Leone-Pizzighella (2019) argues that the positioning is related to language ideology (i.e., the beliefs held by the listener towards the language spoken by the speaker and, in turn, the speaker themselves) and this is then enacted as language policy in the form of “sanctioning, condoning, correcting” (74). Building on Spolsky (2004) and Rymes (2014) (among others), this shows the crucial role played by metadiscourse in dynamics where, for example, it “classifies particular performances under the name of one language or another” (Leone-Pizzighella 2019:74). This approach to language policy and planning is underpinned by a theoretical assumption of ecological interrelatedness between “language status and language function” (*ibid*) and is therefore in ontological alignment with my stance, as discussed above in section 8.2.1.

The form of language ideology manifested through the positioning of the listener in Leone-Pizzighella’s example can be interpreted as an instance of a psychological disposition that informs how favourably or unfavourably the language and its speaker are perceived. If this were the case, scholars such as Kircher & Zipp (2022) would argue that this is an example of an attitude and, more specifically, a *language attitude* rather than a language ideology. Based on the authors’ definition, the key difference between the two is the social level at which each operates: while language ideologies are “a community-level phenomenon [...] attitudes are affected by a broad range of factors relating to specific individuals [...] in addition to the sets of beliefs that are held at the community level” (Kircher & Zipp 2022:6).

From a psychological standpoint, “the main function of attitudes is to organise and structure stimuli in an otherwise ambiguous informational environment in order to enable individuals to adapt to this environment” (Kircher & Zipp 2022:2). It is also thought that attitudes – and therefore language attitudes too – “are socially constructed and learned from experience” (p. 3), starting from childhood in the domestic domain, to friendships, through the media and even in educational settings. Attitudes do not, however, determine a person’s behaviour, but are assumed to influence it. Through the symbolic meaning of group membership carried by language, language attitudes are not simply predispositions about a linguistic variety or feature but they are about the users, too – whether it be their “status, prestige or appropriateness” (Cargile et al.

1994, cited in Kircher & Zipp 2022:5).

As just discussed above, language attitudes operate both at the community and individual level. Attitudes can also be categorised as either explicit or implicit (cf. overt and covert attitudes in Rosseel 2022). They are said to be explicit when they manifest as personal beliefs through which individuals consciously inform their thoughts and behaviours. Likewise, attitudes are implicit when operating unbeknownst to the holder as acquired independently of a person's values and beliefs (Maio et al. 2018). The assumption is that implicit attitudes operate at the community-level as deeply rooted biases which reflect the mental representation of specific social groups that is shared in the community (Charlesworth & Banaji 2021). In addition to the level of awareness, one of the crucial differences between explicit attitudes and implicit attitudes is thought to be their stability: while the former are more susceptible to change, the latter tend to revert back to their initial state after some time (ibid).

Regardless of whether implicit attitudes are conceptualised as language ideology or as separate phenomena, the two arguably share many commonalities. For example, the normative aspect of informing how things should be, which is present in and shared across the collective mind of a community, is a fundamental feature of both implicit attitudes and language ideologies. I contend that both act as heuristics in simplifying the world and helping us seek order in our lives. Crucially, both can influence the way we speak and therefore behave, ultimately translating in forms of language policy.

In relation to the Esperanto community, this can manifest itself through the unquestioned virtue assumed to lie in the goal of the community to push for the language to become the world's auxiliary language. Likewise, the implicit associations held towards a linguistic code as inferior and not needing to be maintained can have repercussions on the ways in which speakers see themselves. In the case of Emilian, I have already referred to this as a phenomenon of language erasure that has been preventing some – arguably most – speakers from recognising themselves as bilingual or multilingual individuals. Within a framework of *linguistic citizenship*, which “rejects the essentialist interpretation of language and identity” (Tufi 2013:153), this erasure can hinder the agency of speakers in exercising linguistic citizenship “by taking linguistic matters in their own hands and away from “distant” centres of control at national and regional level” (ibid). In comparison, the linguistic citizenship of some Esperantists is bolstered by the righteousness associated with their values about the language.

Explicit attitudes can meet and clash with implicit attitudes. Attitude studies such as that of Festinger in 1957, showed that when people find themselves dealing with a conflict between their behaviour and ideological perception of it, they experience a

state of cognitive dissonance (Giles & Marlow 2011). To regain a sense of consonance, people then must either change their attitude or their behaviour, thus highlighting the crucial role of linguistic awareness and education about the language in the speech community. As already mentioned in section 8.2.1, efforts for language support aimed at changing the narrative around Emilian on the basis of heritage rather than linguistic validity would help overcome this conflict. This is discussed in more detail in section 8.4. In the following section I provide an overview of my methodology as one whose aim is to observe these dynamics in a holistic context through the conceptualisation of language as heritage, and of language ideology and attitudes as language policy. The section focuses more on the theoretical contributions fostered by single methods rather than the overarching model of triangulation and does so by making reference to some of the most recent literature in the field of language attitudes research.

8.3 Data and Methodology

The data presented here are the results of the final analytical process expected of the triangulation model designed at the output of my research. The model is explained in detail in Hampton (in print) and for which I will limit myself to provide a concise explanation for the sake of clarity. I build on Flick (2018) who argues for a definition of triangulation as a theoretical framework which allows for the systematical analysis of a given phenomenon. It is a methodological tool that makes use of a number of different methods of data collection and/or analysis in any combination, whether it be solely qualitative, quantitative, or a mix of both. While I contend that every method is never purely qualitative or quantitative, here I refer to the traditional categorisation of methods according to which it follows that a triangulation model is always multi-method in nature and oftentimes it is also mixed-method.

My triangulation model lends itself as a systematic and adaptable research tool to observe language attitudes. I integrate the communication ecology model posited by Giles et al. (2006) with Lefebvre's spatial triad (Lefebvre 1991) to capture data from three different, yet closely interconnected and interdependent, perspectives, namely, the representation of language (also meso-macro level in Giles et al.), perception of language (subjective micro level), and how language is lived (ethnographic micro level). While any combination of qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods is suited to observe data from all three dimensions, I would favour a more qualitative-based approach for lived language to allow for a more granular account of language at the level of experience.

In line with what just discussed about the model, the three methods employed for

the data collection of this study are (i) a sociolinguistic questionnaire (perception level), (ii) found data in the form of YouTube songs (representational level), and (iii) diary for research method for an ethnographic element. Methods are conducted and data are analysed as self-contained studies and only considered holistically in this final step of the model.

The use of a sociolinguistic questionnaire is a consolidated approach to gather large amounts of data in a systematic and relative quick way (see, for example Dollinger 2012). This method was enacted as an online survey administered over the summer of 2020 and allowed me to collect 434 responses from the Emilian community and 153 for Esperanto. The questionnaire was very lengthy and comprised 175 data fields which provided ground for both quantitative and qualitative analyses. While the findings from quantitative analyses on this survey are presented and discussed in Chapter 6, here I contextualise the results in light of the findings from the other two methods. In this sense, I am triangulating results in a more traditional use of the term. In line with the approach adopted by Sallabank (2013), the survey was used to capture a broad overview of attitudes in the community with the purpose to generate hypotheses and research questions later refined by the analyses from other methods.

Indeed, the statistical analyses generated on survey responses were used to gain an insight into language attitudes from the level of perception as well as to formulate hypotheses on what variables to investigate in future studies in relation to the vitality of Emilian and other similar communities. This is done by treating attitudes as an independent variable based on the theoretical assumption that attitudes can be predictive of behaviour (Gass & Seiter 2018). However, instead of using attitudes in relation to linguistic variation (for example Hawkey 2022), I check for an effect with language use (that is the places, the people, and the contexts in which the language is used). The survey also yielded qualitative data which were purposely left out in Chapter 6 to be used in this triangulation of results to either support or contrast the analysis conducted on the YouTube songs in Chapter 7. These qualitative survey data are presented in this paper exclusively and were generated by open-ended questions relating to how the respondent feel towards the language (exact wording of the questions will be provided in section 8.4).

As discussed in Chapter 7, the analysis of the lyrics and music video of two rap songs available from YouTube provide a perspective on how the idea of the speaker of Emilian and Esperanto are represented. This was done by taking an emic approach which allowed me to reveal how the representation is perpetuated, resisted, and/or renegotiated by members of the community. The main findings of this study are reiterated in

this paper to provide the representational element of the model and contribute to the analysis of the overarching study by showing how language attitudes are connected to the linguistic beliefs held at the community level (see for example König 2019). The analytical tools adopted for this method are archetypal narrative analysis, enregisterment, and metalinguistic commentary. I use these tools to analyse the discourse in the lyrics as a form of spoken interaction and, in line with Bellamy (2022:51), by embracing “the shift away from a conception of a language attitude as more or less an isolated construct of the mind, largely devoid of context, and instead [...] [moving] towards the construction of evaluations through discursive practices in interaction, where context is regarded as a significant factor”.

The third and final analytical contribution comes from the data collected through the diary (for a discussion on this method, see for example Nadin & Cassell 2006). The collection took place during a three-month period which spanned from October 2021 to January 2022 and participants were recruited via digital means such as emails, WhatsApp, and social media platforms. Participants were asked to keep a diary for two weeks and make notes on their daily interactions undertaken in the target language. Upon recruitment, participants were sent a Word document (see Appendix B) already laid out over fourteen days and comprising a linguistic autobiography (to explain the role of language and languages in their upbringing – for more on this see for example D’Agostino 2007) and fourteen diary pages to comment on: where/when/and with whom they spoke the language, what it was about, and how the interaction made them feel. The aim was to recruit five participants for each language community and while this was achieved for Esperanto, I was only able to collect three diaries for Emilian². Given the small amount of data collected through this method, I decided to present the results as part of the wider analysis of this paper.

The analysis of these diaries contribute to the model by providing an ethnographic element to the panoramic of language attitudes in the study. Ethnographic methods are characterised by “the long and sustained engagement with social actors and ‘thick description’ of social action within the context of their social, cultural, and historical situatedness” (O’Rourke 2022:273). In line with this, the initial plan was to collect data as part of fieldwork in Italy for Emilian and other parts of Europe for Esperanto. However, due to the global pandemic that took place in 2020 and for which international travel was prohibited, I had to resort to a remote way of collecting lived language data. While I set up the layout of the diary and decided what types of comments to collect,

²This is out of the 44 expressions of interest I had received, seven of which had committed to complete the diary.

the entirety of the data are created by the participants from their own perspective and lived experience over a continuous amount of time. In this sense, then, the data elicited by the diary method provide a suitable alternative for the ethnographic element by capturing how participants reflected on the ways in which their interactions unfolded in their lives.

Overall, the triangulation employed in this study – both as a theoretical framework and in the more traditional use of the word of integrating methods and results – allows to partially overcome the near-impossible challenges of observing attitudes directly. This stems from the idea that data from questionnaires and ethnographic studies are somewhat unstable and superficial due to the so-called social desirability bias. According to this bias, respondents tend to answer in a way that makes them look socially desirable (for example Grimm 2010). However, following Sallabank (2013), in my analyses I “take into account that the context of filling in a questionnaire [...] may have an effect on expressed overt attitudes, as can normative pressures; and, crucially, [...] [I accept] that respondents’ conscious verbalisation of attitudes can provide a window into underlying belief systems and ideologies” (70). In line with this, as part of my analytical toolkit I make use of tools to analyse discourse (for example Johnstone 2017) and reveal the underlying assumptions and values concealed below the text.

8.4 An analysis of the Attitudes, Competence and Use of Emilian and Esperanto

Preliminary analyses run on the qualitative data collected from the questionnaire seemed to be in line with some of the findings discussed in the literature for the two languages. Despite Esperanto being actively promoted as a language fit for all purposes and domains, the language is mostly associated with the expression of feelings (Stria 2017). This is also true of Emilian, whose main current domain of use is indeed that of very informal settings. Emilian is also strongly associated with the idea of territory as in provenance and belonging to one’s area of origin. To the best of my knowledge there are no published works on language attitudes towards Emilian. However, similar findings are discussed in Colonna (2009) in relation to speakers’ attitudes towards Romagnolo (the neighbouring sister language of Emilian) and according to which the regional language is also perceived as an important element of a person’s cultural baggage. Likewise, the data yielded from a similar survey for Piedmontese and Lombard discussed in Soria (2015) reveal overall positive attitudes for both languages with the

exception of a level of anxiety felt towards the idea of being discriminated for speaking an ‘old’ language, and a sense of doom towards its future (p.133-4).

At this stage of my analyses, the main differences in attitudes appeared to be the level of linguistic awareness and the social values that speakers associate to Emilian and Esperanto. Crucially, the latter is often linked to principles of “justice, equality and peace” (Stria 2017:154) and more recently to “equal rights and multilingualism, and the value of preservation of minority languages” (ibid); for more on this recent shift see Gobbo (2017). In contrast, Emilian is merely linked to traditions, family, and backwards thinking (i.e., speaking Emilian limits one’s opportunities rather than expanding them). This is not to say that Esperanto is immune to ideological issues; they are just of a different nature. One of these is in fact strictly connected to the high level of linguistic awareness present among Esperantists, to the point that speakers can fall into behavioural patterns of hypercorrection (Stria 2017). As witnessed by Fiedler (2002) in their data collection, such is the sense of language loyalty experienced by Esperantists that it leads them to correct and police the use of the language in others.

While the pursuit of the ideal Esperantist does not seem to be beneficial to the cause of revitalisation for other minoritised languages, the concepts of language ideology and linguistic awareness are, on the basis of this preliminary overview, fertile grounds for comparative and practical considerations. In this section, I present my analyses as a triangulation of the results obtained from all three methods of data collection and I do so by centring my interpretation around the two concepts just mentioned. First, I discuss the kind of speakers that I was able to identify in terms of identities and attitudes (section 8.4.1) to then move on to the functions that Esperanto and Emilian seem to be fulfilling in the respective community (section 8.4.2). The final section of the analyses in 8.4.3 is entirely concerned with the conflation between ideas of language, slang and dialect in the Emilian community. Despite lacking direct comparison with the Esperanto community, the discussion in this section is a product of the overall research project and is therefore informed by the data yielded from both communities.

8.4.1 Speakers, identities, and attitudes

To provide a wider context within which the data collected in the overall study can be better interpreted, I make reference to Berruto (2018) who summarises the state-of-the-arts around what is currently known on the sociolinguistic landscape of Italy. One of the sources of data used by Berruto is the census conducted by ISTAT in 2006, and presented in 2012, which collected information regarding the maintenance

of Italian and its sister regional languages across the country. In the census, around 1,850,000 respondents declared to be active speakers of their regional language in Emilia Romagna (which therefore includes the area of Romagna as well as Emilia) (Berruto 2018:503). This is around 38.8% of the population of the entire region, standing in third-last position across the country and only followed by Piedmont and Lombardy. For comparison, Calabrian leads the chart with 74.1% of active speakers, and in the north of the country nearly 70% of residents in Veneto declared to actively speak the regional language. As explained by Berruto in a footnote, these figures should be taken with some precaution as the wording on the census can lead respondents to think of their regional language of provenance - rather than of residence, thus resulting in potential inflation of numbers when looking at northern regions with high levels of immigration from southern areas of the country (Berruto 2018:502).

Despite the limitations posed by the problematic language of the census, these numbers can provide a rough idea of the trend each regional language is currently undergoing. Following Berruto (2018:503), the longitudinal perspective fostered by data collected from the census can be used to forecast whether individual language families are going to be maintained, diluted to the point that they are simply part of the regional varieties of Italian (Berruto calls this process “transfiguration”), or die out completely. To account for social stratification and in line with the body of literature published on the topic of language maintenance for the regional languages of Italy, Berruto (2018) identifies level of education and locality (i.e.: rural versus urban) as the main factors which correlate with language maintenance. A weaker, and therefore seemingly neglectable variable, is gender according to which men are slightly more likely to maintain the regional language than women (p. 505).

Summarising data collected through my sociolinguistic questionnaire, Table 8.1 shows the number of respondents who declared to understand and speak either Emilian or Esperanto at least 50/50 (this label was used to indicate a basic level of competence which was more than ‘a little’ but also less than ‘well’) by gender, age, profession, and languages spoken in the family. As I explain in Chapters 4 and 6, the travel restrictions in place during my data collection meant that I had to rely on social media platforms to administer my questionnaire. Instagram was particularly helpful in distributing the survey for Emilian and through this platform I collected around 350 responses. The younger demographic of the users of this platform created an overall imbalance (both within the Emilian dataset and across the two language groups) with nearly 70% of respondents being under 40 years of age. Independent variables associated to a person’s demographic were not used in the study to feed into inferential statistics, instead an

effect was investigated between language attitudes and language use. Due to the high number of students in the Emilian sample population and the use of demographics for purely descriptive purposes, I chose to capture profession and not level of education in the table.

The table can therefore provide a description of what the average speaker of Emilian and Esperanto are in the respective sample population. The most frequent type of speaker that emerges from these numbers are a young, female, student for Emilian and an older, male, skilled professional for Esperanto³. While these profiles are in stark contrast with each other, the linguistic background in the family context seems to be very similar across both sample populations. Only 1% of 50/50 responses came from individuals who grew up in a household where only the target language was spoken (Mono), around 60% of these speakers were brought up in a monolingual environment which did not include the target language (Mono other), and the remaining 40% of respondents come from a multilingual upbringing (Multi and Multi other). As would be expected when comparing an ethnic language with a constructed language, more Emilian 50/50 speakers declared to have been brought up in a household where both Emilian and a different language was spoken (Multi). However, the difference is relatively low with 27% of 50/50 responses in Emilian speakers and 23% of 50/50 responses among Esperantists. With regard to the total number of respondents by category and by language (percentages showing in the second lot of brackets in the table), 50/50 speakers are equally distributed by gender for Emilian (59% of all female-identifying and 61% of all male-identifying respondents) and only slightly imbalanced towards male gender for Esperanto.

Looking at age, 50/50 speakers account for 58-59% of all respondents under the age of 60 (showing a stable trend across generations in the sample) with a peak of 79% in older participants. The trend takes an opposite direction in the Esperanto sample with a steady 90-100% ratio in those aged above 20, down to 75% in the younger group. Proportions are steady across groupings for family languages as well as profession with the exception of respondents not in work, where only 21% of Emilians and 9% of Esperantists selected 50/50 and above for competence.

While these figures cannot provide the basis for generalised claims, it is nonetheless interesting how the majority of those who stated to be average speakers of the language come from either a monolingual background, that excluded the target language, or a multilingual context which included the target language. This is interesting be-

³The profession of 44 respondents for 50/50 Esperanto is unknown partly due to the way the question was posed on the survey

Table 8.1: Demographics of Emilian and Esperanto participants with at least 50/50 competence in understanding and speaking
(the second percentage refers to the survey population in each category)

Gender		F	M	O
Emilian		160 (62%)(59%)	100 (38%)(61%)	0
Esperanto		28 (19%)(88%)	112 (78%)(95%)	4 (3%)(100%)

Age		0-20	21-40	41-60	60+
Emilian		63 (24%)(58%)	113 (44%)(59%)	62 (24%)(58%)	22 (9%)(79%)
Esperanto		6 (4%)(75%)	36 (25%)(92%)	48 (33%)(91%)	54 (38%)(100%)

Profession		Skilled	Unskilled	Student	NIW	NA
Emilian		61 (24%)(64%)	80 (31%)(58%)	88 (34%)(58%)	29 (12%)(21%)	2 (1%)(67%)
Esperanto		60 (42%)(97%)	20 (14%)(95%)	18 (12%)(90%)	2 (1%)(9%)	44 (31%)(94%)

Family languages		Mono	Mono other	Multi	Multi other
Emilian		2 (1%)(100%)	157 (60%)(60%)	70 (27%)(63%)	29 (11%)(51%)
Esperanto		1 (1%)(100%)	82 (57%)(90%)	33 (23%)(100%)	28 (19%)(97%)

cause the numbers appear high for Esperanto (a non-ethnic language) and relatively low for Emilian. The numbers yielded by the Esperanto speakers could be partially explained by the enthusiasm shared across this community which can sometimes skew their judgement around the success of the language (Edwards & MacPherson 1987). In turn, this can also act as selection bias in this type of studies whereby those who feel more excited about the language (and may therefore be confident speakers) are more inclined to take part in this kind of research. As for Emilian, a possible explanation as to why the exposure to the language in the home was reported so low by the respondents may have to do with generational factors. With 68% of active speakers aged under 40, it is reasonable to assume that their caregivers included both parents and grandparents. This is because during the last few decades more and more women have been introduced in the workforce, with childcare duties shifting to the grandparents wherever possible. The question in the survey asked what languages were spoken in the home during childhood and it is therefore plausible that thinking about the primary caregivers that exclude grandparents, respondents declared to have been brought up in a monolingual environment (60%) where Emilian was not spoken. Due to the shift towards Italian, it is also likely that parents of this generation spoke mostly Italian in the home (cf. ISTAT data above and see Sallabank 2022 for a discussion on how language transmission can still take place). This is supported by some of the data collected from all three methods.

The figure of the grandparent is prominent in the lyrics of the Emilian song “Modena Gang” analysed in Chapter 7. It is by directly referencing the role of the granddad as a living vocabulary of the language and by taking on this same role through acts of enregisterment that the artist is able to convey his plea to his peers to maintain the language as part of the local traditions. This is also a frequent theme in the survey responses collected for the question “Do you like to speak Emilian. Why? If you don’t speak it, would you like to?”⁴. Out of 434 responses, only twelve stated that they do not enjoy speaking the language nor would they be interested in learning it. While four further respondents expressed indifference, the remaining 418 responses were of very positive nature with 43 justifying their answer by associating the language with their grandparents, their childhood, their parents, and their past. Of these, four used metaphors such as “it smells of home”. As social beings, family is the closest environment that can provide a sense of belonging to an individual, and to link Emilian to one’s home is to make a very bold statement of primordial necessity that binds person

⁴This question elicited very similar data to question n. 25 “Do you think Emilian should be maintained?” whose responses were therefore left out of this discussion

and language together. These findings are in line with the relevant literature discussing how the regional languages of Italy have lost their social stigma and are now seen as an “expressive enrichment in the individual repertoire” (Berruto 2018:506).

Another equally frequent metaphor used by respondents to describe their relationship with Emilian is that of land, roots, and territory. This was particularly of interest to me as the concept of Emilian as a person’s roots and land is also a prevailing idea of embodiment in the eco-poems that I analyse in Chapter 9. In the survey data, this metaphor is used in sentences such as “it is the language of my land”, “it’s my roots”, “it’s part of the resources of my territory”. This is a metaphor always preceded by the use of a possessive pronoun to denote a sense of belonging. A particularly interesting use of this metaphor is from a 52-year-old male bank manager who commented: “it’s a sign of territory, of secret language, of conviviality, it allowed me to make good business and friendships”. Not only does this person work a white-collar job, but he also holds a Masters’ degree or higher (which based on previous studies would make him less likely to maintain the language) and, yet, he recognises the value of Emilian at both a professional and social level (for a discussion around linguistic confidence in white-collar workers as dialect speakers, see Tufi 2005).

Others made use of the soil metaphor alongside the metaphor of culture, such as in “it’s the humus that I grew up in and my cultural DNA”. The cultural metaphor is the most frequent in the Emilian dataset appearing 55 times alongside the words tradition and folklore. A few responses were also directly related to the sense of belonging that the language instils in them towards their local area. In terms of adjectives, only one respondent described the language as vulgar and not very graceful, all other responses used positive descriptors such as “expressive”, “concise”, “colourful”, “rich”, “spontaneous”, “intimate”, and “direct”. Also worthy of note is the comments left by 43 participants with regard to their willingness to learn and/or improve on the language if given the chance.

Many of these adjectives are also found in the Esperanto survey responses to the same question. Only two participants stated that they felt indifferent towards Esperanto. In contrast all other respondents declared to enjoy speaking it and described the language as “expressive”, “intimate”, “easy to learn”, “logical” and simply “beautiful”. Others mentioned the sense of belonging they get from speaking the language in the same way as Emilian speakers did, whereas, in terms of metaphors, Esperanto is associated to the concepts of freedom, friendship, community, borderless world, equality, justice, and ideals. These are well-known values shared across the Esperanto community and are also of focal importance in the lyrics of the Esperanto song analysed in

Chapter 7. My interpretation of the lyrics brought me to analyse the role of the singer as one undergoing rebirth in coming to terms with the pressure of being the ideal Esperantist: one whose aim is to help Esperanto become the main auxiliary language in the world. Instead, the artist's appreciation of the language is one engaging with global connections.

The vision of Esperanto resisted by the artist encapsulates the main difference between the use of the metaphor of belonging across the two communities, and the temporal direction ascribed to it. While Esperanto is forward-looking in its goal of becoming the language of an equal, just, and borderless world, Emilian is looking backwards towards the past. This nostalgic conceptualisation of the language is also discussed in Sallabank (2013) whose fieldwork on Guernesiais and Jèrriais provided data exhibiting similar discursive practices to my Emilian dataset. Her informants spoke of their language as being "connected to the memories of loved ones who have now passed away" (Sallabank 2013:133) and were reluctant to accept the term "heritage language" to describe it due to its close connection to the past. While Sallabank shows no apprehension towards the linkage between language and nostalgia, with the exception of what possessiveness can lead to (language purism, for example), I contend that this may be part of the problem for Emilian. Part of the community still strongly resists the idea that Emilian may be a language, as can be seen from several responses collected for the following survey question:

Q. 32 "Recent studies indicate that growing up speaking two or more languages can bring advantages such as better concentration, attention, memory, and creativity. Does hearing this make you reconsider the value of Emilian and its role in the upbringing of a child?"

The question was asked to elicit attitudes towards the level of awareness that respondents have around the status of Emilian as a language⁵. By wording this question in a way that assumed Emilian to be a language, the respondent was forced to either accept or reject this premise before giving their opinion. While most either simply replied "yes", "no", or "I'm not sure", sixteen respondents rejected the question arguing that Emilian is not a language, but a dialect, and therefore the theory cannot be applied to it. Four were hesitant and stated that Emilian should be taught to children for other reasons which are connected to the metaphorical heart as well as traditions, while seven more disagreed stating that there are more useful languages to transmit.

⁵It is reasonable to assume that this is not an issue for Esperanto speakers and the question was therefore left out of their survey.

In this latter group, two are from scholars in the disciplines of language acquisition and modern languages thus showing a level of disregard in the community even from those who conduct academic research on similar topics.

These findings are somewhat in contrast with the hypothesis that, having lost their negative connotations, the regional languages of Italy are no longer “perceived to denote ignorance or constitute a disadvantaging gap” (Berruto 2018:506). While the original meaning of constituting such gap could be related to the idea that a speaker of these languages would not be favoured on the job market (as also commented by one of my respondents) because thought to be uneducated, the misconception has now shifted to social capital in a globalised market. That is to say that Emilian is seen as a disadvantage in a hypothetical bilingual context for a child who would benefit from the second language being a global one, such as English or Spanish. Not only is this based on a fallacy of forced trade-offs (i.e.: the child could be brought up hearing Italian, Emilian, *and* Spanish), but it also disregards the cognitive and emotional benefits that acquiring the language as an additional variety brings – regardless of what linguistic variety that is. This is exemplified by a comment left on the questionnaire by a respondent who, after translating the five optional sentences into English and Spanish (instead of Emilian, as was requested), wrote “Conclusion: the dialects are useless and I dunno why they exist in Italy :)”.

Overall the explicit attitudes expressed by participants of both groups are of positive nature. Sense of belonging, community, and intimacy are the three core attitudes identified in the data which are shared by both Emilian and Esperanto respondents. The crucial difference is, however, the association to the nostalgic past present in the Emilian context which risks perpetuating the image of the burdensome baggage being dragged into the present (Eaton & Turin 2022). I argue that this is not conducive to a change of behaviours that can lead to higher levels of maintenance in the community and that, instead, thinking of language as heritage would benefit both Emilian and Esperanto. This is going to be expanded upon after the following section in which I present data collected on the functions each language currently fulfils in its respective community.

8.4.2 The functions of Emilian and Esperanto

As I explain in Chapter 6, the sociolinguistic questionnaire collected data on the type of spaces in which respondents use the target language. These spaces can be seen as social functions that the language fulfils insofar that it is used to enact a specific type

of meaning-making practice. Based on the social context within which the function is fulfilled, these spaces are classified as follows:

1. Physical spaces stand for both interactions with relatives, friends, neighbours, classmates (primary school, secondary school, and university), teachers and lecturers, romantic partner, work colleagues, strangers, doctors, religious officers, as well as locations such as the local shops, pubs and cafes, markets, educational settings, workplaces, religious sites, public offices;
2. Press is for all printed language such as newspapers, teaching materials, literature, flyers and similar, and any other print;
3. Virtual spaces comprise all online interactions and platforms such as emails, texts, internet blogs, and social media;
4. Media includes TV and radio programmes;
5. Other for any other interaction and location not already included in the spaces above.

Reviewing studies on the sociolinguistics of Italy, Berruto (2018:506) elaborates on his theory of *dilalia* (according to which the High language has increasingly been employed in informal domains) to point to the typical pattern of languaging observed in the country, whereby Italian and the regional language are spoken among friends and relatives, and Italian is the preferred code for all other social domains. According to this phenomenon, Emilian is expected to fulfil communicative practices with family members, closest friends and most local settings. This is in line with my findings and, as can be seen in Figure 8.1 and 8.2, the physical space is the most active of spaces for my Emilian respondents. There are, however studies, such as Alfonzetti (2014) which point to a shift in this pattern whereby young speakers are now making use of the regional languages to fulfil specific meaning-making functions outside of the expected domains. This is discussed in a previous study conducted by D'Agostino (2007) who argued that regional languages are being acquired outside of the home and in social contexts where there is still some sort of maintenance of the language. Alfonzetti (2014:436) refers to this process as *polylanguaging* (first introduced by Jørgensen et al. 2011; cf. *code-switching* and *translanguaging* in Parkin 2016) and explains that this occurs whenever community members acquire fragments of the language by being exposed to these practices in their social groups. Berruto (2018:506) posits that this new practice

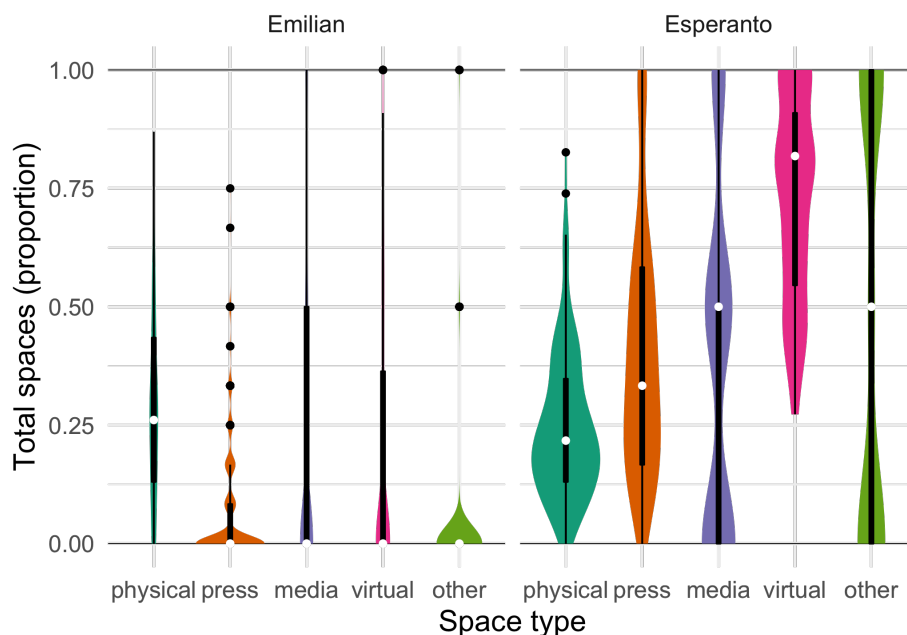


Figure 8.1: Proportion of number of spaces by space type in Emilian and Esperanto. Proportion values are calculated for each respondent.

of maintenance is now a “functional component of the Italian repertoire” which is perceived as a positive meaning-creating device in certain contexts. The author identifies the following functions for these languages:

“the use of dialect can be: (i) actual/effective (when it is instrumental to basic daily interaction for all needs); (ii) expressive/playful (when it conveys particular effects of expressivity, such as jokes, humorous creativity, and so on); (iii) symbolic/ ideological (when it is fundamentally a means of representing or emphasizing a particular identity or evoking a given cultural world); (iv) folkloric/museum-like (when the dialect appears as an object exhibited for documenting and witnessing a cultural heritage)” (p. 520).

The presence of regional languages in the Italian repertoire has also been documented outside of the conversational settings and in contexts such as web chats, social media, music, advertisements, and commercial announcements (Berruto 2018:519). In this sense, the increasing presence of online spaces in our everyday lives has been propping up the recent revival of regional languages. The data collected from my questionnaire show that despite having an online presence (cf. Figure 8.2, the median for

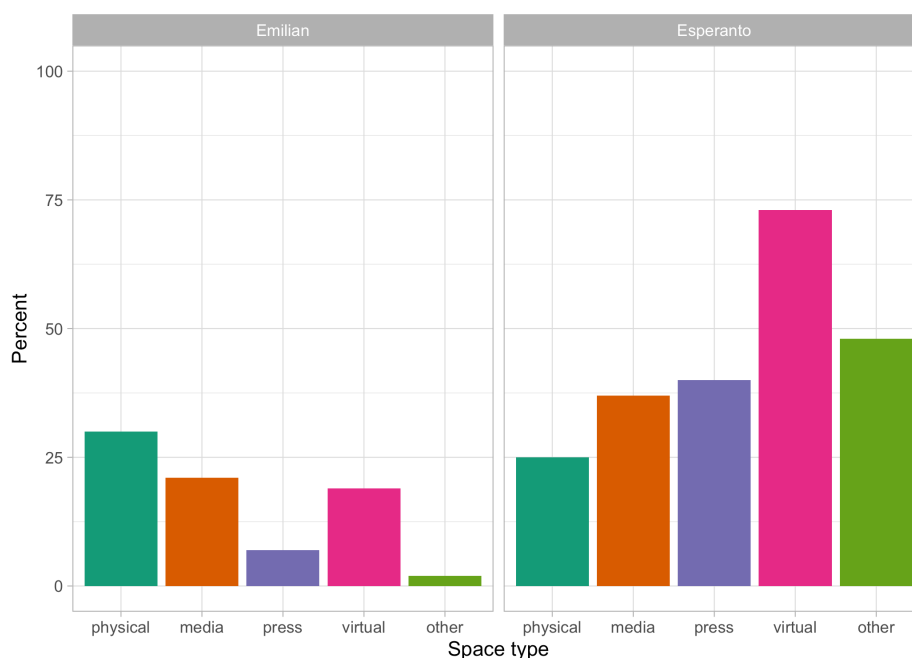


Figure 8.2: Proportion of number of uses by space type in Emilian and Esperanto. Proportion values are calculated for each space across sample population.

virtual spaces in Emilian is equal to zero, thus suggesting a level of activity that is not contributing to the maintenance of the language in terms of vitality (cf. Figure 8.1). While the presence of Emilian on dedicated Facebook pages, Instagram accounts, and Wikipedia entries would seem a positive step towards the revitalisation of the language, oftentimes these online spaces are driven by activists and other gatekeepers who, whilst fulfilling their agenda, are reducing the function of the language to one of mere symbolic nature (p. 520). Activism is also one of the driving forces behind the success of Esperanto (Gobbo 2021a) where the strict approach to the maintenance of the language fostered negative attitudes in the community towards speakers who use Esperanto in practices of polylinguaging. It is a well-known fact in the community that the use of fragments of another language when speaking Esperanto attracts mockery and is referred to as *krokodili* (Fiedler & Brosch 2022).

This normative approach to ensuring Esperanto is not mixed with other codes can be read as a protective precaution towards the dilution of the language (a similar phenomenon to what Sallabank refers to when discussing language purism as a consequence of protectiveness). In other words, it is a way to ensure that the language – which relies entirely on the voluntariness of its speakers to survive – is spoken as if no other

alternatives were available, as if it already were the only auxiliary language. It is a purist approach which pushes for language maintenance to its maximum capacity, albeit artificially so. Interestingly, this is similar in nature to the forced process against which Berruto (2018:519) cautions in the context of the Italian repertoire by describing the role of online activists as not being conducive to the ““natural” social development aimed at restoring the dialect as an indispensable tool in communicative practices”.

It is important to note that not all forms of activism can be seen as problematic towards the cause of language revitalisation. Hand in hand with the emergence of practices of glocalization, groups of activists are linking local identity with regional language in the same way as more traditionally has been done with food and wine (Devilla & Galiñanes Gallén 2021). For example, Leone-Pizzighella (2019) interviewed a group of local activists who promote the maintenance of the Venetan language by focusing on themes of ideal lifestyles with which fellow members of the community are already familiar. This allows the local activists to instantly connect with the target audience and start conversations with people who would not otherwise engage with the issue of language revitalisation.

Data from the three diaries I collected for Emilian suggest that the functions that speakers more closely associate with the language include conversing at home, creating moments of conviviality, breaking the tension, connecting, and carrying out land-related activities. As for Esperanto, of the five diaries collected, four were from individuals who decided to learn the language as adults and one was a *denaskulo* – that is a person who was brought up speaking Esperanto from birth (Fiedler & Brosch 2022). All five participants stated that they speak the language everyday and they do so on online platforms such as Telegram, Amikumu, Discord, WhatsApp, Facebook, Skype and Zoom. In terms of functions, all participants use Esperanto to build and maintain friendships, to attend Esperanto-related events as well as for travelling. Two of them use it for work (such as translating books and giving lectures), one to write poems, and three of them use it for the simple need of practising the language. One participant does so by learning about the culture of Esperanto in the language. The *denaskulo* also stated to speak the language with her mother, her sister, and her baby. Passing her language to her child is something that is giving her joy and sense of pride.

While the diaries do not contain exact information pertaining to the nature of the conversations held in Esperanto, it is reasonable to assume that those who stated to use it during Esperanto-related events and meetings, for work, and with family members do so in the same way they would speak another language. That is to say that they hold entire conversations in Esperanto in those settings. It is important to

bear in mind that these are people who self-identify as speakers of the language (my recruitment advertisement made explicit the requirement to actively use the language in everyday life), yet participants are mostly speakers who acquired the language in recent times and still maintain it on a daily basis. This is not the case for Emilian. The three diaries collected for Emilian captured fleeting moments of using the language for specific meaning-making functions. Despite stating to love Emilian and to feel a deep connection with it, the participants made notes of their interactions in the language as pertaining to connecting with elderly members of the family (and family friends), lightening the mood, marking a funny moment, and, more generally, giving emphasis to something. One participant also stated that she uses Emilian when speaking to family members to talk about agricultural work on the family's land.

With reference to Berruto's functions of a language described above, the diaries for Esperanto provide examples of a language with actual/effective function, whereas for Emilian most diary entries suggested expressive/playful use of the language. There is, however, at least one exception to this summary. For one participant, the use of Emilian seems to still fulfil an effective function in her life by organising the conversational settings related to agricultural work. Adding data from my questionnaire to these findings, the association between language and physical territory becomes stronger still. Emilian is described as a person's roots, as one's soil, as a marker for territorial belonging and used as the language of rural labour. When such association is so deeply embedded in a community, it becomes clearer how the work of local activists who promote the regional language as part of the region's lifestyle is proving successful in engaging with community members. This is further supported by the findings of a study discussed in Eaton & Turin (2022:793) conducted on young speakers of a minoritised language of India which suggested that language can act as a "proxy for ethnicity, helping to cultivate a sense of attachment".

A final function shared by both Esperanto and Emilian (by virtue of being an Italo-Romance language) is their role as auxiliary languages (for Emilian see Berruto 2018:506). This would seem to be supported by my data with comments from both language communities suggesting that some speakers use the language as an auxiliary language that provide connection to fulfil both intrinsically and extrinsically valued functions, such as making friendships and doing good business. This is not, however, the conclusion that I draw from my findings. Instead, I contend that both languages ought to be promoted and embodied as heritage. For Emilian, this goes back to the metaphor of soil. By depicting Emilian as an aspect of regional lifestyle, the metaphor would allow the community to extend the pride they feel towards regional culinary

dishes, such as wines and cheeses, to include the language. This would arguably help change the perception of Emilian from something that belongs to the past to a part of the collective heritage that is proudly maintained in the form of a traditional practice carried into the future. Likewise, Esperanto could benefit from a similar approach by providing a meeting point between activists and those who enjoy the language purely for its potential to make friends across the globe. Promoting Esperanto as heritage would shift the focus from the pursue of becoming the world's auxiliary language to becoming a space to embody the world's heritage through global connections.

For this to happen, however, Emilian must be supported before it becomes the “bad version of Italian” that many already believe it is. I briefly touch on this topic in the next section. Because this issue does not pertain to Esperanto I will solely focus on Emilian before finally building on my findings to outline a model for language attitudes, competence, and use in section 8.5.

8.4.3 The conflation of dialect, slang and language

Throughout this paper, I have been consistently referring to Emilian as a language. This is not a theoretical claim made on the basis of some sort of typological set of criteria but more of an explicit stance that I am consciously taking. As already discussed in section 8.1, Emilian and its sister Italo-Romance languages are commonly labelled as dialects of Italy by laypeople and scholars alike. The debate around what a dialect is and what instead constitutes a language is still ongoing. I will not attempt to provide a definition to either of those because outside the scope of this discussion. I do, however, contend that in communities where the minoritised language is closely related to the dominant language, and where this closeness has been exploited to push an agenda in favour of the national language (see “collateral languages” in Berruto (2018:497)), the term language can be used to reclaim a space for the marginalised vernacular. Calling Emilian a language is therefore an act of scholarly activism that I am taking to foster a shift within the relevant literature. This is, however, a step that I no longer believe to be required when it comes to efforts for the revitalisation of Emilian.

When planning for this research project, one of the goals was to create resources for language support to be disseminated in the community. The idea was to produce materials for revitalisation which acted as an awareness campaign by debunking the myth of Emilian being a non-language. On the topic of awareness as an act of public engagement, Labov modelled the principle of error correction arguing that “[s]cientists who encounter widespread beliefs that they know to be invalidated by their data” have

an obligation to bring such errors to the attention “of the widest possible audience” (Labov 1982:172). Lewis (2018) is, however, critical of this stance and resists the idea that structural biases can be tackled at the individual level. In line with Lewis and in light of the findings here presented, I now believe that a more efficient approach would be to roll out an awareness campaign promoting the idea of Emilian as part of the region’s heritage at the collective level. This is because some of the data collected in my study suggest that the conception of Emilian as something less than a language is too embedded in the collective mind.

Historically, the regional languages of Italy were not even acknowledged as local varieties of a language but were simply thought of as a mere phenomenon. It was Graziadio Ascoli the first to put forward the idea of these being linguistic entities in 1880 (Maccarrone 1929). To add to the confusion, Greco (2006) explains that following the acknowledgement of the regional languages as more than simple deviance from Italian, the term *gergo* (“slang”) started being attributed to the regional varieties of Italian. These slang forms have been documented as linguistic phenomena of secrecy and marker of identity (ibid) and it is therefore easy to see how the commonalities between *gergo* and regional languages can lead to conflate the two in contexts of language erasure. Briefly put, there is too much historical and sociopolitical untangling to undo for Emilians to accept their dialect as a language in the same way they accept Spanish as being separate from French.

As already seen in section 8.4.1, many participants reject the idea that teaching Emilian could be beneficial to the cognitive development of a child because it is not a language. Even a song such as “Modena Gang” (the Emilian song analysed in Chapter 7 written to promote the maintenance of Emilian) refers to the language as “our slang”. This is quite telling when coming from someone, the artist, who speaks it with confidence and can hold full conversations in the language. A more realistic reflection of the current use of Emilian comes from diary entries and the translation task in the questionnaire (these were five sentences written in Italian that respondents were asked to translate into Emilian). Even some of those who identified themselves as fluent speakers ended up using fragments of Italian in their translations. Likewise, diary participants who described themselves as lovers of Emilian provided examples of their use of the language as single phrases and expressions in most cases (similar findings are discussed in Alfonzetti 2017:441).

This fragmented use of regional languages “acquired as L2 through peer-group memberships, [is] a kind of age-group slang learning of very small bits of language [...] [that] closely resemble semi-speakers in situations of language death” (Alfonzetti 2017:441).

It is a way for younger speakers to index their regionality as a sort of filler for the gap left behind by the regional languages. This recent phenomenon provides new grounds for Italian and the regional languages to interact and potentially lead to one of four linguistic outcomes identified by Berruto (2018:513) as: “(1) dialectization of Italian; (2) Italianization of dialect; (3) koineization; (4) hybridization”. Crucially, Berruto (2018:515) concludes that the sum of these emerging phenomena would lead “to an advergence of the Italo-Romance dialects to Italian; and consequently to a convergence among the dialects”. In other words, the sense of reclamation that younger speakers feel towards their regional language is acting as a driving force behind the fragmented use of the vernaculars in a way that will eventually lead them to become the variety of Italian spoken in the area. In this sense, it will act as a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy whereby speakers use parts of a language in the belief that it is a form of slang to the point that it becomes mere diatopic variation of the national language.

Heritage as a lived experience of regional identity which includes the maintenance of the regional language is therefore crucial as a concept informing efforts for language support. To rethink of Emilian as heritage is a shorter stretch of the imagination for the community when compared to the unlearning and learning involved around the concepts of language and dialect. Time is of the essence. Due to the lack of awareness, younger Emilians want to reclaim the language but they do so in the belief that it is a form of slang. Speech communities such as those of Sardinian and Friulian “are said to perceive a sense of “cultural otherness,” which warrants a unique identity different from the common national culture” (Toso 2008:89-91). Based on the findings here discussed, I would argue that the same sense of belonging through otherness is also felt albeit left unfulfilled in the Emilian community. Language support informed by a heritage framework would help achieve that and hopefully avert “cultural/heritage erasure” (Berruto 2018:496-7) as part of language erasure.

8.5 ACtUs: Towards an integrated model for language maintenance

Having laid out the main findings from my triangulation of results in previous sections, RQ1 can now be directly addressed:

What is the current state of affairs of the linguistic attitudes and practices

for Emilian and Esperanto? What are the differences and similarities across the two? [RQ1]

In terms of the linguistic attitudes observable from my data, both communities exhibited ideals and associations of positive nature to their respective language. These can be summarised as concepts of belonging, intimacy, and interpersonal connection. Within the ideological realm, Esperanto and Emilian also share aspects of internal conflict. The Esperanto community has been dealing with internal disagreement between those who embody the language as a form of activism invested in fulfilling the global lingua franca goal, and those who engage with the language as a form of culture of global peace and friendship. Albeit not as overtly, Emilian is also in a state of internal turmoil due to the divergence of opinion between those who accept it as a language and those who vehemently reject this idea. Both types of conflict can be seen as politically laden whereby the revitalisation of Emilian is at times strumentalised to prop the political agenda of local and national parties, and the promotion of Esperanto is policed through historical documents such as the Manifesto of Rauma (for example Gobbo 2021a; Fiedler & Brosch 2022). The third and final shared feature found in my analyses is the intermediary function that both languages seem to be fulfilling. It is part of the original remit of Esperanto to become the primary auxiliary language in use across the world, but this is not the case for Emilian. As an ethnic language family, Emilian is only recently regaining a presence in the linguistic repertoire of its community in dynamics of polylinguaging. Despite granular differences across the two languages, connection, conflict and communicative complementarity are the three shared characteristics observable in the linguistic attitudes and practices of Emilian and Esperanto.

These similarities are not to be taken as an essentialisation of the communities or as discreet features of their practices. Instead, these commonalities are closely linked to one another and even overlapping with some of the main differences revealed by the analyses. The three main areas in which Esperanto and Emilian data diverged have been identified as: language awareness, language use, and temporal direction of language beliefs. The vitality of minoritised languages heavily relies on the volunteriness of their speakers to maintain them. This, however, requires a level of awareness in speakers that allows them to understand that what they have been exposed to is in fact a language (here simply used as an entity in itself that is not considered to be a lesser derivation of another language). Esperanto is a non-territorial language whose status as a *de facto* language has never been questioned by its community (not considering

scholars and others sceptical of the validity of constructed languages), but for Emilian this seems to be part of the problem behind its low vitality. In what I define as a situation of language erasure, the lack of awareness can lead to impoverished linguistic citizenship and misplaced acts of language reclaiming (i.e.: thinking of the language as a slang and therefore reclaiming it as such).

This leads to the second difference identified. In a speech community as self-aware as that of Esperanto, language policing and prescriptivism push speakers to maintain the language in an artificially wholesome way where translanguaging is frowned upon. In contrast, Emilian is being partly revived by fragmented acquisition and acts of polylinguaging which is not expected to yield enough behavioural change to make a difference to its future. Although similar in nature, the attitudes towards the languages seem to differ in their anchorage in time. Esperanto is conceptualised as a beacon of light which provides safe passage to a better future, while Emilian is a mere nostalgic tie to the past. A tie to the present, nonetheless, which can still provide an opportunity to extend the function of Emilian to a futuristic outlook.

Overall, attitudes, competence and use are the three factors that seem to be explaining the vitality of Esperanto thus providing an answer to the second research question:

What can the findings from the Esperantist community tell us about efforts for language revitalisation in the context of Emilian and other historically marginalised languages? [RQ2]

To answer this question, I refer back to the statistical analyses conducted on the sociolinguistic questionnaire and discussed in Chapter 6. From the data analysed by descriptive means, I was able to conclude that Emilian is only being maintained in a meaningful way (i.e.: a way that has a potential impact on its future) in local spaces, and while it is being used in several other domains, the median for these domains equals to zero, thus showing an inefficacy of the level of maintenance in those spaces. Looking for an effect between language attitudes and language use, a positive correlation was identified in the Esperanto dataset. This trend can point to a potential link between attitudes and use that can help inform efforts for language support in other minoritised communities. Building on these findings, I propose a theoretical integrated model for language revitalisation that can act as a conceptual framework for how languages decline and how they can be supported back to a flourishing state.

The model is centred around the three main aspects of language maintenance identified in the analyses of Esperanto data. These are attitudes, competence, and use;

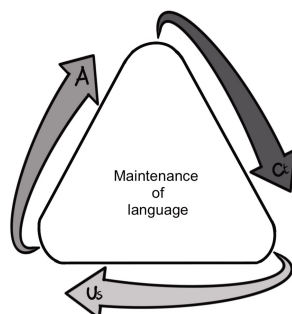


Figure 8.3: ACtUS – an integrated model for language maintenance

hereafter ACtUs. Far from wishing to propose a ground-breaking model for language revitalisation, I strive for simplicity by purely packaging up the evidence collected with what has become apparent to me throughout this study. Setting off to understand what may be at play in the Esperanto community and driving its seemingly thriving vitality, I approached this study to learn from its members with a vision to gauge what phenomena could be abstracted and applied elsewhere. ACtUs is a way to summarise this both visually and theoretically.

According to ACtUs and as seen in Figure 8.3, language maintenance is sustained whenever attitudes, competence, and use are coexisting in a balanced environment. A definition of attitudes has already been provided in section 8.2.2, however, as it is beyond the scope of my study to contribute towards definitions of key theoretical terms, I will not delve into a discussion around what maintenance and competence stand for. Very briefly put, these terms can be taken at face value to mean the level of linguistic activity that can foster continuity into the future (maintenance), and a person's level of proficiency of speaking and/or understanding and/or writing and/or reading in a given variety (competence). As for use, I subscribe to the notion of language as social practice emplaced (Scollon & Scollon 2003). Use therefore stands for both uses of space (i.e.: how much the space is used for languaging) and spaces of use which include geographical places, relationship settings, virtual practices, and any other social contexts where language is used. Spaces of use can also be broken down as summarised by Berruto (above), and for a range of discussions around the role of minority languages and the meaning of their visibility in the linguistic landscape see also Blackwood & Tufi (2015).

The discussion around the fragmentation of Emilian versus the artificial wholesome-

ness of Esperanto is a key difference between the two which supports the presence of competence as a component of ACtUs. A fragmented competence of the language is not a functioning level for the scope of language maintenance. Recent studies in the field of language attitudes are shifting the focus of language support in recognition of the connection between the two. Negative attitudes can be a driving force behind the decline of a language (as has been the case for the languages of Italy, for example Leone-Pizzighella 2019). My findings are in line with this and provide evidence for a link between attitudes and use whereby the higher the number of uses of space in the community, the more positive are language attitudes. This, in turn could mean that the creation of more spaces of use attached to social functionality could contribute towards language maintenance. As discussed in Leone-Pizzighella (2019:74), “changes in language function [...] both precede and follow changes to language status” thus pointing to function as a key element for the maintenance of a language.

Acknowledging that social dynamics never operate in a vacuum, I wish to point to the compatibility of ACtUs with other frameworks for language policy, such as Spolsky’s (2019). According to his modified theory, language policy depends on “language practices, language beliefs or ideologies, and language management” (Spolsky 2019:335). Indeed, the competence and use elements of ACtUs can correspond to Spolsky’s language practices, likewise the term attitudes in ACtUs coincides with Spolsky’s language beliefs, whereas language management can provide the context within which ACtUs operates in a given community. Furthermore, as a conceptual framework, ACtUs does not prescribe levels for success, such as Fishman (1991); Hammarström et al. (2018); Lee & Van Way (2016); Moseley (2012), but it simply aims to describe what elements must be restored to a balance for language maintenance to gain momentum and continue. When one element is compromised, maintenance is compromised, too. It then follows that to restore maintenance, all three elements must be restored.

Finally, to achieve this overall balance, efforts for language support must tackle ACtUs from a culturally-informed approach to ensure engagement reaches enough people to shift from individual behavioural change to collective behavioural change. Borrowing from social theories of change and – more specifically – from theories of social tipping, I argue that the present ACtUs of Emilian is corrupt, nonetheless change can be achieved through tipping processes which “can be triggered by a relatively small disturbance of the system” (Winkelmann et al. 2022:3). To further elaborate on this, I refer to the following explanation of what constitutes social tipping:

“A ‘social system’ can be described as a network consisting of social agents

(or subsystems) embedded within a social-ecological ‘environment’. Such a social system is called a ‘social tipping element’ if under certain (‘critical’) conditions, small changes in the system or its environment can lead to a qualitative (macroscopic) change, typically via cascading network effects such as complex contagion and positive feedback mechanisms. Agency is involved in moving the system towards criticality, creating small disturbances and generating network effects. By this definition, near the critical condition the stability of the social tipping element is low. The resulting transient change process is called the ‘tipping process’. The time it takes for this change to manifest is the ‘manifestation time.’” (Winkelmann et al. 2022:6)

Building on this, I argue that it would take a small disturbance to the hegemonic state of things to create a space for change to be initiated and further fed forward. In the context of the regional languages of Italy, the small disturbance can be something like the local activism connected to lifestyle which was documented in Leone-Pizzighella (2019). As discussed in this paper, my approach would be to promote Emilian as part of the region’s heritage. By making use of a concept that is already familiar and positively embraced by the community, the regional language can be promoted against the dominant nationalist discourse of monolingualism. It takes enough people to be aware of a social problem and behave against mainstream trends to encourage a response from the community which, in turn, can shape the discourse and become the new norm informing linguistic behaviours. Last but not least, I wish to clarify that due to my privilege I may be blind to the limitations of the applicability of ACtUS outside of a white, European context of internal colonisation such as that of Emilian, and therefore limit its remit to similar communities to what discussed in this paper.

8.6 Conclusion

Through the lens of interconnectedness, in this paper I combined the findings from three different methods to evaluate the language attitudes surrounding Esperanto and Emilian. Data from a sociolinguistic questionnaire administered digitally contributed to the discussion from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective. Answers analysed qualitatively provided both support and context to the statistical analyses previously conducted in terms of how members of the community feel toward the language and where and how the languages are being maintained. Overall both languages share simi-

lar positive attitudes attached to values of conviviality, intimacy, and attachment. The main difference here being the outward look attached to Esperanto contra a backward sentiment of past and nostalgia associated with Emilian. This was supported by data from both diary method and narrative analyses of YouTube songs. As for language maintenance, the only space where Emilian is still alive – albeit barely so – is the physical dimension of home, local streets, shops, and local communities. Data from Esperanto suggest a maintenance of the language across all spaces captured by the questionnaire. The diary method yielded data that shed light on the use of Emilian as one that is fragmented and part of the polylinguaging of the youth. This is in line with the most recent literature on the sociolinguistic repertoire of Italy and shows the willingness to reclaim the language in the community.

Due to the phenomenon of language erasure, Emilian speakers are reclaiming the language as a form of colloquialism which, if sustained in time, will effectively turn Emilian into a regional variety of Italian. To avert this, I argue for efforts of language support to be informed by the idea of language as heritage – an approach similar to what Leone-Pizzighella (2019) found in Veneto. Language as heritage would bypass the mental jump that Emilians would have to take to understand that in order to fully reclaim the language (if they truly wish to maintain it as they stated in my questionnaire) they must use it as such – and not as a form of slang. Instead, it would offer a familiar bridge onto which they can rebuild a functional relationship with Emilian; one with a future rather than just a past. Data from Esperanto were instrumental in gauging what is working for one and lacking for the other, thus showing the importance of comparative analyses in the study of language attitudes. Finally, the findings from this triangulation of results were pulled together to build a prototype of an integrated model for language maintenance. I propose ACtUs as a framework that can hopefully inform future studies on language revitalisation by accounting for attitudes, competence, and use – spaces of use and uses of space.

Chapter 9

Telling stories of the local natural world: A path of reconnection with language and place.

Hampton, Jessica. “Telling stories of the local natural world: A path of reconnection with language and place in the Emilian context” *Journal of World Languages*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2022, pp. 409-433. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jwl-2022-0006>

This paper takes a pragmatic approach to the issue of language maintenance and revitalization and constructs its argument through an ecological lens. Electing Emilian – a minoritized language of Italy, as a case study, this article analyzes folk stories related to the more-than-human world. Employing an ecolinguistic framework and focusing on key theoretical concepts of evaluation, salience, and identity, this paper proposes that these folk stories can serve a dual purpose. Firstly, they can be used as materials to re-introduce the use of Emilian in the public domain by creating local spaces where the language can be spoken organically thus escaping the social stigma usually attached to it. This would help raise awareness of Emilian as a language intrinsically valuable. Secondly, by using these texts as materials, users would be exposed to new ways in which the local environment can be looked at and rediscovered. The results of the analyses are used to illustrate how ecolinguistics can be used to identify materials for language revitalization efforts in Emilian and other similar communities where the connection with heritage language, place, and identity is either partial or missing.

Keywords: ecolinguistics; Emilian; environmental identity; language revitalization; storytelling

9.1 Preface

In this chapter I address my third research question, namely:

RQ3: How can Ecolinguistics, as a framework of interconnectedness, practically help minoritised communities to reconnect with both language and their natural environment?

However, given the paper format of this thesis, this chapter has been kept as it appears in *Journal of World Languages*. Due to the limitations imposed by the focus of the special issue within which this chapter is published, the research question is not mentioned directly but, instead, it is answered through the analysis of poems and the discussion that both precedes and follows it.

9.2 Introduction

The current state of the world's languages in terms of their vitality and maintenance is an increasingly researched topic in the fields of linguistics, anthropology, and other related disciplines (Sallabank 2013). In the relevant literature, it is now a routinely stated trope that around a half of currently spoken languages will be left with no speakers in a matter of decades (Crystal 2002). Arguably, this is to draw the much-needed attention that these languages and their communities deserve before it is too late. One of the responses to this call was to repurpose the academic practice of language documentation from the mere act of creating a grammar for under/non-described languages to the holistic and collective mission of recording *all* aspects of the language and its culture (the limitations of this definition of language documentation are beyond the scope of this paper but for more on this, see for example Austin 2013). Using a phrase coined by and used in Himmelmann (1998), the scope of language documentation is now often defined in the literature as the creation of a multi-purpose record of a language and the linguistic practices of its community. With my current research focused on an under-studied historically minoritized language, I too subscribe to the ideal of helping endangered languages by contributing towards the creation of a long-lasting corpus. As Jones & Ogilvie (2013) argue in the preface of their edited volume, language documentation can be a powerful instrument for all endangered languages in the planning of revitalization efforts but only when done with the specific needs of the community

in mind.

In this paper, I present the case of Emilian, a seemingly endangered Gallo-Italic language family historically spoken in northern Italy, to exemplify how language documentation can better inform practices of revitalization by considering the community in its entirety. Specifically, I contend that due to its inextricability from a community, the local natural environment and its interactions with members of the speech community should be included in both the documentation and processes of language maintenance and revitalization. The paper is structured as follows: a brief overview of Emilian, its vitality, and the current state of documentation are described to justify the decision to choose this language family over other endangered languages. In this section, I also delve into the connection between language, place, and identity and argue in favor of conceptualizing an aspect of place as our belonging to the local more-than-human environment¹. A discussion on ecolinguistics will follow to provide the reader with an understanding of what this recent sub-field of linguistics does and how it can help achieve my scopes for the maintenance and revitalization of Emilian. Taking Emilian eco-poems, texts are analyzed by focusing on analytical aspects of evaluation, salience, and identity (Stibbe 2021).

9.3 Literature review

9.3.1 Emilian: A language that doesn't know it wants to be saved

It is a well-known fact that the territory occupied by Ancient Rome was vast and covered most of modern Europe, stretching to northern Africa and the Middle East. Latin was the official language of Rome and its occupied territories which co-existed to some degree with the local languages. Very simply and briefly put, this co-existence allowed for regional varieties of vulgar Latin to emerge in the Middle Ages which further developed into modern Romance languages (e.g. Ledgeway 2012). Five of these Romance languages have become some of the most researched and widely spoken tongues; these are French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. Others have either undergone or are currently undergoing a process of shift – and are consequently dying out – in part due to language policies both at the national and grassroot levels that have privileged the national standards at the expense of multilingualism.

This is also the case for Emilian, the language family chosen for purposes of both

¹This is not to say that place should only be conceptualized in its territorial and physical form but rather to emphasize that our sense of belonging should include our relationship with the local environment, too.

analysis and discussion in this paper. Emilian and its sisters are commonly referred to as dialects: a label that is also frequently used in academic literature (e.g. Maiden & Parry 1997). As explained, these so-called dialects of Italy are Italo-Romance varieties and languages in their own right. Due to the counterintuitive labeling of these languages, it is necessary to make a distinction between “primary Romance dialects” and “secondary dialects” (Loporcaro 2009:5); in the Italian context, the former refers to its historical Italo-Romance languages, such as Emilian and Sicilian, and the latter to the regional varieties of Italian spoken throughout the country. Compare for example these translations of *Are you taking out the rubbish?* in Emilian, Regional Italian, and Standard Italian, respectively: *Pórt-et fòra al ròsc?*, *Porti fuori il rusco?*, and *Porti fuori l'immondizia?* – where *rusco* is the local lexeme for *waste* equivalent to Standard Italian *immondizia* and thus an instance of diatopic variation (Berruto 1995)².

In terms of its vitality, the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley 2010) states that Emilian is “definitely endangered” due to the shift to Italian, the national language (for more on how this shift was initiated and its current effects, see Benincà et al. 2016; D'Agostino 2007; Foresti 2010). Not only is this language family endangered and therefore in urgent need of strategies for its maintenance and revitalization, but it is also under-researched and under-documented. Indeed, while other dialects of northern Italy, such as Friulian, Venetan, and Lombard are often used for analyses of various linguistic nature in textbooks and scientific articles, Emilian varieties appear less frequently.

This is further highlighted in Hajek (1997) who warns that a survey for Emilian does not yet exist; at the time of writing 25 years have passed but the situation is still the same. The socio-political history of Emilia Romagna together with its geography has meant that unlike other dialects of northern Italy, Emilian does not have a koine while its continuum is fairly fragmented (Foresti 2010).

The dialectal fragmentation of Emilian can be analyzed as both a symptom and a cause of its current vitality. It is a symptom because of an outcome of the sociohistorical and ideological processes just discussed. The fragmentation is a symptom of the recent idea of nation and how in western culture this should correspond to one language (see ‘nationalist model’ in Geeraerts 2003). It is also a cause, however. The fragmentation of Emilian as a language family is also historically reflected in terms of the sense of identity and belonging of its community members. Indeed, instead of identifying with an identity at the regional level (i.e. modern Emilia), the sense of belonging was and

²For the sake of clarity whenever I mention the dialects of Italy in this paper, I am always referring to primary Romance dialects as described above.

arguably still is at the micro-level (i.e. provinces, towns, and villages). I contend that this lack of macro identity has facilitated the process of language shift and – what I call – language erasure. Borrowing from Stibbe’s (2021) definition of erasure, I refer to language erasure as the socio-historical process of ideological nature which culminated in the current state of affairs of Emilian.

In a country where the act of colonialization occurred from the inside, at the hands of internal forces and of very closely related ethnicity, a process of standardization of language and administration can arguably take place with less resistance. This is in line with Toso (2008) who states that self-confidence in a speaker and their willingness to revendicate the language is central to changes in language policy for minoritized languages. For a speaker to feel confident and to want to reclaim a space for the language in society requires awareness: being aware that the idiom is indeed a language and that they are a speaker of said language. This is not the case for most speakers of Emilian. After decades of ideological propaganda pushing for the use of Italian over the ‘dialects’, many now believe that these regional languages are a bad version of Italian and therefore nothing worth revendicating. Paraphrasing Busch (2021:101), this process is a clear example of how “language policy is a practical application of language ideology” – in other words, this is the result of the speakers’ internalized view of language consolidated through language ideology. Not only was the discursive move effective in convincing people to abandon the use of Emilian but it also removed the language from their consciousness thus inflicting the coup de grâce on the future of the language. After all, you cannot lose what you never had or what you never knew you had.

As an endangered language, Emilian would be an ideal candidate for language documentation. As argued by Jones & Ogilvie (2013:xiii), language documentation can serve a dual scope: one of pragmatic nature, that is, to provide practical support to the language and its community (i.e. materials, grammars, dictionaries – all part of a standardized approach to language), and one of symbolic nature. The tangible act of creating all these resources is also symbolic as it makes the language exist in the social world. This, in turn, can bolster the speaker’s sense of self-confidence mentioned by Toso (2008) while also “fostering a sense of unified identity [...] [and] even a partial means of repackaging a hitherto stigmatized identity, as speakers see their ancestral language being used in modern domains” (Jones & Ogilvie 2013:xiii). Although this would be a very beneficial and even desired outcome for Emilian, I would argue that first a fundamental step must be taken to raise awareness in the speech community.

Before the identity of the community can be unified and reinforced through the

means of language maintenance and revitalization efforts, the connection between language and identity must be reinstated (O'Rourke 2005). To revitalize Emilian, it is necessary that the act of speaking Emilian be restored in the identity-building strategies (e.g. Borland 2005) of community members as a resource to index their membership to the community. As emphasized by Toso (2008:25), speaking the ancestral language and identifying at such a micro level is not in opposition to thinking of oneself as outward thinking, identifying as a global citizen, or speaking the national language and other major languages. Instead, they can coexist as different but connected layers of the same identity. It is therefore critical that when planning awareness strategies for Emilian these should use a language that fosters positive attitudes towards a multilingual, multifaceted, multicultural (cf. 'superdiverse' in Karel et al. 2015) identity of the community. As I will explain in more detail in Section 9.3.2, concepts of empathy and solidarity are paramount in the creation of a more inclusive society and local community, too.

Before I move on to discuss the specific strategy of language maintenance and revitalization that I argue in favor of in this paper, there is a further fundamental aspect of identity that I must address. So far, I have discussed identity about language and membership groups (i.e. the speech community) through the lens of belonging and indexicality. In this sense, belonging is conceptualized in its societal form but belonging can and arguably is at its core a relationship of physical nature. We are born in a physical world and live our lives permanently and inextricably immersed in a physical environment. We are not just part of that physical environment, but *we are* – as in our presence constitutes part of – the physical environment. Just like the wind, we too can be heard, seen in the same way as we notice droplets of dew resting on a strand of grass on a crisp morning, smelt, touched, and tasted like nectar to a honeybee. We can call the physical environment within which we live a space (Massey 1994) and the relationships that we build with space both at the individual and collective level can be referred to as places (Bachelard 1961).

Place and space are deeply rooted in our sense of belonging, for example as understood in the idea of the dweller in Heidegger (1977), and subsequently of our identity, too. When prompted about our origins and the place we call home, for example, we often think of it in terms of nations, cities, streets, and neighborhoods. Our identity can however be more deeply seated as one which has “a sense of connection to some part of the nonhuman natural environment that affects the way we perceive and acts toward the world; a belief that the environment is important to us and an important part of who we are” (Clayton 2003:45-46). While this kind of connection is not neces-

sarily true for everyone, it is arguably a desirable goal given the urgency of our times in slowing down the effects of climate change.

I would even go as far as speculating that it is no coincidence that the erasure of Emilian (a language historically spoken by farmers and less educated people) occurred at the same time as our distancing with the more-than-human world unfolded. An example of how language erasure can go hand in hand with the erasure of nature. Because of this urgency and the rootedness of local ecological knowledge in endangered languages (Stibbe 2021), I argue that planning for language maintenance and revitalization efforts should take into consideration aspects of the local natural environment to foster reconnection in the community with both language and place. Due to the state of Emilian as an endangered, understudied, and under-documented language with a fragmented identity, this language was selected to exemplify the proposition put forward in this paper. In line with this, in the following section, I describe how ecolinguistics can help inform better strategies for language maintenance and revitalization and later offer an analysis of some ecopoems in Emilian to illustrate its application.

9.3.2 Ecolinguistics as a practical tool for language revitalization

So far, I have presented the case of Emilian as an endangered language family that requires both academic and public attention to be revitalized. In previous sections, the issue of endangerment is discussed as one which is deeply entangled in the erasure of the language from the memory and consciousness of the community as well as the loss of a connection with the natural world. A collective effort to create a documentation of Emilian that not only satisfies linguistic and cultural aspects of the community but also accounts for its ecological knowledge is advocated. Documentation can however run the risk of laying in silence and collecting dust as artifacts in a museum. Instead, these archives should be used to create materials for language revitalization that consider the needs of the community as well as the kind of specific audience they are targeted for (see Hinton 2011 for examples of different ways languages can be revitalized). In this instance, I look at Emilian poems about the local natural world and analyze specific linguistic patterns using Stibbe's (2021) ecolinguistics framework. This wishes to serve as an example of how to conduct ecolinguistics analyses on texts of minoritized and endangered languages so that both the language and its ecological knowledge are disseminated in academia. More importantly, however, is the exemplification of how the identification process for beneficial texts can be used for strategies of language revitalization – the outcome of which would hopefully be the creation of materials to be

used in the community of the target language through acts of outreach.

As argued by Stibbe (2021:9), ecolinguistics is whatever branch of linguistics whose inquiry has to do with “the role of language in the life-sustaining interactions of humans with other humans, other organisms and the physical environment”. Specifically, “[e]colinguistics [...] is about critiquing forms of language that contribute to ecological destruction and aiding in the search for new forms of language that inspire people to protect the natural world” (Stibbe 2021:1). While the first half of the scope of ecolinguistics would be equally as beneficial to the cause of language revitalization, in this paper I focus on language uses that can inspire members of the Emilian speech community to reconnect with the local natural space.

As set out in previous sections, this analysis is not meant as an elaborated overview of the beneficial representations of the natural world in Emilian poems. Its purpose is purely demonstrative in providing an example of the practical application of the ideas proposed. For this reason, the analysis is not comprehensive but, if interested in exploring how a more detailed analysis can be achieved, the reader is invited to consult Stibbe (2021). Instead, in this paper, I deploy a reverse approach to the usual way of using analyses as it seeks to illustrate how my argument applies to the real world. Here then the analysis works in two ways by doing, in the traditional sense, as they show us the *how* (through language documentation and revitalization), as well as *doing* in a speech act theory way (Austin 1962) – through ecolinguistics. In this latter sense, they offer new ways of thinking about our local environment, and they allow us to reimagine our collective identity at the local level. This is where the two combined can serve as a path of reconnection to both the local language and the local more-than-human world – to save and care for both.

In referring to the idea of speaking Emilian as a practice that has to do with the collective identity of its speakers, I am pointing to a posthumanist conception of language. Instead of taking languages as a central component of communication, the focus is on our wider environment, which includes both material and abstract objects, as a source of “semiotic possibilities” (Pennycook 2018:455). This allows us to truly account for the interconnection between all things living, and to look at human language as a part of the natural world and communication as a process emerging from it. Fundamentally this ecological shift is to do away with the exceptionalism of the human condition that separates us from our environment and instead embraces our togetherness in and with the natural world. In the field of sociolinguistics, Pennycook (2018:450) describes repertoires as entities that should be “understood in terms of spatial distribution, social practices, and material embodiment rather than the individual competence of the

sociolinguistic actor who has held center stage over the past few decades”. Again, this is to recognize the collectiveness of our human experience and that our learning also takes place in the physical world rather than solely in our mind (Pennycook 2018:450). Our environment – whether it be digital or in the real world – dictates what we can and cannot do in our communicative experiences; it provides the tools necessary for our interactions to be meaningful. In this sense repertoires are spatial and our identity is an endeavor of collective (in its broadest sense) nature.

It is in the very concept of collectiveness that a way forward in how to bring about tangible change in the current situation of Emilian and other similar speech communities can be found. Arguably the foundations of togetherness are empathy and solidarity. These values have been recently attracting attention in studies of second language acquisition whereby empathy was observed to enhance a learner’s pronunciation skills (Dewaele & Li 2012; Ożańska-Ponikwia & Dewaele 2012; Rota & Reiterer 2009). An elusive term that captures a complex interpersonal feeling, empathy can be defined as “the ability ‘imaginatively’ to enter into and participate in the world of the cultural Other cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally” (Calloway-Thomas 2010:8). Crucially, Calloway-Thomas (2010:7) argues that empathy has “the potential to alter what we do interculturally”.

This is in line with the notion of stories – “cognitive structures in the minds of individuals which influence how they think, talk and act” (Stibbe 2021:6). When these models are prevalent in the collective mind of a culture, they become *stories we live by* (Stibbe 2021:6). This, therefore, presents an opportunity to change attitudes around Emilian in a positive way by leveraging on feelings that are inherently valuable rather than approaching it from a negative angle. In practice, the scope is to foster values of empathy and solidarity towards Emilian by exposing the community to new ideas of what it means to be a speaker of Emilian with a focus on commonalities (Mercer 2016): a shared history, an ancestral ecological knowledge, a rediscovered appreciation of the local nature through a new tool in the spatial repertoire of the community. This, to me, seems to be both a practically and morally desirable path of reconnection for Emilian. It is practically beneficial because a more efficient way of changing language attitudes and language use compared to, for example, the targeting of pedagogies in schools (as discussed in Ferrer & Sankoff 2004). It is also morally favorable as it encourages the creation of communities centered around solidarity, empathy, and compassion for one another – humans and more-than-human alike.

9.4 Research design

9.4.1 Data selection

For my analyses, I selected five poems from two separate publications. The first is an edited volume titled *Poesî long'-a Panêra* ('Poems along the Panaro')³ which is dated 1968 and was compiled specifically for the 98th fair of San Giovanni in Spilamberto (Modena). The volume comprises forty-five poems in the local varieties of Emilian which were written by 18 men and one woman. Two poems were selected from this volume, and these are *La Vanga* ('The Spade') by Ugo Roli, and *Meravii dlla Natura* ('Wonders of Nature') by Battista Rompianesi. Roli was born in Vignola where he lived until his death and where he worked as a lawyer. He was a well-known poet of dialectal poetry in the area whose main theme was nostalgia and melancholy. A former railway worker from Sassuolo, Rompianesi was of similar age to Roli and a fellow dialectal poet whose creative writing in Emilian earned him recognition and several awards. Both Roli's and Rompianesi's varieties are from the outskirts of Modena and can therefore be classified from a regional perspective both as eastern (based on Pellegrini's classification in Loporcaro 2009:105) and southern (Hajek 1997:271). At a more local level, the two varieties can also be classified as urban (as opposed to the northern "Bassa" grouping and the Apennine set of varieties, south) for their proximity to the city of Modena (Cevolani 2011).

The second publication is titled *Àqua de Mé Cantér* ('Water of My Cantiere')⁴ and was written by Antonio Mazzieri in 1974. As stated in the preface, the book pays homage to Mazzieri's Lama variety of Emilian as a gesture of love towards his land. Interestingly, Mazzieri's preface also mentions the poems as a contribution towards the documentation of the variety spoken in Lama Mocogno. Lama is a town that sits high up in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines and is, therefore, an Apennine variety of Modenese. Three poems have been taken from Mazzieri's publication and these are *Àqua de Mé Cantér* ('Water of My Cantiere'), *E A Vrée* ('And I Wish'), and *Guardand al Mée Muntàgn* ('Looking at My Mountains'). For ease of reading, the analysis in Section 9.5 will be based on the paraphrasing of the English translation⁵.

Modenese is a language group with no standardized writing system, and this is evidenced by the discrepancies and inconsistencies in the way authors (both among

³Panaro is the name of the local river whose source is in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines and merges into the River Po.

⁴Cantiere is the name of a peak in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines.

⁵The reader can access the full Emilian texts with both word-for-word and morphemic glossing, and literal translation into English by requesting a copy directly to the author.

authors and within the same author) replicate their varieties in writing. Texts and authors' choices are loyally reproduced in this paper as a way to lift the morale ban on writing 'badly' and to recognize the freedom speakers should be afforded when writing in a historically minoritized language whose fragmentation and lack of a standard can often inhibit the process of communication – whether creative or not.

The process of selecting poems was one of conscious and purposeful nature. I wanted to find poems that touched upon the relationship between the author and their local natural environment and did so in a positive way. Positive stories of what it means to belong to the natural world in and around the area where Lama, Vignola, and Sassuolo sit. Stories that are unique to the special characteristics of each area – unique enough to allow for a sense of belonging to be recognizable to an insider and unrecognizable to others – but also universal and widely identifiable in their candid portrayal of the intrinsic value of nature. To use the term positive in describing this kind of story is to refer to a specific stance: my stance, my vision of what works to fix the issue at hand, or more precisely my ecosophy (Stibbe 2021:10). In other words, my idea of what a good example of an alternative story to the hegemonic conceptualization of belonging (e.g. nationalistic, monolingual, competitive, individualistic) is what informed the selection process. I looked for examples of collectiveness, compassion, empathy, and simplicity.

These are the values that I wish to tap on through my analysis and that I would hope to see in materials for revitalization efforts so that local identity can be reshaped in unison with a reconnection with the local natural space. As these concepts are expressed at the lexical/phrasal level, in the analysis I show the Emilian original excerpts with their literal translation while omitting the glossing for reasons of space (see Appendix G).

9.4.2 Theoretical framework and research questions

Following Stibbe's (2021:16) framework, the excerpts are analyzed and discussed according to the kind of story that they convey; these are *ideology*, *framing*, *metaphor*, *evaluations*, *identity*, *conviction*, *erasure*, and *salience*. These also form the linguistic theory employed as part of the analyses. I do not, however, analyze language patterns to reveal the underlying stories and judge them based on my ecosophy as described in Stibbe (2021:11). Instead, I used my ecosophy to identify suitable poems at the level of perception, to then apply ecolinguistics to answer the following questions: (1) what kind of beneficial story do they convey? (2) what features in the language are at play? This is to show the practical application of ecolinguistics to real-world issues

such as language revitalization in the hope that it may be used more widely and with intent when creating relevant materials. My ecosophy can be summarized in one word *compassion*. Anything that fosters a sense of compassion among all living beings is something that I cherish and see as necessary to change the stories we live by. Compassion to oneself, to our loved ones and those we like less: compassion for those we do not yet know, for the birds, the plants, the tress, and the rivers – compassion for all of those with whom we share a life on this beautiful planet.

I make no efforts to conceal the nature of my analysis as both political and involved in activities of social change: quite the opposite. While the act of analyzing texts to reveal ideological discursive practices which contribute to social inequality can sit within a critical discourse analysis framework, I intend to be proactive rather than deconstructive. In other words, my contribution responds directly to Martin's (2007) call to use our academic voice as a form of intervention. In this sense, the ecolinguistic work presented in this paper is closer to positive discourse analysis (Martin 2004) in approach. As Bartlett (2018:138) explains, "ecolinguistics and PDA are distinct from CDA not so much in their mode of analysis but in terms of their practical application: the raising of critical awareness of hidden ideologies in the case of CDA and, for PDA/ecolinguistics, the promotion of positive texts".

Bartlett (2018) also argues in favor of an approach that goes beyond the promotion of benevolent stories by analyzing both hegemonic discourses and existing counter-discourses. He refers to this approach as a post-foundational stance that seeks to foster dialectical self-reflexivity in the analyst so that context and its vulnerability may be accounted for when exposing destructive discourse (see also Chen et al. 2021b). The scope of this paper is very practical insofar that it wishes to offer examples of language revitalization materials that serve the goal of encouraging more people to use the language and also inspire them to love and protect their local natural environment. It follows that although I agree in principle with Bartlett's (2018) approach, my focus is on the practical application of ecolinguistics and therefore does not require an extension of the analysis on the grounding.

9.5 Eco-poems in Emilian: An ecolinguistic analysis

Building on Martin & Rose (2007), Stibbe (2021:78-79) defines evaluations as a kind of story that influences our behaviors based on whether we deem an area of life as good or bad. Evaluations are therefore attitudes informed by collectively recognizable values that emerge in texts as observable clusters of linguistic features known as appraisal

patterns (Stibbe 2021:78-79). Given the crucial role of attitudes in my research, this analysis looks at evaluations as the main type of story followed by smaller contributions on erasure (areas of life not worthy of attention), salience (areas of life worthy of attention), metaphors, and identity. The analysis is organized per poem, as opposed to thematically, as these texts are short and self-contained to the point that contextualizing the analytical process to the whole poem is not only practical but essential.

I will start with the first poem *Àqua de Mé Cantér* ('Water of My Cantiere') (Figure 9.1). The author is describing the water, the clear water whose source is the local mountain called Cantiere. This water has agency as it jumps, froths up amongst rocks, and slows down in a small plane. Water is represented through the active voice as an actor of material processes (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014) – Stibbe's (2021:167) framework – as opposed to being a mere participant in these everyday physical activities of our living world. The representation of water is specific to the water of the author's local mountain and both specificity and activation are co-constructors of the story of salience underlying in these verses. The poem continues. It is water that only yesterday was snow and is therefore fresh and clean. It is as clean as the soul of an innocent child who is still unaware of what the world is really like.

'Fresh' and 'clean' are words that have positive connotations in Emilian as they do in English. As such, these lexical items are considered part of an appraisal pattern which would allow us to observe the author's evaluation of water as being positive and worthy of attention. The figure of the child goes from being one of symbolic abstraction to indexical concretization in the subsequent and concluding verse: "it is the water, the clear water of my Cantiere and I, like a child, enjoy feeling it flow through my hands, playing with the rocks and reliving a time that is now far away". Water can take on the meaning of time if used as a metaphor, but it is also the very vessel via which the author travels back in time to his childhood and that he relives as something to be enjoyed and lovingly reminisced. Evaluations, metaphors, and salience are the three kinds of stories concealed in this text which represent the local mountain and its water springs as something intrinsically valuable and capable of reconnecting us with our inner child.

In a very similar fashion to *Àqua de Mé Cantér* ('Water of My Cantiere'), the analysis of the second poem *E A Vrée* ('And I Wish') (Figure 9.2) also reveals salience and a positive evaluation of the ordinary. The poem is written as a form of a wish, a mantra that the author repeats in the hope that it may become true. He only wishes for one thing and that is to return young and to be walking barefoot in the fields of his plain and to suddenly discover behind prickly hedges a bird's nest, and to remain

1) *Àqua de mé Cantér*
 “Water of my Cantiere”

L' é l' àqua, l' àqua cèra,
 “It’s the water, the clear water”
nèda da e mé Cantér,
 “born from my Cantiere”
quòla ch' sèlta e la spöma in mèz a i sas,
 “that jumps and froths in between the rocks”
ch' la ralènta la fuga int' na pianlina;
 “that slows down its escape in a small plain”
àqua che ancòra aiér
 “water that still yesterday”
l' éra néva, lasö tra al mac ad faz:
 “was snow, up there in the beech wood”
àqua frasca, pulida cume l' anma
 “water, fresh and clean like the soul”
d' un pipìn inucént, che ancòra e n sà
 “of an innocent child who’s yet to know”
de mònd 'd la véta.
 “about the world, about life.”
L' é l' àqua, l' àqua cèra
 “It’s the water, the clear water”
da mé Cantér: e me, cume un pipìn,
 “of my Cantiere: and me, like a child”
a m gód a sént' la scòrer tra al mée mèn,
 “I enjoy feeling it flow between my hands”
a zügher cun la gèra,
 “playing with the gravel”
a arvèvr un témp luntèn.
 “reliving a faraway time.”

Figure 9.1: *Àqua de Mé Cantér* (‘Water of My Cantiere’) (Mazzieri 1974:7).

2) *E a vrée*
“And I wish”

E a vrée, a vrée, psér una nòta andér
“And I wish, I wish I could one night go”
là, duve e sòn n' amòcia
“where sleep gathers”
i insòni 'd la zénta.
“all people’s dreams.”

E a vrée truvèr i mée e purtèn véia
“And I wish I could find mine and take away”
un, un sulamént: quast ché.
“one, one only: this one.”

Ragazöl artruvèm a caminèr
“a kid, finding myself walking”
daschèlza suvr' i prà
“barefoot in the fields”
dal mée Pièn e, a l' impruvis,
“of my Plain, and all of a sudden”
dascröver, drée a un macium, un né d' uslìn:
“discovering behind a bush, a birds’ nest:”
e ster lé, lé a guarder.
“and to stand there, there watching.”

Figure 9.2: E A Vrée (‘And I Wish’) (Mazzieri 1974:21).

there watching. The author describes this desire as the one dream he wishes he could take away with him from the land where all dreams lay.

The semantic entailment of the dream as a word with positive connotations allows us to understand this poem as a positively evaluated story of connection with the more-than-human world. In turn, this provides focus on the ordinariness of birds in their nest – here passive and not participating in the mental story depicted – as something worthy of such special consideration. In contrast to the first poem, here salience is not given by a process of grammatical activation but by the fact that the simple discovery of a bird’s nest is the object of one’s most longed-for dream. This is further accentuated by the reiteration of the verb ‘watching’ which also mimics the passing of time.

On the subject of time, the poem can also be interpreted as a nostalgic cry to what has been and cannot be relived; in a world that is now increasingly engrossed in chasing appearances, this is perhaps an expression of remorse for not having spent enough time in his childhood enjoying the simple things. While these interpretations are outside the remit of my analysis, they can be useful considerations when creating language revitalization efforts by serving as points of reflection and discussion in whatever activity they are employed.

Topics related to time, birds, and watching are also pervasive in *Guardand al Mée Muntàgn* ('Looking at My Mountain') (Figure 9.3), the third and last poem written by Mazzieri that I am analyzing. The act of watching is however oriented towards the two main local mountains named Cimone and Cantiere. The author spends time just looking at them and observing how spring has dressed them in the green of a shade so fresh that cannot be compared to anything else in the world. While observing the peaks, his mind wanders to the present and the past, and in his contemplation, he can feel his love growing for every living thing ever created. Words such as 'enjoyment', 'beautiful', 'beauty', and 'love' form an appraisal pattern to convey the author's positive evaluation of his local green space. The poem ends with a remark on how the love the author is experiencing is making him feel closer to the greatness of God – closer than he feels at church. The juxtaposition of the beauty of the mountains to the presence of God as a final conclusive verse acts as a climax and provides salience to this very personal and humble experience and renders it precious, extracorporeal, divine.

The fourth and fifth poems are from a separate publication and by two different authors: namely *La Vanga* ('The Spade') by Ugo Roli (Figure 9.4) and *Meravii dla Natura* ('Wonders of Nature') by Battista Rompianesi (Figure 9.5).

La Vanga ('The Spade') is a poem written in the first person about the simplicity of life in the fields. The first three stanzas set the scene by introducing the author as someone who has just had a productive and exhausting day working in the fields. He tells of his appreciation of working in the morning when the breeze shakes the Lucerne, birds can be heard messing around in the trees chatting away endlessly, chickens are pecking for food, and earthworms jump out of the ground as he digs. Using the active voice, the language portrays these beings as actors of material processes which in turn gives them salience in the narrative. In the next stanza, the author compassionately describes the fleeing of stink bugs, earthworms, lizards, earwigs, butterflies, spiders, grasshoppers, ants, snails, and crickets from the slashes of the spade. Here salience is further heightened by the use of hyponymy where the words used to identify these living beings are specific enough to imagine them as individual agents (Stibbe 2021:72) and

<p>3) <i>Guardand al mée muntàgn</i> “Looking at my moutains”</p> <p><i>Quènd e turna la föia, quènd luntén</i> “When the leaf returns, when faraway” <i>a sént in méz al mac usée cantèr,</i> “I hear in the middle of the wood birds singing” <i>a n pröv gudiöl piü grand che pièn, pièn, pièn,</i> “I don’t feel more enjoyment than slowly, slowly, slowly” <i>andèr in zéma a un strat e pò guardèr.</i> “going to the top of the range and looking.” <i>Guardèr intur’n a me al mée muntàgn</i> “Looking around me, my mountains” <i>ad vérd vistidi da la premavéra,</i> “of green dressed by Spring.” <i>d’ un vérd frasch, acsé bèl, che ün cumpàgn</i> “of such a fresh green, so beautiful that one like it” <i>e n’ as tröva, par me, int la tèra intèra.</i> “to me, cannot be found in the whole world”.</p>	<p><i>Guardèr e me Cimun, e me Cantèr,</i> “Looking at my Cimone, and my Cantiere” <i>cal gli èter zèmm ch’ al s’ élzen ché e là,</i> “at the other peaks raising here and there,” <i>e, intènt, lasér andèr e me pensér</i> “while letting my thought go” <i>duve e vól: a e presént, a e pasà,</i> “wherever it wants, present or past” <i>a quósti e a quòl. E cuntemplànd la blàza</i> “to this and that. And contemplating the beauty” <i>dal mée muntàgn a sént cràser l’ amur</i> “of my mountains I feel my love growing” <i>p’r ogni còsa creèda: e la grandàza</i> “for everything created: and the greatness” <i>ché, piö che in cèsa, a sént ad nòster Sgnur.</i> “here, more than in church, I feel of our Lord.”</p>
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Figure 9.3: Guardand al Mée Muntàgn (‘Looking at My Mountains’) (Mazzieri 1974:26).

relate to them in their terrifying experience. This is the opposite of what would happen if the author had clamped them together using one of their hypernyms – ‘creatures’, ‘bugs’, ‘insects’ for example. Hypernyms are too abstract and obscure to allow our imagination to depict agents at the individual level and are therefore effective linguistic choices to obtain what Stibbe (2021:139) defines as erasure: “[a] systematic absence or sidelining of certain participants from a text [...] tells a story in itself – that they are unimportant, irrelevant or marginal”.

In contrast, the participants of this poem are central, relevant, and very important to the author who continues his account by wondering how many of them there must be in the whole field who have families and lived their lives quietly and happily, under the impression of being undisturbed; *povr’ inuzèint!* (‘poor innocents!’). The poem is written as an allegory for war, famine, and death where the spade is the dictator and the small creatures inhabiting the earth are like humans, those imprisoned, those oppressed. This is evident in the last three stanzas where the author talks of the arrival of a dictator whose brutal actions burn as much as the raw slashes of the spade. However, it is through the compassionate reflection on his experience in the fields that the author can draw parallels with his post-war trauma and his empathy for those fleeing beings allows him to see them as individuals whose lives are worthy of consideration and protection. In other words, compassion is fostered by the act of looking for commonalities across species rather than differences.

4) *La Vanga*

“The spade”

A i ho finì d' vanghèr la me piantèda
 “I’ve finished digging up my orchard”
A son stoff e a i ho spòlt fin la camisa
 “I’m tired and I’ve even drenched my shirt”
Mo a peins che incò a i ho fat bona giurnèda
 “But I think that today was a good day’s work”
E la fadiga l’ an n’ em pèsa brisa.
 “and the strain doesn’t weigh on me.”
A m pies ed lavurèr a la mateina
 “I like working in the morning”
Quand al sol al saluta la campagna
 “when the sun greets the countryside”
E a s seint al frash alzèr d’ un’ ariarèina
 “and one can feel the light coolness of a breeze”
Ch’ al fa termèr la brina in t l’ erba spagna.
 “which is shaking the dew on strands of lucerne”
A gh’ è i uslein ch’ i froll’ in mez a i ram
 “Birds are messing around in the trees”
E i n la finèssen mai ed ciacarèr
 “and they won’t stop talking”
A gh’ è el galein ch’ el bèchen da la fam
 “chickens are pecking out of hunger”
I bégh ch’ i selten fòra in t al vanghèr.
 “worms jumping out amid all the digging”
Tótti el volt ch’ a se sfànda una vanghèda.
 “every time a dig goes through”
L’ è una bataglia con i morti e i fri
 “it is a battle with the dead and with the priests”
La vanga la va avanti e l’ an gh’ abèda
 “The spade carries on and takes no notice”
La sbrisa tòtt infin ch’ l’ an n’ à finì.
 “eventually it crumbles everything that hasn’t already finished”
I bestiulèin ch’ a n psu schivèr al tai
 “the beasts who couldn’t dodge the cut”
I s’ vadden a scapèr a zèint, a mèll:
 “you can see them running away in their hundreds, thousands:”

Zèmes, lumbris, lusért, furbsèl, parpai
 “stink bugs, earthworms, lizards, earwigs, butterflies”
Ragn, cavalàtt, furmigh, lumegh, e grèll.
spiders grasshoppers ants snails and crickets
 “spiders, grasshoppers, ants, snails and crickets.”
E chi sa quant milion in tòtt al prè
 “And who knows how many millions in the whole field”
Ch’ i s’ èren fàt famia, povr’ imuzèint!
 “who had a family of their own, poor innocents!”
I s’ cherdiven de n’ èser desturbè
 “they believed they weren’t being disturbed”
E i s’ la passèvn insàmm chièt e cuntèint.
 “and they were just passing time together, quiet and happy”
L’ è gnu al castigamat, l’ è gnu stavolta
 “The martinet has arrived, he has come this time”
A arduser tòtt al camp us d’ na gratusa!...
 “to reduce the whole field to a grater!...”
Al v’ taia, al v’ sbat, al v’ péccia, al v’ scaravolta
 “he cuts you, he hits you, he beats you, he throws you”
E avanti, senza gnanch dmandèrev scusa.
 “and on and on, without even apologising.”
Mo quand a srà passé soquanti stman,
 “but when so many weeks will have passed”
A n gh’ srà piò al brusor d’ la vanga ruda,
 “there will no longer be the burning from the rough spade”
L’ erba la srà chersuda dò o tre span
 “the grass will have grown by two or three spans”
A cróver d’ un bèl vérd la tèra muda.
 “to cover the naked earth of a beautiful green.”
L’ è quall ch’ succèd in tòtt i sit d’ la tèra:
 “That’s what happens everywhere in the world.”
Quand a s’ è chièt e a s’ bèda a lavurèr
 “when you’re quiet focused on working”
A scopia un fulmin, un mapèl, na guèra...
 “there explodes a lightning bolt, a hustle, a war...”
Mo a n pàsa tant ch’ a s’ torna a prinzipièr!...
 “but not much time goes by that we go back to start again!...”

Figure 9.4: *La Vanga* (‘The Spade’) (Roli 1968:11-12).

5) *Meravii dla natura*

“Wonders of Nature”

Sa vagh a girer per mez la campagna
 “If I go wandering in the countryside”
am seint duminer da la curiosità
 “I feel dominated by curiosity”
cunchili fossil fra i sass ed muntagna ...!
 “Sheels, fossils among the mountain rocks...!”
ch' em fan pènsèr ai teimp lontan... pasè ...!
 “which make me think of the passed time now faraway...!”
E po' a guerd tutt è-gli' èrb e i fior piò curios
 “and then I look at the tree and the flowers most curious”
argoi di campion da imprim' una sportla,
 “enough samples to fill a bag”
(e ancàra a m arcord ed ch- l' erba 't sant Ambros
 “(and again, I remember of that grass of Saint Ambrose)”
che sovr' una man, l'am fé gnir 'na sfiopla...!)
 “which on one of my hands gave me a blister”
Vè... inzema a cal fior 'na bela farfala,
 “Look... on that flower a beautiful butterfly,”
a per cla respira murvand el sò el,
 “it looks like she's breathing moving her wings”
pian pian a m avsein... a guerd... mo csa fala
 “slowly, slowly, I'm getting closer... I look... what is she doing”
l' è ed sovra a cal fior, e l' ha scelt al piò bel...
 “she's on top of that flower, and she's chosen the most beautiful...”

La mòv e-gli antènn e a per cla s' orienta...
 “She's moving her antennas and it looks like she's orienting herself...”
forse, per radio!, l' avertés na cumpagna,
 “maybe via radio!, she can sense a companion,”
ed gnir ché da lè e cla staga cunteinta;
 “coming here for her and may she be happy;”
ca gh' è t-cla roba cla s-sòcia e cla s-magna.
 “there is so much stuff that she sucks and eats.”
Stel bistiuleini e-glien anch misteriosi ...
 “These beasties are also mysterious...”
el s' dan, forse, di radio avertimeint ...!
 “maybe, they give each other radio warnings...!”
anch nueter a-s-sam fat stel cos famosi!
 “we have also created such famous things!”
mo préma, a lor, a gh-li fé l' Onnipoteint !!!
 “but first, it was them who the Omnipotent made them for!!!”

Figure 9.5: *Meravii dla Natura* (‘Wonders of Nature’) (Rompianesi 1968:67).

In the fifth poem *Meravii dla Natura* (‘Wonders of Nature’) (Figure 5), it is curiosity that takes center stage. The author opens a dialogic narration of his experience of his time spent in the countryside. There he lets curiosity lead him to find fossils and think of the past. The most curious flowers and herbs are the ones that catch his attention until he spots a butterfly whose movements appear mysterious as she selects the most beautiful flower, she breathes in sync with her wings, she moves her antennae as she perceives the author’s presence while she sucks on nectar and eats away. The butterfly is the main protagonist of this poem; it deserves the undivided attention of the author as he observes it as an actor of material processes and a perceiver of mental processes (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014).

These activation strategies form salience in the poem together with the final comparison the author makes on the radio warning-like movements of the butterfly to the then most popular recent human invention (the radio). Both intelligent and resourceful, humans and butterflies are the same in the eyes of the author as God’s creations. This poem is similar to the others insofar as it touches upon the theme of past time, personal experience in nature, and the appreciation of simple, ordinary activities. It also conveys a sense of deep connection to the natural space without making use of possessive pronouns – like Roli in *La Vanga* (‘The Spade’).

Roli and Rompianesi use a language of compassion and curiosity to draw closer to the natural world whereas Mazzieri makes use of first singular person possessive pronouns to portray a personal and intimate relationship of belonging to his local green space. In this sense then the use of possessive pronouns helps to build a story of *self-identity* (Stibbe 2021:100) and, in the case of Mazzieri, what it means to be someone who culturally and environmentally identifies as belonging to the Apennine area called Lama Mocogno. As I will discuss in the following section, both strategies and all five poems are effective in exposing readers to alternative stories to live by and foster the building of environmental identities through the minoritized language when used as materials for language revitalization.

9.6 Discussion and conclusion

The analysis I presented in Section 9.5 shows how poems can expose the reader to more beneficial ways to engage with the local, natural world. From an analytical standpoint, linguistic patterns were scrutinized in terms of activation, appraisal patterns, hyponymy, and pronoun use. These, in turn, helped reveal stories of positive evaluation, salience, and identity which based on my ecosophy, are the kinds of stories needed to promote reconnection with the local natural environment and through the heritage language.

Given the potential complexity afforded by the framework proposed by Stibbe (2021), the analysis of these five poems could have been much more nuanced than what was illustrated here. However, this is not meant as a paper of solely theoretical nature but one whose scope is to apply a theoretical framework as a practical solution to a real-world problem. In this, I contend, my analysis sufficed and succeeded in showing how ecolinguistics can inform the creation of language revitalization materials that simultaneously provide stimuli for evolving one's self-environmental identity.

My argument relies on a series of theoretical assumptions that need unpacking to fully understand the processes that are at play. In this discussion, I address the main theoretical assumptions that I identified as necessary, and I do this by organizing what follows in points – points that are not to be taken as discreet or self-contained stages but rather as analytical considerations that inform and are informed by one another.

I start from the result and work backward. The texts selected are five poems written in two varieties of the Emilian language family. These poems were chosen because of their content which pertains to the natural environment local to the authors. Like with all forms of communication, the language used is a result of a series of choices

that the author made either consciously or unconsciously. These linguistic choices were then analyzed to reveal the assumptions concealed behind stanzas, verses, phrases, and single words. This was done using Stibbe's (2021) framework which allowed me to draw conclusions on the stories to live by hidden in the poems and to confirm my initial impression of their nature as benevolent stories.

Evaluations, metaphors, salience, and identities come together to tell stories of the authors' local natural space as a place to get lost in, relive our past, let our curiosity wander, and be wondered by its inhabitants. These stories are humble, ordinary experiences which lived through the authors' words, become special, surprising, and intrinsically worthy of our attention. They expose the reader to alternative ways to relate with the natural world so that we may unlearn and relearn how to connect and protect. Poems have the power to reshape our conception of the world because they are a form of storytelling. When we read or are exposed to a story, we enter an imaginary world in which our emotions play a key role in the way we build and understand narratives (Zahavi 2007).

As already mentioned in Section 9.3.2, this is because emotions are essential to our decision-making strategies as they inform us about both the physical and social world (Damasio 2004). Tapping on our values and emotions and rewiring our neural connections, narrative texts can reshape our worldview. Stories that expose us to ways to perceive the local parks, peaks, birds, and trees as part of our membership in the area (such as through the use of possessive pronouns) can create an intimate sense of belonging and contribute to the growth of our environmental identity. This, in turn, would ultimately have an impact on our behaviors, and given that the stories are in a minoritized language it follows that such behavioral changes would be both of language use (language attitudes have been impacted) and of ecological nature (effects on environmental identity).

Changing stories is just one part of the solution, however. If the aim is to reconnect people with their heritage language and their local green spaces, access to both must be promoted and enabled, too. From a linguistic perspective, this is because language can be understood as a local practice in the sense that "languages are a product of the deeply social and cultural activities in which people engage" (Pennycook 2010:1). For a language to thrive it is therefore necessary that it be assigned a social space and a social role in the community.

For Emilian – a language historically linked to the most familiar domains – this could be promoted by running weekend activities in the language that are aimed and appeal to youths by hosting them in the local square or park. These activities could include

eco-poem sessions in the park, forest school sessions run in the language, culinary demonstrations and workshops in the local variety, and more technological events such as guided lessons on how to build an app for language learning. As well as these more organized activities, youths should be also allowed to create their own spaces and uses for the language by, for example, inviting them to run artistic events in the square and picnics in the woods.

Environmentally, access to space has to do with the embodiment of our identity of feeling and *being* part of nature. This refers directly to the definition of environmental identity mentioned in Section 9.3.1 and to the role played by emotions in the way we shape our worldview that I already discussed in this section. As explained in Clayton (2012:168), this is because the time spent in the natural world helps shape our identity on a cognitive level as its deep emotional impact is well retained and fulfills our need to belong. It is by spending time in and amongst nature that we can empathize with it, where we build a co-identity through a collective sense of space and place described in Section 9.3.1 and 9.3.2.

It is however reductionist and essentialist to see language and our relationship with the natural world as two separate phenomena. Instead, I would argue in favor of a holistic vision of these seemingly distinct issues. Ultimately language and our relationship with nature go hand in hand. Pennycook's (2010) take on language, for example, allows us to see how language is a particular kind of doing that is grounded in place – here understood as the physical unfolding of communication. Language is a social activity that organizes our social life at the “interplay between humans and the world” (Pennycook 2010:2). Languages are not mere means of communication, but they also provide wisdom about how the world can be understood. It then follows that to lose a language means to lose some of this wealth of perspectives. This is for example discussed at length in Evans's (2009) book on what we can learn from endangered languages. Likewise, Emeka-Nwobia (2020) gives a compelling account of the loss of perspective sustained when languages are no longer transmitted through intergenerational communication, and of the detrimental impact this can have on the relationship between younger generations and the local environment.

At a time when the global concern on climate change is more urgent than ever, the issue of language endangerment becomes one of ecology, too. It is a problem that affects us all and should therefore be actively considered by all fields of research. This is for example echoed in political ecology where the power of storytelling is starting to be used experimentally to “not only understand how or why climate knowledge has developed the way it has [...], but also as a means of attempting to actively shift

these knowledge, or [...] ‘climate consciousness’” (Harris 2021:332). Storytelling is a cultural practice that has been at the heart of human existence for thousands of years. Through this practice, we are transported into a fantasy world where we can identify with characters and empathize with them (Nanson 2021). This is a practice that can and arguably should be used as a tool to make people feel closer to the current ecological crisis that we are living in. Telling stories of the local natural environment is not just a strategy to maintain and revitalize a minoritized language but it is also a necessary eco-political tool in the global efforts to slow down climate change by retrieving the ecological perspective on the world and restoring the natural world to consciousness (Stibbe 2014).

Based on what was just discussed, it becomes imperative that we get things right when planning efforts for language revitalization and maintenance. This means that materials must be created bearing in mind the needs and interests of the audience for which they are intended (see for example Jones & Ogilvie 2013). The five poems analyzed here have a strong flavor of nostalgia and may be too quaint for the younger generations to relate to. This is not to say that they should be avoided. They are still very effective ways to expose young speakers to the language of compassion, of intraspecies connection, of appreciation of simplicity. This kind of language can make them feel grounded and can arguably equip them with the tools needed to better navigate through the hectic, frantic, and growth-centered societal life of our times.

However, as compellingly discussed in Chen et al. (2021a), the act of discovering beneficial stories as new ways of conceptualizing specific areas of our life would fail to yield the desired results unless they are accepted by the target audience. This can be achieved by ensuring these new stories both speak and are told in a language that is acceptable and accessible to the community. In other words, they must be narratives that are in line with the cultural and linguistic practices of the locale as well as perceived as relevant to the youths. The five poems here analyzed should therefore be packaged in a contemporary vest (e.g. turned into rap songs, hosted on social media platforms for commenting, used for arts and crafts, and so on) and only seen as one instrument in a much wider toolbox of revitalization efforts.⁶

As I hope this paper demonstrated, ecolinguistics can be a powerful tool to identify texts based on benevolent stories to live by to use as materials for language revitalization efforts. I am not contending that these materials require ecolinguistic analyses to be created. Rather I would invite scholars working on endangered languages to analyze

⁶I would like to thank the reviewers for mentioning this very important aspect of any revitalization effort and encouraging me to think more deeply.

texts with this scope in mind and to share them with language activists and/or the community to help the cause. In this same spirit, the five poems selected for the analysis have been fully glossed and are accessible upon direct request to the author (together with a list of dying words) so that colleagues may be exposed to Emilian in the hope that the poems may be used for further analyses and continued dissemination.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

When planning for this thesis, I had set myself the goal to compare data from Esperanto and Emilian to observe the linguistic practices of a thriving community (Esperanto) and check for differences and similarities with a declining community (Emilian). The five empirical chapters that constitute this thesis accomplished this by answering all three research questions and also producing theoretical outputs, falsifiable hypotheses, and empirical evidence to be corroborated in future studies. With a lack of previous studies on the specific context of Emilian, research questions were left open so that I could be driven by the data in my analyses. Despite narrowing down the scope of the enquiry to observable linguistic behaviours, such open-ended questions called for a broad methodology which allowed for granularity at the same time. The triangulation model discussed in Chapter 4 was created to fulfil that very need, while also lending itself as a prototype of triangulation as a systematic approach to the study of language attitudes. The model is the first theoretical output of my study.

From theory to practice, the prototype of the model was modified to create a triangulation of methods which could answer RQ1 and RQ2. The data collected through the administration of a sociolinguistic questionnaire, together with data from the diaries and the lyrics of rap songs, were analysed in their own right and later combined in a triangulation of results to provide a holistic overview of my analyses. A positive correlation between language attitudes and language maintenance was found and discussed in Chapter 6. This, in turn, led me to formulate two hypotheses to be investigated in future studies. Not only does this further our understanding of the linguistic behaviours in the Emilian context (thus filling the gap in the knowledge discussed throughout this thesis), but it is also a contribution to the current sociolinguistic literature on Esperanto. The qualitative analysis of the two rap songs in Chapter 7 yielded findings

which are in keeping with the current literature for both Esperanto and the dialects of Italy. As well as suggesting that both communities hold positive attitudes towards their respective language, Hiphop discourse was shown to be a compelling political tool to voice dissent and resist the status quo. In this chapter, I argue that rapping in Emilian is especially powerful as it ascribes modern functions to a language that is otherwise perceived as stuck in the past.

The temporal direction ascribed to Emilian and Esperanto by their communities is a key finding in my analyses. Despite sharing positive attitudes associated to themes of conviviality, belonging, and intimacy, Emilian is still mentally relegated to the past and the obsolete. This is in line with the findings discussed in Chapter 8 where RQ1 is addressed to reveal the difference in maintenance between the two languages: while Esperanto (a global language, with a global community scattered around the globe) is used in all domains investigated, Emilian is only meaningfully maintained in the local, physical space. In an effort to pull the findings together and answer RQ2, in the chapter I propose an integrated model for language maintenance according to which languages need a balance of competence, use (as in social functions and spaces), and positive attitudes to thrive in a given community. This model, which I named ACtUs, is the second theoretical output of my study and differs from other models for language maintenance, such as Fishman (1991); Hammarström et al. (2018); Lee & Van Way (2016); Moseley (2012), insofar that it does not provide a list of actions to measure and/or restore the vitality of a language, but instead captures the core elements needed for the sustainment of language.

Crucially, by providing answers to these research questions, I can also now assert the suitability of the triangulation model as a tool for observing language behaviours. Likewise, I contend that without data from Esperanto I would have not been able to grasp the dynamics at play in the linguistic practices of Emilian in such insightful way – thus showing the effective role of comparative analyses in linguistic studies of this kind. Arguably, this is because as humans inhabiting the same planet, there will always be some common ground through which our similarities can be traced. The theme of interconnection runs throughout this thesis as a core theoretical underpinning of the ontological stance that I hold as a researcher. RQ3 was borne out of this conscious effort to bring the intertwined nature of our social being with the environment that surrounds us to the fore of my research. The question is fully addressed in Chapter 9 where notions of environmental identity, belonging, and well-being are brought together to argue in favour of strategic planning whenever dealing with data from a minoritised and/or endangered language. The main idea put forward in this chapter is that studies

on endangered languages lend themselves as opportunities to give something back to the communities by making available data that can be used to foster reconnection with both language and local environment.

The idea of giving something back to the community is in line with my ethical stance as discussed in Chapter 6.2 and it is in this spirit that I will be offering a summary of my findings to relevant institutes and organisations for both Emilian and Esperanto. Similarly, all data from this thesis will be uploaded on an open data repository for both purposes of language documentation and open research principles. This only seems fair to me when the input I received from both communities gave me so much: I reconciled some of my demons, I became more accepting of diverging opinions around Emilian, and above all I “revitalised myself” (King 2021:136) because speaking minoritised languages really is “good for the heart” (Squillaci 2021:137).

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet for Questionnaire

Vitality of Esperanto and Emilian: a sociolinguistic inquiry

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your friends and relatives if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

1. What is the purpose of the study? My name is Jessica Hampton and I am a current PhD student at the University of Liverpool, UK. I was born and brought up in Guiglia (MO) and as such I am very familiar with the regional language, Modenese. In my study, I aim to understand who still speaks Modenese and in what contexts and for this reason I am collecting data from speakers of the language.

2. Why have I been chosen to take part?

If you have been asked to take part in this study, it means that you are a native speaker of Modenese. As I aim to understand the current status of Modenese, I believe your contribution will be very valuable for the purposes of this study.

3. Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation at any time until March 2022, without explanation, and without incurring a disadvantage.

4. What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire, roughly 30 minutes in length.

5. How will my data be used?

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of ‘public task’, and in accordance with the University’s purpose of “advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit.

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University’s research. The [Principal Investigator / Supervisor] acts as the Data Processor for this study, and any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to Jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

Further information on how your data will be used can be found in the table below.

How will my data be collected? Questionnaire in paper format
How will my data be stored? Data will be securely stored on the M Drive of the University of Liverpool. Data will be coded and analysed in anonymity.
How long will my data be stored for? For a maximum of 7 years
What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of my data? Data to be securely stored on the internal drive of the University and anonymised for use in the results and publications
Will my data be anonymised? Yes
How will my data be used? Data will form part of the results and analysed/discussed/published
Who will have access to my data? Only the researcher and Supervisor will have access to raw data
Will my data be archived for use in other research projects in the future? Yes
How will my data be destroyed? Paper will be shredded and disposed of.

6. Are there any risks in taking part?

There are no perceived disadvantages or risks involved. Should you experience any discomfort or disadvantage as part of the research then please notify the researcher immediately.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

There is no intended benefit in taking part in this study, however we hope you will enjoy in taking part nonetheless.

8. What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the study will not be made available to the participants but will be used for the completion of the researcher's doctoral thesis and relevant publications. These publications are expected to be published on, and therefore accessible from academic journals and other similar outlets. Participants will not be identifiable from the results and all names will be either omitted or a pseudonym used instead.

9. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You can withdraw your participation in the study at any time until March 2022, without explanation. However, because results will be anonymised, results can only be withdrawn prior to anonymisation. To withdraw your information please get in touch with the researcher, Jessica Hampton on Jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

10. What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting Jessica and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at ethics@liv.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity Office, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

11. Who can I contact if I have further questions?

Please get in touch with Jessica Hampton or Dr Stefania Tufi University of Liverpool Department of Modern Languages and Cultures 1-7 Abercromby Square Liverpool L69 7WY (0044) 0141 7942768

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet for Diary

Vitality of Esperanto and Emilian: a sociolinguistic inquiry

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your friends and relatives if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

1. What is the purpose of the study? My name is Jessica Hampton and I am a current PhD student at the University of Liverpool, UK. I was born and brought up in Guiglia (MO) and as such I am very familiar with the regional language, Modenese. In my study, I aim to understand who still speaks Modenese and in what contexts and for this reason I am collecting data from speakers of the language.
2. Why have I been chosen to take part?
If you have been asked to take part in this study, it means that you are a native speaker of Modenese. As I aim to understand the current status of Modenese, I believe your contribution will be very valuable for the purposes of this study.
3. Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation at any time until March 2022, without explanation, and without incurring a disadvantage.

4. What will happen if I take part?

You will be given a diary on which you will keep note of all your interactions undertaken in Esperanto/Emilian during the day. This will be done for a period of 14 days. At the end of the period, you will be asked to return the diary to the researcher. If you wish to have your diary back, you can request it once the analysis has been completed.

5. How will my data be used?

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of ‘public task’, and in accordance with the University’s purpose of “advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit.

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University’s research. The [Principal Investigator / Supervisor] acts as the Data Processor for this study, and any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to Jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

Further information on how your data will be used can be found in the table below.

How will my data be collected? Participant to create notes on diary
 How will my data be stored? Data will be securely stored on the M Drive of the University of Liverpool.
 How long will my data be stored for? For a maximum of 7 years
 What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of my data? Data to be securely stored on the internal drive of the University and anonymised for use in the results and publications
 Will my data be anonymised? Yes
 How will my data be used? Data will form part of the results and analysed/discussed/published
 Who will have access to my data? Only the researcher and Supervisor will have access to raw data
 Will my data be archived for use in other research projects in the future? Yes
 How will my data be destroyed? Paper will be shredded and disposed of and electronic data will be deleted from all unsecure storage

6. Are there any risks in taking part?

There are no perceived disadvantages or risks involved. Should you experience any discomfort or disadvantage as part of the research then please notify the researcher immediately.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

There is no intended benefit in taking part in this study, however we hope you will enjoy in taking part nonetheless.

8. What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the study will not be made available to the participants but will be used for the completion of the researcher's doctoral thesis and relevant publications. These publications are expected to be published on, and therefore accessible from academic journals and other similar outlets. Participants will not be identifiable from the results and all names will be either omitted or a pseudonym used instead.

9. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You can withdraw your participation in the study at any time, without explanation. However, because results will be anonymised, results can only be withdrawn prior to anonymisation. To withdraw your information please get in touch with the researcher, Jessica Hampton on Jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

10. What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting Jessica and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at ethics@liv.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity Office, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

11. Who can I contact if I have further questions?

Please get in touch with Jessica Hampton or Dr Stefania Tufi University of Liverpool Department of Modern Languages and Cultures 1-7 Abercromby Square Liverpool L69 7WY (0044) 0141 7942768

Appendix C

Consent Form for Diary

Participant consent form

Version number & date: 2 19/05/2020

Research ethics approval number: 5430

Title of the research project: Vitality of Esperanto and Emilian: a sociolinguistic inquiry

Name of researcher(s): Jessica Hampton

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet dated _____
for the above study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to consider
the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that taking part in the study involves keeping a diary for research
purposes and that I can request my diary back once the analysis is completed.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to stop taking part
and can withdraw from the study at any time until March 2022, without giving any
reason and without my rights being affected. In addition, I understand that I am free
to decline to answer any particular question or questions.
4. I understand that I can ask for access to the information I provide and I can request
the destruction of that information if I wish at any time prior to anonymisation. I
understand that following anonymisation I will no longer be able to request access to
or withdrawal of the information I provide.
5. I understand that the information I provide will be held securely and in line with data
protection requirements at the University of Liverpool until it is fully anonymised and
used in other research in the future.
6. I understand that signed consent forms and diary notes will be retained in the M-
Drive of the University of Liverpool for a maximum period of 7 years.
7. I agree to take part in the above study.

Participant name

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature

Principal Investigator

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Appendix D

Emilian Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the vitality of Emilian

Dear participant,

please answer the following anonymous questionnaire in a complete and accurate way (this will take roughly 30 mins): the data collected here will be used to assess the vitality of the Emilian in the Emilia-Romagna region, taking into account its geographical and sociolinguistic variation. Should you wish to know more about this questionnaire, do not hesitate to get in touch and write to: jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

Personal information

Gender

Age

Education

Lower secondary	Upper secondary	BA	MA and above
-----------------	-----------------	----	--------------

Occupation

Place of birthPlace of residence.....

For how long.....

Commuter – specify commuting route

Language(s) spoken in the family

Language(s) acquired first & from whom.....

Language(s) acquired later & from whom

Language(s) of parents

Mother	Father
--------	--------

Language use

- 1) Do you understand spoken Emilian?
 - a. Which variety?

Very well	Well	50/50	A little	None
-----------	------	-------	----------	------

- 2) Do you speak Emilian?
 a. Which variety?

Very well	Well	50/50	A little	None
-----------	------	-------	----------	------

- 3) Who with?

	Gender	Comments
Family (specify)		
Friends		
Neighbours		
Schoolmates		
Nursery Primary Secondary Sixth form		
School teachers		
Nursery Primary Secondary Sixth form		
University mates		
University teachers		
Partner		
Acquaintances		
Colleagues		
(Emilian) strangers		
Priest		
GP		
Other		

- 4) Where?

	Comments
Coffee bar/bar	
Market	
Shop (specify)	
School	
University	
Workplace	
Church	
Public offices	
Other	

- 5) What about?

	Comments

Greetings	
Occasion wishes/condolences	
(Mental) sums	
On the telephone	
To talk about daily matters	
To tell stories	
To talk about politics	
To joke	
To express anger	
To express joy	
To swear	
To think	
To pray	
Other	

6) Do you use Italian words when you speak Emilian?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....
.....

7) Do you use Emilian words when you speak Italian?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....
.....

8) Do you use words from other languages when you speak Italian? Which languages?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....

.....

9) Do you use words from other languages when you speak Emilian? Which languages?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....

.....

10) Do you read and write in Emilian?

a) Which variety?

11) What type of text?

	Read	Write
Novels/short stories		
Press (specify)		
School material (specify)		
Brochures		
Other advertising material (specify)		
Other printed material (specify)		
Text messaging		
E-mail		
Facebook		
WhatsApp		
Social media (specify)		
Other		

12) TV and/or radio programmes in Emilian

	TV programmes & time spent	Radio programmes & time spent
Every day		
Every week		
Every month		
Every year		
Never		

13) Internet

	Type(s) of website	Time spent
Every day		
Every week		
Every month		
Every year		
Never		

Opinions

14) Do you like speaking Emilian? Why?

15) If you have/had children, what language/s would you speak to them? Why?

16) Do you think that Emilian should be maintained? Why?

17) What should be done for Emilian to be maintained, and who should do it?

18) Where and when should Emilian be used? Why?

19) Do you think that Emilian should be studied in schools/at university? Why?

20) What type of Emilian would you like to see taught? Why?

21) Do you think that Emilian should be used as a language of instruction in schools/at university? Why?

22) What type of Emilian would you like to use at school/university? Why?

23) How would you define yourself in terms of identity? (Ex: Italian, Emilian, European, etc...)

24) What does it mean to be a montanaro/a (mountain person)?

25) What does it mean to be a cittadino/a (city/urban person)?

26) How do you instinctively evaluate someone who speaks Emilian?

Choose for each item in the table (a. - h.) one of the five options depending on how much you agree in attributing one of the two adjectives at the end of the table to a speaker of Emilian. If you do not have strong opinions on the characteristic indicated, choose option 3 to express "indifferent". Please bear in mind that the evaluations given must be your impressions on a person who speaks Emilian and therefore instinctively attributed:

(Eg: entry a. choose 1 if you consider it educated, 2 if it is fairly educated, 3 if indifferent, 4 if not well educated, 5 if not educated)

	1	2	3	4	5	
a. Educated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uneducated
b. Intelligent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stupid
c. Diligent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lazy
d. Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unfriendly
e. Kind	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruse
f. Trustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unreliable
g. Sophisticated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulgar
h. Familiar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unfamiliar

Geographical variation

27) How would you say “the bed” in your Emilian?:

28) How would you say “the sun” in your Emilian?:

29) How would you say “the chin” in your Emilian?: _____

Please answer the following questions individually without using any form of dictionary or vocabulary for Emilian. Respond based only on your knowledge of Emilian.

30) Write “Is there not any sugar left?” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

31) Write “You told me so!” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

32) Write “There were two people at the door: I don't know who they were” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

33) Write “There arrived some students yesterday” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

34) Write “The pan is on the table” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

35) Write “The cat (M) scratched me” and “The cat (F) scratched me” in your Emilian:

_____ I don't know/can't remember

END

Thank you for your patience and attention in answering these questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch via e-mail if you wish to have further information on the questionnaire or on the purpose of this language study.

I have read the information sheet provided and I am happy to participate. I understand that by filling in and returning this questionnaire, I agree to be part of the research study and that my data is used as described.

Appendix E

Esperanto Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the vitality of Esperanto

Dear participant,

please answer the following anonymous questionnaire in a complete and accurate way (this will take roughly 30 mins): the data collected here will be used to assess the vitality of Esperanto. Should you wish to know more about this questionnaire, do not hesitate to get in touch and write to: jess82@liverpool.ac.uk

Personal information

Gender

Age

Education

Lower secondary	Upper secondary	BA	MA and above
-----------------	-----------------	----	--------------

Occupation

Place of birthPlace of residence.....

For how long.....

Commuter – specify commuting route

Language(s) spoken in the family

Language(s) acquired first & from whom.....

Language(s) acquired later & from whom

Language(s) of parents

Mother	Father
--------	--------

Language use

1) Do you understand spoken Esperanto?

Very well	Well	50/50	A little	None
-----------	------	-------	----------	------

2) Do you speak Esperanto?

Very well	Well	50/50	A little	None
-----------	------	-------	----------	------

3) Who with?

	Gender	Comments
Family (specify)		
Friends		
Neighbours		
Schoolmates		
Nursery		
Primary		
Secondary		
Sixth form		
School teachers		
Nursery		
Primary		
Secondary		
Sixth form		
University mates		
University teachers		
Partner		
Acquaintances		
Colleagues		
(Esperanto) strangers		
Priest		
GP		
Other		

4) Where?

	Comments
Coffee bar/bar	
Market	
Shop (specify)	
School	
University	
Workplace	
Church	
Public offices	
Other	

5) What about?

	Comments
Greetings	

Occasion wishes/condolences	
(Mental) sums	
On the telephone	
To talk about daily matters	
To tell stories	
To talk about politics	
To joke	
To express anger	
To express joy	
To swear	
To think	
To pray	
Other	

6) Do you use words from Esperanto when you speak other languages?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....
.....

7) Do you use words from other languages when you speak Esperanto? Which languages?

Very often	Often	50/50	Occasionally	Never
------------	-------	-------	--------------	-------

Examples

.....
.....

8) Do you read and write in Esperanto?

9) What type of text?

	Read	Write
Novels/short stories		
Press (specify)		
School material (specify)		
Brochures		
Other advertising material (specify)		

Other printed material (specify)		
Text messaging		
E-mail		
Facebook		
WhatsApp		
Social media (specify)		
Other		

10) TV and/or radio programmes in Esperanto

	TV programmes & time spent	Radio programmes & time spent
Every day		
Every week		
Every month		
Every year		
Never		

11) Internet

	Type(s) of website	Time spent
Every day		
Every week		
Every month		
Every year		
Never		

Opinions

12) Do you like speaking Esperanto? Why?

13) If you have/had children, what language/s would you speak to them?

14) Do you think that Esperanto should be maintained? Why?

15) What should be done for Esperanto to be maintained, and who should do it?

16) Where and when should Esperanto be used? Why?

17) Do you think that Esperanto should be studied in schools/at university? Why?

g. Sophisticated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulgar
h. Familiar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unfamiliar

END

Thank you for your patience and attention in answering these questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch via e-mail if you wish to have further information on the questionnaire or on the purpose of this language study.

I have read the information sheet provided and I am happy to participate. I understand that by filling in and returning this questionnaire, I agree to be part of the research study and that my data is used as described.

Appendix F

Lyrics

Samideano

Teksto kaj muziko: Igor Wasilewski

Samideano, ĉu vi atendas ĝis la fina venko
Samideano, ni ĉiuj sidas sur la sama benko
Samideano, ĉu vi laboras por pli bona mondo
Samideano, kion signifas familia rondo
Multaj homoj miras kaj miras kial mi
Esperanton parolas
La klarigo estas simpla: mi tiel volas
Kaj mi ne vivas en histori'
Nek venas de l' futur'
Mi ekzistas hodiaŭ, antaŭ mi nenia mur'
Mi volas esti bona homo
Kum amikoj en ĉiu domo
Saluti esperantistojn
En ŝanhajo kaj en Romo
Kaj en ĉiuj lokoj
Kiujn ne eblas mencii
Vi devas tion scii
Ĉu Esperanto iam venkos
Ne demandu min
Eble ĝi jam venkis
Sed oni ne sufiĉe tion prezentis
Ĉar sentis homoj la neceson
Fari aferojn tute aliajn
Ne gravas, mi ja havas amikojn miajn
Pro mi tio certe bonas
Mi pli multe ne bezonas
Bele estas tiel, mi nenion al vi ordonas
Ne batalas, mondon ne ŝanĝas
Ĉar ne eblas
Tio ja kompreneblas

Comrade, are you waiting until the final victory?
Comrade, we're all sitting on the same bench
Comrade, are you working for a better world?
Comrade, what does familia rondo mean?
Many people wonder and wonder why I
speak Esperanto
The explanation is simple: I want to
And I don't live in history
Nor do I come from the future
I exist today, before me no wall
I want to be a good person
With friends in every house
To greet Esperantists
In Shanghai and in Rome
And in all places
Which cannot be mentioned
You must know that
Will Esperanto ever win?
Don't ask me
Maybe it has already won
But that hasn't been made clear enough
Because people felt the need
Of doing things in completely different ways
It doesn't matter, I have friends of my own
For me that's good enough
I don't need much more
It's fine, I'm not telling you to do anything
No fighting, the world doesn't change
Because it's not possible
That's for sure

Modena Gang (RAP MODENESE)

Sè, sè, a sun turnè
Mo sè sta chiet, mo sè dai
Oh Cappi... mo second te...
Gl'în prount chelor??
DAI
Cappi prepèra la ciclo ch'ag e di putein
Inzéma al tricilo ch'i fan trap
Me sun turnè perché i'm an ciamè cun la sirena
Dall'altopiano Sestola
E tot i ragaz ed Modena i îin chèn c'aspeten
Na traza in dialet et voilà
Ma te t'al se che chè, nella città,
LA QUALITA' LA PORTA TOBI1

Cappi prepèra la ciclo ch'ag e di putein
Inzéma al tricilo ch'i fan trap
Tè te vo la canzoun nóva cativa
Ch'la spaca gli urèci a têt i ragaz
Me a sun ed Modna, a ciacar in dialet
Ag o têt i me arnés e i trapèl in garage
E te t'al se che chè, nella città,
LA QUALITA' LA PORTA TOBI1

Tira i giaroun cun la Modena gang
Sovra i leoun cun la Modena gang
Vin anca te cun la Modena gang
Têt fradel in d'la Modena gaaaang
Modena gang, sovra i leoun cun la Modena gang
A'n m'in ceva gninta dé quell ch'at per
E quand te vo gnir
A'n te preoccupèer, in questa zitè i îin têt my friends
Un gir in zeinter fin a terd, vin nosc zugam a bilierd
Têt fradel in d'la Modena gang.

Dounca, ascoltamo bein:
Mè a sun chè e a fag c'al lavor chè perchè mè
A voi insgner a la Modena gang
Ch'an gh'è brisa bisagn ed ciacarèr mèl ch'an
M'in ceva gninta di snitch e cultel,
Di bitch e dener, di te o to fardel, di weeda e dessert
Ch'a voi sul druver al mic
Per dir a Modena e a têt i so fiô ch'ag è Tobi sul beat
Ag avî da capir! L'é na storia séria e parlèr
In dialet al n'è menga po facil
L'è l'ônica via per ferem sculter da ueter
Ragaz ch'a pinsèe ai vistî nôv

Yeah, yeah, I'm back
Yeah, calm down, yeah come on
Hey Cappi... what do you reckon...
Are they ready, this lot??
COME ON
Cappi get the bike ready coz there are some kids
On the tricycle who're playing trap
I'm back because they called me with the siren
From the upland Sestola
And all the kids of Modena have been waiting
For a track in dialect and voila
But you know that here, in the city,
QUALITY IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY TOBI1 [ITA]

Cappi get the bike ready coz there are some kids
On the tricycle who're playing trap
You wanted the new banging song
Ear-splitting for all of the kids
Me, I'm from Modena, I speak dialect
I've got all my tools and knick-knacks in the garage
And you know that here, in the city,
QUALITY IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY TOBI1 [ITA]

Throw stones with Modena gang
On top of the lions with Modena gang
Come along with Modena gang
All brothers in Modena gaaaang
Modena gang, on top of the lions with Modena gang
I don't give a fuck about what you want
And you want to come
Don't worryyy, in this city they're all my friends [ENG]
A walk in the centre 'til late, come with and play pool
All brothers in Modena gang.

So, listen carefully:
I'm here doing this thing because I
Want to teach Modena gang
That there's no need to talk badly coz
I don't give a fuck of snitch and knife,
Of bitch and money, you or your hitches, of weeda and dessert
Coz I only want to use the mic
To tell Modena and all its children that Tobi goes with the beat
You must understand! It's serious and speaking
Dialect isn't easy
It's the only way to get you to hear me
Kids who care about new clothes

Du mila desnov, têt atachè a inutil lavor
Chi ragasol che fanno Tik Tok e
Intanto Tic Tac e gnanc un valor.
Calma... calma... calma...

Se t'an capes un quell dmanda a to nòn che se no
Se te screv sull'iPhone
T'en cat gninta ed boun al vocabulari in dialet l'é la
ginta
Ch'la salteva i fos per la lónga e spint dla voia
Ed deres da fer ed in quelc mod saveres cuntinter.

Io non noleggio la maglia di Gucci
Per farla vedere nel videoclip
Il beat non lo vado a comprare a Sick Luke
L'ho fatto con Zanna e spacca di più

A volte dicono Tobi parla italiano
Allora stavolta ti rispondo chiaro

I say what I want, this is my slang,
Lo slang ed tòta la Modena Gang!

Chorus

Dag mo un tai, adesa as catam in via tai
Menga thai box, non mangiamo pollo thai
Oh mio Dio questa ché l'an tez mai,
Arsura l'é al sô scutmai
L'ag a ados trapel e zavai, dag ados se t e vo guai
OH MY
Non ce la fai
Ad ascultèr al paroli ma dai...
Ma dove vai? T'fè so barac buratèin e bagai
Sera la porta ag è Tobi tonight
Ormai
Don't cry
Snitch mai
All right
Dàm chè al stumpai ch'al i fam tasér,
E quest chè l' è dvintè un freestyle...

Ai ragaz ch'im disen t'é fort, a'g voi bein,
I òn i mé sostenidor.
S'i òn ed Modena i capesen incosa ch'ag mètt l'amor
Per tramander un lavor:
La tradizioun ed la zitè... ch'ag avam in dal cor

2019, everyone after useless jobs
Those kids doing [ITA] Tik Tok and
Meanwhile Tick Tock and not even a value
Calm... calm... calm... [ITA]

If you don't understand something ask your grandpa
Cause if you type on your iPhone
You won't find anything good, the dictionary for dialect
is the people
Who used to jump ditches lengthways and pushed by
the desire to work hard and somehow make do.

I don't hire a Gucci shirt [ITA]
To show it in a videoclip [ITA]
I don't buy the beat from Sick Luke [ITA]
I made it with Zanna cause it rocks even more [ITA]

Sometimes they say Tobi speak Italian [ITA]
So this time I'll be clear [ITA]

I say what I want, this is my slang, [ENG]
The slang that belongs to Modena Gang!

Chorus

Give it a rest, let's meet in Via Taglio
No Thai box, we don't eat Thai chicken
Oh my God, this one never shuts up,
Sore throat is her nickname
She's wearing rumble-bumble, get close if you want trouble
OH MY [ENG]
You just can't
Listen to words come on...
Where are you going? You leave everything and go
Shut the door cause Tobi's on tonight
At this point
Don't cry [ENG]
Snitch [ENG] never
All right [ENG]
Hand me the babies and we'll make them shut up
This thing has now become a freestyle...

To the kids who tell me I'm cool, I love them,
They're my supporters.
If they're from Modena they get it that I put my all
To transmit something:
The tradition of the city... which we carry in our heart

Appendix G

Glossing of Emilian poems

Àqua de mé Cantér

Water of my Cantiere

1 L ' é l ' àqua , l ' àqua cèra
l= é l àqua l àqua cèra
l= é l àqua l àqua cèra
S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg art water art water clear.Sg.F
pro v the n the n adj
it is art water art water clear
pro v n n adj

2 nèda da e mé Cantér ,
nèda da e mé Cantér
nèda da₁ al₁ mé Cantér
born.F of the.Sg my Cantiere
v prep art posssg n
born from the.Sg my Cantiere
v prep art poss n

3 quòla ch ' sèlta e la spöma in mèz a i sas ,
 quòla ch sèlta e la spöma in mèz a i sas
 quòla ch sèlta e₁ la₂ spöma in mèz a₁ i₁ sas
 that.Sg.F which jump.3Sg and S.Cl.3Sg.F froth.3Sg in middle at the.Pl.M rocks
 dem pro v coordconn pro v prep adv prep art n
 that which jumps and it froths in middle at the rocks
 dem pro v coordconn pro v prep adv prep art n

4 ch ' la ralénta la fuga int ' na pianlina ;
 ch la ralénta la fuga int na pianlina
 ch la₂ ralénta la₁ fuga in na pianlina
 which S.Cl.3Sg.F slow=down.3Sg the.Sg.F escape in a.F plain.DIM
 pro pro v art n prep art n
 which it slows down art escape in a plain
 pro pro v n prep art n

5 àqua che ancòra aiér
 àqua che ancòra aiér
 àqua che₁ ancòra aiér
 water which still yesterday
 n pro adv adv
 water which still yesterday
 n pro adv adv

6 l ' éra néva , lasö tra al mac ad faz :
 l= éra néva lasö tra al mac ad faz
 l= éra néva lasö tra al₁ mac ad faz
 S.Cl.3Sg= be.IPFV.3Sg snow up=there between the.Sg wood of beech
 pro v n adv prep art n prep n
 it was snow up there between art wood of beech
 pro v n adv prep n prep n

7 àqua frasca , pulida cume l ' anma
 àqua frasca pulida cume l anma
 àqua frasca pulida cume l anma
 water fresh.Sg.F clean.Sg.F like art soul
 n adj adj adv the n
 water fresh clean like art soul
 n adj adj adv n

8 d ' un pipin inucént , che ancòra e n sà
 d un pipin inucént che ancòra e= n sà
 d un₁ pipin inucént che₁ ancòra l= n sà
 of a child innocent who still S.Cl.3Sg= PV.NEG know.3Sg
 prep art n adj pro adv pro Neg v
 of a child innocent who still pro doesn't know
 prep art n adj pro adv Neg v

9 de mòmnd ' d la véta .
 de mòmnd d la véta
 de mòmnd d la₁ véta
 of world of the.Sg.F life
 prep n prep art n
 of world of art life
 prep n prep n

10 L ' é l ' àqua , l ' àqua cèra
 l= é l= àqua l= àqua cèra
 l= é l àqua l àqua cèra
 S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg art water art water clear.Sg.F
 pro v the n the n adj
 it is art water art water clear
 pro v n n adj

11 da mé Cantér : e me , cume un pipin ,
 da mé Cantér e me cume un pipin
 da₁ mé Cantér e₁ me₁ cume un₁ pipin
 of my Cantiere and I like a child
 prep posssg n coordconn pro adv art n
 of= the.Sg.M my Cantiere and I like a child
 prep poss n coordconn pro adv art n

12 a m gód a sént ' la scòrer tra al mée mèn ,
 a m gód a sént = la scòrer tra al mée mèn
 a₂ m gód a₃ sént = la₃ scòrer tra al₂ mée mèn
 S.Cl.1Sg myself enjoy to feel.INF O.Cl.3Sg.F flow.INF between the.Pl my.Pl hands
 pro refl v prep v pro v prep art posspl n
 S.Cl.1Sg myself enjoy to v O.Cl.3Sg.F v between the.Pl poss hands
 pro refl v prep pro prep art n

13 a zùgher cun la gèra ,
 a zùgher cun la gèra
 a₃ zùgher cun la₁ gèra
 to play.INF with the.Sg.F gravel
 prep v prep art n
 to v with art gravel
 prep prep n

14 a arvèvr un témp luntèn .
 a arvèvr un témp luntèn
 a₃ arvèvr un₁ témp luntèn
 to relive.INF a time far
 prep v art n adj
 to v a time far
 prep art n adj

E a vrée

And I wish

1 E	a	vrée	,	a	vrée	psér	una	nòta	andér
e	a	vrée		a	vrée	psér	una	nòta	andér
e ₁	a ₂	vrée		a ₂	vrée	psér	na	nòta	andér
and	S.Cl.1Sg	want.1Sg.COND		S.Cl.1Sg	want.1Sg.COND	be=able=to.INF	a.F	night	go.INF
coordconn	pro	v		pro	v	v	art	n	v
and	S.Cl.1Sg	v		to	v	v	art	n	v
coordconn	pro			prep					

2 là	,	duve	e	sònn	l	'	amòcia
là		duve	e	sònn	l=		amòcia
là		duve	al ₁	sònn	l=		amòcia
over=there	where	the.Sg	sleep	S.Cl.3Sg=	pile=up.3Sg		
adv	pro	art	n	pro	v		
adv	pro	the.Sg	n	it	v		
		art		pro			

3 i insòni ' d la zénta .
i insòni d la zénta
i₁ insòni d la₂ zénta
the.Pl.M dreams of S.Cl.3Sg.F people
art n prep pro n
the n of it n
art prep pro

4 E a vrée truvèr i mée e purtèn véia
e a vrée truvèr i mée e purtè =n véia
e₁ a₂ vrée truvèr i₁ mée e₁ purtè =n véia
and S.Cl.1Sg want.1Sg.COND find.INF the.Pl.M my.Pl and take.INF =PART away
coordconn pro v v art posspl coordconn v nomprt adv
and S.Cl.1Sg v v the poss and v adv
coordconn pro art coordconn

5 un , un sulamént : quast ché .
un un sulamént quast ché
un₂ un₂ sulamént quast ché
one.M one.M only this.Sg.M here
pro pro adv dem adv
pro pro adv dem adv

6 Ragazöl artruvèm a caminèr
ragazöl artruvè = m a caminèr
ragazöl artruvè m a₃ caminèr
boy wind=up.INF =myself to walk.INF
n v refl prep v
n v to v

prep

7 daschèlza suvr ' i prà
daschèlza suvr i prà
daschèlza suvr i₁ prà
barefoot on the.Pl.M fields
adj prep art n
adj prep the n

art

8 dal méé Pièn e , a l ' impruvis ,
dal méé pièn e a l impruvis
of méé pièn₁ e₁ a₁ l impruvis
prep my.Pl Plain and at the.3Sg.M sudden
of posspl n coordconn prep art adv
prep poss n and at the.3Sg.M adv

coordconn prep art

9 dascröver , drée a un maciun , un né d ' uslin :
 dascröver drée a un maciun un né d uslin
 dascröver drée a₁ un₁ maciun un₁ né d uslin
 uncover.INF behind at a bush a nest of birds
 v adv prep art n art n prep n
 v adv at a n a n of n
 prep art art prep

10 e ster lé , lé a guarder .
 e ster lé lé a guarder
 e₁ ster lé lé a₃ guarder
 and stay.INF there there to watch.INF
 coordconn v adv adv prep v
 and v adv adv to v
 coordconn prep

3 a n pröv gudiöl più grand che pièn pièn , pièn ,
a n pröv gudiöl più grand che pièn pièn pièn
a₂ n pröv gudiöl più grand che₂ pièn₂ pièn₁ pièn₁
S.Cl.1Sg PV.NEG feel.1Sg pleasure more big than slowly Plain Plain
pro Neg v n comp adj comp adv n n
S.Cl.1Sg doesn't v n comp adj comp adv n n
pro Neg

4 andèr in zéma a un strat e pò guardér .
andèr in zéma a un strat e pò guardér
andèr+UNSPEC. VAR. OF in zéma a₂ un₁ strat e₁ pò guardér+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
go.INF in top S.Cl.1Sg a mountain=range and then watch.INF
v prep adv pro art n coordconn adv v
v in adv to a n and adv watch.INF
prep pro art coordconn v

5 Guardér inturn a me al mée muntàgn
guardér inturn a me al mée muntàgn
guardér+UNSPEC. VAR. OF inturn a₂ m+UNSPEC. VAR. OF al₁ mée muntàgn
watch.INF around S.Cl.1Sg myself the.Sg my.Pl mountains
v adv pro refl art posspl n
watch.INF adv to refl art poss n
v pro

6 ad vérd vistidi da la premavéra ,
 ad vérd vistidi da la premavéra
 ad vérd vistidi da₁ la₂ premavéra
 of green dressed.Pl.F by S.Cl.3Sg.F Spring
 prep n ptcp prep pro n
 of n ptcp prep it n
 prep pro

7 d ' un vérd frisch , acsé bèl , che ün cumpàgn
 d un vérd frisch acsé bèl che ün cumpàgn
 d un₁ vérd frisch acsé bèl che₃ un₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF cumpàgn
 of a green fresh.Sg.M so beautiful that one.M same
 prep art n adj adv adj subordconn pro adj
 of a n adj adv adj subordconn pro adj
 prep art

8 e n as tröva , par me , int la tèra intéra .
 e= n as tröva par me int la tèra intéra
 l= n as tröva par me₁ in la₂ tèra intéra
 S.Cl.3Sg= PV.NEG IMP find.3Sg for I in S.Cl.3Sg.F Earth whole.Sg.F
 pro Neg verbprt v prep pro prep pro n adj
 pro doesn't verbprt v prep I in it n adj
 Neg pro prep pro

9 Guardér al me Cimun , e me Cantér ,
 guardér al me Cimun e me Cantér
 guarder+UNSPEC. VAR. OF al₁ mé+UNSPEC. VAR. OF Cimun e₁ me₁ Cantér
 watch.INF the.Sg my Cimone and I Cantiere
 v art posssg n coordconn pro n
 watch.INF art my n and I Cantiere
 v poss coordconn pro n

10 cal gli èter zémm ch ' al s ' élzen ché e là ,
 cal gli èter zémm ch al s élzen ché e là
 cal₁ al₂ èter₂ zémm ch al₁ s₁ élzen ché e₁ là
 those the.Pl other peaks which the.Sg REF.3PI raise.3PI here and over=there
 dem art adj n pro art refl v adv coordconn adv
 dem art adj n which art REF.3PI v adv and adv
 pro refl coordconn

11 e , intènt , lasér andèr e me pensér
 e intènt lasér andèr e me pensér
 e₁ intènt lasér andèr+UNSPEC. VAR. OF al₁ me₁ pensér
 and meanwhile let.INF go.INF the.Sg I thought
 coordconn adv v v art pro n
 and adv v v the.Sg I n
 coordconn art pro

12 duve e vö1 : a e presént , a e pasà ,
 duve e= vö1 a e presént a e pasà
 duve l= vö1 a2 al1 presént a2 al1 pasà
 where S.Cl.3Sg= want.3Sg S.Cl.1Sg the.Sg present S.Cl.1Sg the.Sg past
 pro pro v pro art n pro art n
 pro pro v to the.Sg n to the.Sg n
 pro art pro art

13.1 a quó1t e a quò1 .
 a quó1t e a quò1
 a2 quó1t e1 a2 quò1
 S.Cl.1Sg this and S.Cl.1Sg that
 pro pro coordconn pro pro
 to pro and to pro
 pro coordconn pro

13.2 E cuntemplànd la blàza
 e cuntemplànd la blàza
 e1 cuntemplànd la2 blàza
 and contemplate.GER S.Cl.3Sg.F beauty
 coordconn v pro n
 and v it n
 coordconn pro

14 dal mée muntàgn a sént cràser l ' amur
dal mée muntàgn a sént= cràser l= amur
da₁ mée muntàgn a₂ sént= cràser l amur
by my.Pl mountains S.Cl.1Sg feel.INF grow.INF the.3Sg.F= love
prep posspl n pro v v art n
prep poss n to v v art n
pro

15 pr ogni cósà creèda ; e la grandàza
pr ogni cósà creèda e la grandàza
par+UNSPEC. VAR. OF ogni cósà creèda e₁ la₂ grandàza
for each thing created.F and S.Cl.3Sg.F greatness
prep quant n ptcp coordconn pro n
prep n ptcp and it n
quant coordconn pro

16 ché , piö che in césa , a sént ad nòster Sgnur .
ché piö che in césa a sént= ad nòster Sgnur
ché piü+UNSPEC. VAR. OF che₂ in césa a₂ sént= ad nòster Sgnur
here more than in church S.Cl.1Sg feel.INF of our Lord
adv comp comp prep n pro v prep poss n
adv comp comp in n S.Cl.1Sg^v of poss n
prep pro prep

La vanga

The spade

1 Ai ho fini d ' vanghèr la me piantèda
ai ho fini d vanghèr la me piantèda
a₂ ho fini d vanghèr la₂ mé+UNSPEC. VAR. OF piantèda
S.Cl.1Sg have.1Sg finish.PTCP of dig.INF S.Cl.3Sg.F my orchard
pro v v prep v pro possg n
pro v v of v it my n
prep pro poss

2 A son stoff e ai ho spòlt fin la camisa
a son stoff e ai ho spòlt fin la camisa
a₂ son stoff e₁ a₂ ho spòlt fin la₂ camisa
S.Cl.1Sg be.1Sg tired.Sg.M and S.Cl.1Sg have.1Sg drench.PTCP until S.Cl.3Sg.F shirt
pro v adj coordconn pro v v adv pro n
to v adj and pro v v adv it n
pro coordconn pro

3 Mo a peins che incò ai ho fat bona giurnèda
 mo a peins che incò ai ho fat bona giurnèda
 mo a₂ peins che₃ incò a₂ ho fat₁ bona giurnèda
 but S.Cl.1Sg think.1Sg that today S.Cl.1Sg have.1Sg do.PTCP good.Sg.F day
 coordconn pro v subordconn adv pro v v adj n
 coordconn to v subordconn adv pro v v adj n
 pro

4 E la fadiga l ' an n ' em pésa brisa .
 e la fadiga l= an n em pésa brisa
 e₁ la₂ fadiga l= n n me₂ pésa brisa
 and S.Cl.3Sg.F strain S.Cl.3Sg= PV.NEG PV.NEG me weigh.3Sg PosV.NEG
 coordconn pro n pro Neg Neg pro v Neg
 and it n it Neg doesn't pro v Neg
 coordconn pro pro Neg

5 A m pies ed lavurér a la mateina
 a m pies ed lavurér a la mateina
 a₂ me₂ pies d lavurér a₁ la₂ mateina
 S.Cl.1Sg me like.3Sg of work.INF at S.Cl.3Sg.F morning
 pro pro v prep v prep pro n
 to pro v prep v at it n
 pro prep pro

6 Quand al sol al saluta la campagna
 quand al sol al saluta la campagna
 quènd+DIAL. VAR. OF al₁ sol l=+DIAL. VAR. OF saluta la₂ campagna
 when the.Sg sun S.Cl.3Sg greet.3Sg S.Cl.3Sg.F countryside
 adv art n pro v pro n
 adv art n pro v it n
 pro

7 E a s seint al frisch alzér d ' un ' ariarèina
 e a s seint al frisch alzér d un ariarèina
 e₁ a₄ s₂ seint₂ al₁ frisch alzér d un₁ ariarèina
 and S.CL.IMP IMP feel.3Sg the.Sg fresh.Sg.M light.Sg.M of a breeze=DIM
 coordconn pro pro v art adj adj prep art n
 and S.CL.IMP pro v art adj adj of a n
 coordconn pro prep art

8 Ch ' al fa termèr la brina int l ' erba spagna .
 ch al fa termèr la brina int l= erba spagna
 ch l=+DIAL. VAR. OF fa termèr la₂ brina in l erba spagna
 which S.Cl.3Sg make.3Sg shake.INF S.Cl.3Sg.F dew in the.3Sg.F= grass Spain
 pro pro v v pro n prep art n n
 which pro v v it n in art n n
 pro pro prep

9 A gh ' è i uslein ch ' i froll ' in mez a i ram
a gh è i uslein ch i froll in mez a i ram
a₄ gh₁ é i₁ uslin ch i₂ froll in mèz+UNSPEC. VAR. OF a₁ i₁ ram
ESCL PF be.3Sg the.Pl.M birds which S.CL.3Pl mess=around.3Pl in middle at the.Pl.M branches
expl pro-form v art n pro pro v prep adv prep art n
ESCL pro-form v the n which SCL.3Pl v in adv at the n
pro art pro pro prep prep art

10 E i n la finéssen mai ed ciacarè
e i n la finéssen mai ed ciacarè
e₁ i₂ n la₃ finéssen mai d ciacarè
and S.CL.3Pl PV.NEG O.Cl.3Sg.F fnish.3Pl never of chat.INF
coordconn pro Neg pro v adv prep v
and SCL.3Pl doesn't O.Cl.3Sg.F v adv prep v
coordconn pro Neg pro

11 A gh ' è el galein ch ' el bèchen da la fam
a gh è el galein ch el bèchen da la fam
a₄ gh₂ é el₁ galein ch i₂ bèchen da₁ la₂ fam
ESCL them.DAT be.3Sg the.Pl.F chickens which S.CL.3Pl peck.3Pl by S.Cl.3Sg.F hunger
expl pro-form v art n pro pro v prep pro n
ESCL them v art n which pro v prep it n
pro pro-form pro pro

12 I bègh ch ' i selten fòra int al vanghèr .
 i bègh ch i selten fòra int al vanghèr
 i₁ bègh ch i₁ selten fòra in al₁ vanghèr
 the.Pl.M worms which the.Pl.M jump.3Pl out in the.Sg dig.INF
 art n pro art v adv prep art v
 the n which the v adv in art v
 art pro art prep

13 Tótti el volt ch ' a se sfànda una vanghèda ,
 tótti el volt ch a se sfànda una vanghèda
 tótti el₁ volt ch a₄ s₂ sfànda na vanghèda
 all.Pl the.Pl.F times which S.CL.IMP IMP break.3Sg a.F dig.PTCP
 quant art n pro pro pro v art ptcp
 quant art n which S.CL.IMP pro v art ptcp
 pro pro

14 L ' è una bataglia con i mort e i fri
 l= è una bataglia con i mort e i fri
 l= é na bataglia con i₁ mort e₁ i₁ fri
 S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg a.F battle with the.Pl.M dead.Pl and the.Pl.M priests
 pro v art n prep art n coordconn art n
 it v art n prep the n and the n
 pro art coordconn art

15 La vanga la va avanti e l ' an gha bèda
 la vanga la va avanti e l= an gha bèda
 la₂ vanga la₂ va avanti e₁ la₂ n gh₁ bèda
 S.Cl.3Sg.F spade S.Cl.3Sg.F go.3Sg ahead and S.Cl.3Sg.F= PV.NEG PF mind.3Sg
 pro n pro v adv coordconn pro Neg pro-form v
 it n it v adv and S.Cl.3Sg.F Neg pro-form v
 pro pro coordconn pro

16 La sbrisa tòtt infin ch ' l ' an n ' à fini
 la sbrisa tòtt infin ch l= an n à fini
 la₂ sbrisa tòtt infin ch l= n n à fini+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
 S.Cl.3Sg.F crumble.3Sg everything eventually which S.Cl.3Sg= PV.NEG PV.NEG have.3Sg finish.PTCP
 pro v pro adv pro pro Neg Neg v v
 it v pro adv which it Neg doesn't v v
 pro pro pro Neg

17 I bistiulèin ch ' an psu schivèr al tai
 i bistiulèin ch an psu schivèr al tai
 i₁ bistiulèin ch an psu schivèr al₁ tai
 the.Pl.M beasts=DIM which have.3Pl be=able=to.PTCP dodge.INF the.Sg cut
 art n pro v v v art n
 the n which v v v art n
 art pro

18 I s ' vadden a scapèr a zèint , a méll :

i s vadden a scapèr a zèint a méll

i₂ s₂ vadden a₃ scapèr a₁ zèint a₁ méll

S.CL.3Pl IMP see.3Pl to run=away.INF at hundred at thousand

pro pro v prep v prep num prep num
 SCL.3Pl pro v to v at num at num

pro prep prep prep

19 Zémes , lumbris , lusért , furbsèl , parpai

zémes lumbris lusért furbsèl parpai

zémes lumbris lusért furbsèl parpai

stink=bugs earth=worms lizards earwigs butterflies

n n n n n
 n n n n n

20 Ragn , cavalàtt , furmigh , lumegh , e gréll .

ragn cavalàtt furmigh lumegh e gréll

ragn cavalàtt furmigh lumegh e₁ gréll

spiders grasshoppers ants snails and crickets

n n n n coordconn n
 n n n n and n

coordconn

24 E i s ' la passèvn insàmm chiét e cuntèint .
 e i s la passèvn insàmm chiét e cuntèint
 e₁ i₂ s₁ la₃ passèvn insàmm chiét e₁ cuntèint
 and S.CL.3Pl REF.3Pl O.Cl.3Sg.F pass.IPFV.3Pl together serene.Pl.M and happy.Pl.M
 coordconn pro refl pro v adv adj coordconn adj
 and S.CL.IMP REF.3Pl O.Cl.3Sg.F v adv adj and adj
 coordconn pro refl pro coordconn

25 L ' è gnu al castigamat l ' è gnu stavolta
 l= è gnu al castigamat l= è gnu stavolta
 l= é gnu al₁ castigamat l= é gnu stavolta
 S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg come.PTCP the.Sg martinet S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg come.PTCP this=time
 pro v v art n pro v v adv
 it v v art n it v v adv
 pro pro

26 A ardúser tott al camp us d ' na gratusa !...
 a ardúser tott al camp us d na gratusa
 a₂ ardúser tótt+UNSPEC. VAR. OF al₁ camp us d na gratusa
 S.Cl.1Sg reduce.INF everything the.Sg field like of a.F grater
 pro v pro art n comp prep art n
 to v pro art n comp of a n
 pro prep art

27 Al v ' taia , al v ' sbat , al v ' péccia , al v ' scaravolta
 al v taia al v sbat al v péccia al v scaravolta
 I=+DIAL. VAR. OF v taia I=+DIAL. VAR. OF v sbat al₁ v péccia al₁ v scaravolta
 S.Cl.3Sg O.CL.2Pl cut.3Sg S.Cl.3Sg O.CL.2Pl hit.3Sg the.Sg O.CL.2Pl beat.3Sg the.Sg O.CL.2Pl throw.3Sg
 pro pro v pro pro v art pro v art pro v
 pro pro v pro pro v art pro v art pro v

28 E avanti , senza gnanch dmandèrev scusa .
 e avanti senza gnanch dmandèr =ev scusa
 e₁ avanti senza gnanch dmandèr v scusa
 and ahead without even ask.INF =O.CL.2Pl excuse
 coordconn adv adv adv v pro n
 and adv adv adv v n
 coordconn

29 Mo quand a srà passé soquanti stman ,
 mo quand a srà passé so quanti stman
 mo quènd+DIAL. VAR. OF a₄ srà passé so quant stman
 but when ESCL be.FUT.3Sg pass.PTCP know.1Sg how=many weeks
 coordconn adv expl v v v quant n
 coordconn adv ESCL v v quant n
 pro

30 A n gh ' srà piò al brusor dla vanga ruda ,
a n gh srà piò al brusor dla vanga ruda
a₄ n gh₂ srà piò al₁ brusor dal vanga ruda
ESCL PV.NEG them.DAT be.FUT.3Sg anymore the.Sg burning of=the spade rough.Sg.F
expl Neg pro-form v adv art n art n adj
ESCL doesn't them v adv art n art n adj
pro Neg pro-form

31 L ' erba la srà chersuda dò o tre span
l= erba la srà chersuda dò o tre span
l= erba la₂ srà chersuda dò o tre span
S.Cl.3Sg= grass S.Cl.3Sg.F be.FUT.3Sg grow.PTCP.F two or three spans
pro n pro v ptcp num coordconn num n
it n it v ptcp num coordconn num n
pro pro

32 A cróver d ' un bèl vérd la tèra nuda .
a cróver d un bèl vérd la tèra nuda
a₂ cróver d un₁ bèl vérd la₁ tèra nuda
S.Cl.1Sg cover.INF of a beautiful green the.Sg.F Earth naked.Sg.F
pro v prep art adj n art n adj
to v of a adj n art n adj
pro prep art

33 L ' é quall ch ' sucéd in tótt i sit dla tèra :
 l= é quall ch sucéd in tótt i sit dla tèra
 l= é quòl+UNSPEC. VAR. OF ch sucéd in tótti i₁ sit dal tèra
 S.Cl.3Sg= be.3Sg that which happen.3Sg in all.Pl the.Pl.M sites of=the Earth
 pro v pro pro v prep quant art n art n
 it is pro which v in all.Pl the n art n
 pro v pro prep quant art

34 Quand a s ' è chiét e a s bèda a lavurèr
 quand a s è chiét e a s bèda a lavurèr
 quènd+DIAL. VAR. OF a₄ s₂ é chiét e₁ a₄ s₁ bèda a₂ lavurér+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
 when S.CL.IMP IMP be.3Sg serene.Pl.M and S.CL.IMP REF.3Pl mind.3Sg S.Cl.1Sg work.INF
 adv pro pro v adj coordconn pro refl v pro v
 adv S.CL.IMP pro v adj and S.CL.IMP REF.3Pl v to v
 pro coordconn pro refl pro

35 A scopia un fulmin , un mapèl , na guèra ...
 a scopia un fulmin un mapèl na guèra
 a₄ scopia un₁ fulmin un₁ mapèl na guèra
 ESCL explode.3Sg a lightning a hustle a.F war
 expl v art n art n art n
 ESCL v a n a n a n
 pro art art art

36 Mo	a	n	pâsa	tant	ch	' s	torna	a	prinzipièr !...
mo	a	n	pâsa	tant	ch	s	torna	a	prinzipièr
mo	a ₂	n	pâsa	tant	che ₃	s ₁	turna+UNSPEC. VAR. OF	a ₃	prinzipièr
but	S.Cl.1Sg	PV.NEG	pass.3Sg	much	that	REF.3Pl	return.3Sg	to	begin.INF
coordconn	pro	Neg	v	quant	subordconn	refl	v	prep	v
coordconn	S.Cl.1Sg	doesn't	v	quant	subordconn	REF.3Pl	v	to	v
	pro	Neg				refl		prep	

Meravii dla natura

Wonders of nature

1 S	a	vagh	a	girer	per	mez	la	campagna
s	a	vagh	a	girer	per	mez	la	campagna
s ₃	a ₂	vagh	a ₃	girer	par+UNSPEC. VAR. OF	mèz+UNSPEC. VAR. OF	la ₂	campagna
if	S.Cl.1Sg	go.1Sg	to	wander.INF	for	middle	S.Cl.3Sg.F	countryside
adv	pro	v	prep	v	prep	adv	pro	n
adv	S.Cl.1Sg	v	to	v	prep	adv	it	n
	pro		prep				pro	

2 a m seint duminer da la curiosit e
 a m seint duminer da la curiosit e
 a₂ m seint₂ duminer da₁ la₂ curiosit e
 S.Cl.1Sg myself feel.3Sg dominate.INF by S.Cl.3Sg.F curiosity
 pro refl v v prep pro n
 S.Cl.1Sg myself v v prep it n
 pro refl pro

3 cunchiili fossil fra i sass ed muntagna ...!
 cunchiili fossil fra i sass ed muntagna
 cunchiili fossil tra+UNSPEC. VAR. OF i₁ sas+UNSPEC. VAR. OF d muntagna
 shells fossils between the.Pl.M rocks of mountain
 n n prep art n prep n
 n n prep the n prep n
 art

4 ch ' em fan pènsèr ai teimp luntan ...
 ch al m fan pènsèr a i teimp luntan
 ch i₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF me₂ fan pensér+UNSPEC. VAR. OF a₃+UNSPEC. VAR. OF i₁+UNSPEC. VAR. OF teimp₂ luntèn+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
 which S.CL.3PI me make.3PI thought to the.Pl.M times far
 pro pro pro v n prep art n adj
 which the.Sg v n prep art n adj
 pro pro
 pasé ...!
 pasé
 passé+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
 pass.PTCP
 v
 pass.PTCP
 v

5 argoi di campiou da imprim ' una sportla ,
 argoi di campiou da imprim =n una sportla
 argoi d+UNSPEC. VAR. OF campiou da₂ imprim =n na sportla
 collections of samples to fill.INF =PART a.F bag.DIM
 n prep n prep v nomprt art n
 n prep n to v art n
 prep

6 (e ancàra a m arcord ed ch - l ' erba ' t sant Ambros
 e ancàra a m arcord ed ch l = erba t sant Ambros
 e₁ ancòra+UNSPEC. VAR. OF a₂ m arcord d ch l erba d sant Ambros
 and still S.Cl.1Sg myself remember.1Sg of which the.3Sg.F= grass of Saint Ambrose
 coordconn adv pro refl v prep pro art n prep adj n
 and adv to myself v prep which art n prep adj n
 coordconn pro refl pro

7 che sovr ' una man , l ' am fé gnir ' na sfiopla ...!
 che sovr una man l = am fé gnir na sfiopla
 che₁ suvr+UNSPEC. VAR. OF na man l = me₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF fé gnir na sfiopla
 which on a.F hand S.Cl.3Sg= me make.PST.3Sg come.INF a.F blister
 pro prep art n pro pro v v art n
 which prep art n it pro v v a n
 pro pro art

8 Vè ,... inzema a cal fior ' na bela farfala ,
 vè inzema a cal fior na bela farfala
 vè inzema a₃ cal₂ fior na bela farfala
 look.IMP.2Sg on to that flower a.F beautiful.F butterfly
 v adv prep dem n art adj n
 v adv to that n a adj n
 prep dem art

9 a per c la respira movand el sô el ,
 a per c la respira movand el sô el
 a₄ per₂ che₃+UNSPEC. VAR. OF la₂ respira movand i₂ sô el₂
 S.CL.IMP seem.3Sg that S.Cl.3Sg.F breath.3Sg move.GER S.CL.3Pl her wings
 pro v subordconn pro v v pro pro n
 S.CL.IMP v subordconn it v v pro pro n
 pro pro

10 pian pian a m avsein ... a guerd ... mo csa
 pian pian a m avsein a guerd mo csa
 pièn₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF pièn₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF a₂ m avsein a₂ guerd mo csa
 slowly slowly S.Cl.1Sg myself come=closer.1Sg S.Cl.1Sg watch.1Sg but what
 adv adv pro refl v pro v coordconn pro
 adv adv S.Cl.1Sg myself v S.Cl.1Sg v coordconn pro
 pro refl pro

fala

fa la

fa la₂+UNSPEC. VAR. OF

make.3Sg S.Cl.3Sg.F

v pro

v

111 ' è ed sopra a cal fior , e l ' ha scelt al
 l= è ed sopra a cal fior e l= ha scelt al
 la₂ é d SUVR+UNSPEC. VAR. OF a₁ cal₂ fior e₁ la₂ à+UNSPEC. VAR. OF scelt al₁
S.Cl.3Sg.F= be.3Sg of on at that flower and S.Cl.3Sg.F= have.3Sg choose.PTCP the.Sg
pro v prep prep prep dem n coordconn pro v v art
S.Cl.3Sg.F v prep prep at that n and S.Cl.3Sg.F v v art
pro prep dem coordconn pro
 piò bel ...
 piò bel
più+UNSPEC. VAR. OF bèl+UNSPEC. VAR. OF
 more beautiful
 comp adj
 more adj
 comp

12 La móv egli anténn e a per c la s ' orienta ...
 la móv egli anténn e a per c la s orienta
 la₂ móv i₁ anténn e₁ a₄ par+UNSPEC. VAR. OF ch+UNSPEC. VAR. OF la₂ s₁ orienta
S.Cl.3Sg.F move.3Sg the.Pl.M antennae and S.CL.IMP for which S.Cl.3Sg.F REF.3Pl orientate.3Sg
pro v art n coordconn pro prep pro pro refl v
it v art n and S.CL.IMP prep which it REF.3Pl v
pro coordconn pro pro pro refl

13.1 forse , per radio !,
 forse per radio
 forse par+UNSPEC. VAR. OF radio
 maybe for radio
 adv prep n
 adv prep n

13.21 ' avertés na cumpagna ,
 l avertés na cumpagna
 l avertés na cumpagna
 the.3Sg.F sense.3Sg a.F companion
 art v art n
 the.3Sg.F v a n
 art art

14 ed gnir chè da lè e c la staga cunteinta ;
 ed gnir chè da lè e c la staga cunteinta
 d gnir ché+UNSPEC. VAR. OF da₁ lè e₁ ch+UNSPEC. VAR. OF la₂ staga cunteinta
 of come.INF here by her and which S.Cl.3Sg.F stay.SBJV.3Sg happy.Sg.F
 prep v adv prep pro coordconn pro pro v adj
 prep v adv prep pro and which it v adj
 coordconn pro pro

17 el s ' dan , forse , di radio avertimeint ...!
 el s dan forse di radio avertimeint
 i₂ s₁ dan forse d+UNSPEC. VAR. OF radio avertimeint
 S.CL.3Pl REF.3Pl give.3Pl maybe of radio warning
 pro refl v adv prep n n
 pro REF.3Pl v adv prep n n
 refl

18 anch nueter a sam fat stel cos famosi !
 anch nueter a sam fat stel cos famosi
 anch nueter a₂ sam fat₁ stel cos famosi
 also we S.Cl.1Sg be.1Pl do.PTCP these.F things famous.Pl
 adv pro pro v v dem n adj
 adv pro S.Cl.1Sg v v dem n adj
 pro

19 mo préma , a lor , a gh li fé l ' Onnipoteint !!!
 mo préma a lor a gh li fé l= Onnipoteint
 mo préma a₃ lor a₇ gh₂ li fé l Onnipoteint
 but first to them S.CL.3Sg them.DAT O.CL.3Pl make.PST.3Sg the.3Sg.M= Omnipotent
 coordconn adv prep pro pro pro-form pro v art n
 coordconn adv to them S.CL.3Sg them them.OBJ v the.3Sg.M Omnipotent
 prep pro pro pro-form pro art n