



MASTER THESIS

**DIALECT SWITCHING IN THE ACQUISITION OF ITALIAN
BY ROMANIAN IMMIGRANTS**

A FOCUS ON SPLIT AUXILIARY SELECTION IN THE DIALECT OF CHIETI
(ABRUZZO)

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Abstract

This research project aims to test, for the first time so far, the way adult Romanian immigrants of the latter migration period - i.e. after 2004 - learn Italian as an L2. The hypothesis is that they learn a Regional Italian and that they show an active or passive - competence in the local vernacular, as do Italian native speakers.

In order to test the hypothesis, 12 Romanian immigrants currently residing in Chieti (Abruzzo) have been interviewed, where the local vernacular is named Chietino and is a variety of (Eastern) Abruzzese, an Upper Southern Italian Dialect. Participants - both men and women and older than 20 years-old - performed two tasks, one responding to 29 auditory stimuli that were either a common expression in Chietino (distractors), or a clause of a dialogue where present perfect is used. The last type of clauses aims to add data to a previous survey, conducted by the author, where native speakers were tested: the new data collection was expected to, partially, clarify the selection of the auxiliaries [BE] and [HAVE] in the present perfect conjugation in Chietino, following the work of D'Alessandro & Roberts (2010) for other varieties of Abruzzese.

Participants were also interviewed with a Sociolinguistic Questionnaire, in order to add, to gather information about the attitude of Romanians toward Chietino, as a local vernacular compared to Italian, the dominant language.

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Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.1. The Italian repertoire: Standard, Regional varieties, Dialect variation

Italy is well known, among dialectologists, as the European nation that is “most fractured in its dialects” (Rohlf, in Bolelli 1971: 219).

Before describing the current Italian linguistic repertoire, we should explain how the Italian word *dialetto* (en. ‘dialect’) shows both semantic ambiguity and vagueness. What Rohlf - and Italian linguists - means with ‘dialect’ differs from what is universally intended as dialect - that is, a “not autonomous and not prestigious” (Enciclopedia Treccani) variety of the Standard language. The word Dialect as the English translation of *dialetto* semantically overlaps with Vernacular, namely the “native or indigenous language of a country or district”: dialects in Italy did not evolve from the Standard, neither are they a local variety of the National language; instead, they evolved from Latin *in parallel* with the chosen Standard Italian, and have their own features and grammars which did not follow a National Standard language during their evolution, until the end of 19th century (see e.g. Berruto 1994; Grassi et al. 2003; De Mauro 1970²; Marcato 2007; Merlo 1937; Pellegrini 1977; Rohlf 1966-9, 1967).

Moreover, the word *dialetto* is vague when used by Italian native speakers: it can be intended as the macro-group of all varieties spoken in a given area - e.g. *dialetto Abruzzese* - or as a variety spoken in a specific city, town or village - e.g. *dialetto di Chieti*. Indeed, dialectologists agree about the impossibility to draw strict boundaries between dialects

(Grassi et al. 2003: 41); their extreme microvariation has to be taken into account in empirical research, and this will be evident in the present research too.

In the last fifty years, dialects of Italy have started a mutation due to contact with Standard Italian. This is the reason why many Italian linguists, the first of which Tullio De Mauro (De Mauro 1994), are aware of the importance that a broad approach to the study of dialects has, in order to answer the question *how do Italians speak?* - in parallel to research focused on micro-dialectal varieties.

1.1.1. The emergence of a 'standard'

How did contact between the so called *dialetti* and the chosen Standard Italian start? The question drives us to the choice of Standard Italian.

In the 19th century, in parallel with the process of unification of Italy, the intellectual debate focused on the selection of the “best Italian”¹, known as *Questione della lingua* - i.e. ‘the language question’ - (see Grassi et al. 2003; Love 2014; Migliorini 1960) was significantly influenced by a new school of thought. Alessandro Manzoni, inspired by Machiavelli’s theories, started promoting a new model of illustrious Italian, which referred to the spoken language, instead of a written abstraction: Manzoni’s model was the *Fiorentino* spoken by cultured people. After the Unification of Italy, in 1861, Manzoni’s propose was promoted by the political class in power at the time, even though some intellectuals, like Ascoli (1873), considered it anachronistic and unsuccessful. As we read in Love (2014: 28):

Joseph (2004) wrote describing this relationship between language and nation-building projects, ‘The “nation-state myth” – that basic view of the world as consisting naturally of nation-states – is bound up with an assumption that national languages are primordial reality’ (p. 98). A single common national language was so important to the notion of national identity that monolingual schooling, which either intentionally or inadvertently aimed to eliminate or

¹ In the treaty *De vulgari eloquentia*, Dante Alighieri wrote a first geographic classification of the languages spoken in Italy, aiming to show the ugliness of every single variety except for the written *Fiorentino* - namely, the written variety of the language spoken in Firenze - the only “volgare illustre” - i.e. “illustrious vulgar”. After two centuries, the felicitous literary production by Dante, Petrarca and Boccaccio was considered by Pietro Bembo as the evidence of the supremacy of written Fiorentino, compared to further literature produced in the Italic peninsula so far. After Bembo, the “archaic literary fourteenth model” (Grassi et al. 2003: 19) kept on being considered the most illustrious, at the expense of every spoken variety. The same model was adopted by the *Accademici della Crusca* at the beginning of the 17th century, when they started to draw up their famous Vocabulary (see Grassi et al. 2003; Migliorini 1960).

marginalize the usage of other language varieties and registers, was seen as an indispensable tool. This type of language policy can be understood as subtractive in that it ‘subtracts from the ... linguistic repertoire, instead of adding to it’ (Magga, Nicolaisen, Trask, Skutnabb-Kangas, & Dunbar, 2005, p. 1).

The subtractive language policy, which esteemed Manzoni’s model as the simplest to adopt in the newborn Italy, did not consider that introducing a standard language in an almost illiterate country would have been extremely difficult. Especially because Italians were still, by that time, speaking local languages - which evolved from Latin, as much as Fiorentino did, but with completely different outcomes (see Rohlf, in Bolelli 1971) - and just the 2,5% of them was able to speak Standard Italian (De Mauro 1962).

After one hundred years, Tullio De Mauro observed that Italian speakers were still far from linguistic unification (De Mauro 1963), even though the standard language was slowly trying to replace dialects by means of the following factors:

- *school*, where dialects were strongly fought;
- *urbanism*;
- *internal migration and expatriation*;
- *bureaucracy, army, press*;
- *new media*, namely radio, cinema and television;

Until the 1980s, this slow process led to a situation of *diglossia* between the H language, namely Italian, and the L variety, local dialects, but mostly *without bilingualism*: this lasted longer in rural areas and small towns. Bilinguals were, in contrast, primarily members of the urban middle class (Grassi et al. 2003: 31).

In the 1970s, the category of *popular Italian* was used for the first time by De Mauro (1970), to define “the kind of Italian acquired by those [unlettered] who have a *dialetto* as their mother tongue” ([Cortelazzo 1972] in Beccaria 2004³: 425).

1.1.2. Regional Italians

In the last two decades of the 20th century, younger generations’ competence of Standard Italian has improved significantly, with the result that a bilingual repertoire - local dialect and

A recent dialect classification can be found in Marcato (2007: 177), where the category of *linguistic minorities* is remarkably separate from italo-romance dialects.

Italian Language policy does not recognise and protect dialects, unlike linguistic minorities: the Law 482/1999 has been adopted aiming at the protection «of the languages and culture of the Albanians, Catalans, Germans, Greeks, Slovenians and Croatians, as well as of those speaking French, Friulian, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian». These are considered *historical linguistic minorities* and still survive on the borders and in some “linguistic islands”. There is an ongoing debate about the actual accuracy and the concrete benefits of this law, though³.

Given this linguistic background, the concept of *new (linguistic) minorities* can be introduced, which may be defined as groups that emerged after the formation of the nation-state, normally as the result of demographic mobility. The main linguistic interest in migratory movements would be to observe processes of language change and language acquisition. These processes, according to Krefeld (2010: 468-78), occur simultaneously with the reorganization of the communicative space; they are characteristic of migratory contexts because of their frequency and density; of course, they may occur in other speech communities as well, particularly in regions which are undergoing rapid dialect levelling.

1.1.4. How do Italians speak?

In 1994, a group of Italian linguists proposed a collection of spoken Italian data, aiming at the compilation of the LIP (*Lessico di frequenza dell'Italiano Parlato*, 1994). Spoken language was, indeed, seen as a subject of particular interest because of the difference between Standard Italian and the Italian really used, both as a sociolinguistic study and for language teaching issues. That is, how teaching Italian for foreigners should be planned, considering *which* Italian foreigners learn whenever they arrive in Italy (De Mauro 1994: XI-XXVI). In *Come parlano gli italiani* (ed. by De Mauro 1994) we find a layout of several speeches that deal with some important issues of the LIP project. In Berruto's article (De Mauro 1994:

³ See Toso, F. (2008) and Telmon (2006: 39), who points out the «sociolinguistic approximation» of the law.

15-24), interestingly, some scenarios are previewed about “the fortunes” of dialects of Italy, namely “how will Italians speak tomorrow”. Berruto considers the following possibilities:

1. preservation of dialects;
2. transfiguration of dialect in regional varieties distinct but strongly italianized at the same time;
3. disappearance of dialects;
4. regional differentiation - which he calls ‘scenario of many Italies’ - meaning that the three previous situations would be all plausible, depending on the sociolinguistic situation of the Italian region/area.

What Berruto qualitatively observes (De Mauro [ed.] 1994: 23), also, is the progressive neutralization that dialects were experiencing in the 1990s: the negative value and discrimination of dialects were decreasing, despite the decennial efforts of the institutions.

To notice, also in Grassi et al. (2003: 158-9) a *new dialectization* is pointed out.

1.2. Overview of migrations into Italy from Romania

According to Tabouret-Keller (2012), Europe has always been a “continent of sustained migrations”. This never-ending process “caused large dialectal continua to emerge” in the past, while nowadays migrations show different dynamics, which do not produce a long-lasting bilingualism anymore (Tabouret-Keller 2012: 6). Let us consider the case of migrations between Italy and Romania.

In the latest centuries, Italy and Romania used to keep in uninterrupted contact. Among the 19th century, people from Northern Italy emigrated to Romania, reaching the number of 60.000 emigrates between the two World Wars. Nowadays, Italian residents in Romania are barely 3.000⁴; they are recognised as a linguistic minority, protected by political and cultural institutions (Asociația Italienilor din România). Italian language is taught in the towns of Greci and Constanza, while Bucharest hosts two Italian High Schools.

⁴Italians resident in Romania in 2002 were 3.331, according to the census in Toso, F. (2008: 211).

The Italian migratory flow has now ceased, since, in the last century, Italy shifted “from a mass emigration to a mass immigration” (Love, 2014) country. In contrast, Romanian migration in Italy - started, in this scenario, more than thirty years ago - is still increasing.

1.2.1. “Before”

Romanian migration to EU countries started right after the end of the socialist regime, in 1989. During Ceaușescu’s dictatorship Romania experienced an outstanding economic growth, by means of a work of political centralization and accumulation. The target was a “mature socialism” (Cingolani 2009: 34), with pair richness and opportunities for every region of Romania, beside the equalization of development in metropolitan and rural areas.

Indeed, differences between regions caused internal migrations of manpower throughout the country. Also, the high birth rate - as a consequence of the abortion law in 1966 (see Cingolani 2009: 34) - also in regions where job opportunity was limited, pushed many young people to emigrate to headmost regions. Consequently, population in rural areas became mostly old and female.

An interesting phenomenon that was triggered by the attempt of government to decrease internal migrations was the rise of a class of commuters, which, depending on the proximity of the big city to their home village, adopted different solutions. One was the so called «diffused mixed family», that is, members from the same family, thus, a “single socio-economic unit” (Cingolani 2009: 37), live in different places.

1.2.2. “After”

The first important international flow came with the end of Ceaușescu’s regime. Cohal (2014: 36), who tested Romanian language variation in heritage speakers in Italy, primarily describes two migration phases concerning Italy, which we will consider in a while.

There was a first phase, from 1990 to 1994, that mainly involved ethnic minorities (see Cingolani 2009: 42; Torre et al. 2009: 9), namely German, Hungarian and Jewish people, who went back to their mother country. This migration wave constituted a first touch point between Romanians and West-European countries.

Although, in the mid-90s both Germany and Israel started applying a different migration policy, which was considerably more restrictive toward irregular Romanian immigrants.

This modification of migration policies triggered what has been called (see Cingolani 2009: 44) the second phase of migration, which lasted until 2000. Remarkably, there was a reorientation of flows towards the countries on the Mediterranean Sea - i.e. Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal. In this period, the so called “circular migration” (Cingolani 2009: 44; Cohal 2014: 36) started, also named *transnational*: “transmigrants are immigrants whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state” (Schiller et al.1995, 1)”(in Cohal 2014: 45).

As a better explanation of the transnational migration, Cingolani (2009: 45) refers to a study conducted by the Ministry of the Interior together with the OIM in Bucharest in 15.000 villages and 100 towns, by means of a questionnaire filled out by a representative member from each community. By that time, around 200.000 people were abroad and 120.000 lived abroad in the previous years; out of this amount of emigrants, 47% went back to Romania at least two times during the period of residence abroad.

In the third phase, two dates significantly conditioned the migratory flow (Cingolani 2009: 45; Cohal 2014: 36-9):

- 2002, Visa was removed for Romanians traveling to countries inside Schengen area - but they were not allowed to remain more than three months;
- 2007, Romania becomes part of the European Union.

1.2.3. Romanians in Italy

According to what is reported in Cingolani (2009: 47), Romanian residents in Italy were, at the beginning, just 1% of immigrant population (7.494 residency permits in 1990); in 2007 they were the first foreign group in the country (856.700 residency permits), namely 21,5% of the immigrant population.

Cohal (2014: 40) reports all the reasons why, according to Turliuc (2009: 3107), the mass Romanian emigration has been oriented towards Italy:

- geopolitical: territorial proximity,
- ease of mobility (after 2002),

- globalization,
- relative economic backwardness,
- low cost travels,
- cultural and linguistic proximity,
- shared traditions and presence of Italians in Romania.

To date, according to ISTAT statistics (January 1st, 2016), numbers increased further: Romanian residents in Italy are 1.151.395 out of a total of 5.026.153 foreigners (22,9%). A slight difference from the data reported in Cingolani (2009: 48) is found about the distribution of Romanians throughout Italian regions: the higher concentration of Romanians is in Lazio, Piemonte and Lombardia; nevertheless, Lombardia has now exceeded Piemonte, compared to past (Cingolani 2009: 48). Interestingly, Cingolani labels the spread of Romanians as “diffused” and “polycentric”: for instance, despite in Rome a high density of Romanians is currently present, a higher number is widespread in the hinterland of the Capital - like Velletri, Frascati, Grottaferrata. According to Weber (Cingolani 2009: 49) this is a phenomenon due to two factors: the greater availability of accommodation and more job opportunities.

In Abruzzo, the region where our research took place, Romanians are 31,3% of immigrants, that is, more than 27.000 out of 86.363 foreigners. Numbers increased since 2010 (ISTAT 2016), but look more stationary in the last two years.

1.2.4. Areas of employment and women migration

Romanian men, in Italy, are mostly employed in construction, agriculture and craft, while care services - personal care in particular - are the most common employments among women.

In Cingolani (2009: 51) the high demand of labor in care services is motivated by the socio-demographic changes that Italy experienced in the last thirty years: that is, aging population, falling birth rate, the increasing active role of women in the labor market.

Due to the growing necessity of care services, Romanian women’s immigration was stimulated: after 2002, Romanian women became the second group of workers, namely 16% of the total, after Ukrainian women (Caritas e Migrantes 2006).

Romanian women have been defined by Vlase (see Cingolani 2009: 51) “pioneers”, since they usually are the first who leave the four walls and travel abroad. In Licata and Pittau (2008: 117) the emphasis of women's' role is considered “absolutely new”; moreover “with Romanian women there’s a switch from a status of immigrants, either unmarried, either married but without their husband and sons [as, in the past, has been the case of Philippine women in Italy], to a “family” immigration” (*Ibid.*).

According to Torre et al. (2009: 13) Romanian women show very specific migratory and settlement strategies, oriented to family reunification. Also, while right after the Visa abolition in 2002 the strategy of *share-work* was more spread - a brief migration period in substitution of a friend, an acquaintance or a member of the family -, after 2007 the circular model started to be abandoned: in 2008, around 40% of Romanian caregivers stated they were planning to permanently settle down in Italy (Torre et al. 2009: 14).

A complete overview of immigrant women’s role is given in Cohal (2014: 49-51). A remarkable observation that he does is:

“Since women represent around 50% of Romanian immigrants, they lead their community towards a mixed choice, both sociocultural and linguistic, where the mother culture and language compete with the culture and language of arrival. In particular, women who work as caretakers get in touch with bilingual dialect-speakers (dialect plus Italian), both adult and elderly people; this exposes them to a variety of popular Italian with regional dialect features, where mixed language and code-switching often occur - according to the results of the interviews.”(Cohal 2014: 50-1)

In Chapter 2, we will go into the merits of the research. Also, it will be indispensable to make some considerations about what in this chapter has been said, from the point of view of language policy connected to the immigration subject.

Chapter 2

2. The research

2.1. Project and research question

This research aims to plan a first and partial approach to the language spoken by Romanian immigrants who currently live in Chieti, a town in Abruzzo, an Upper Southern Region in Italy. This is going to be the first study focused on contact between Romanian and a dialect of Italy so far; hence, reference to previous literature has been highly limited.

The question that has been addressed, is to what extent dialect interference, in the Italian linguistic repertoire, plays a role in the acquisition of Italian as L2, by testing how adult Romanian participants deal with common dialect clauses, some of them used in contexts⁵ that generally trigger code-switching between Italian and Abruzzese.

A parallel investigation, with a more sociolinguistic imprinting, focused on the attitude that Romanian immigrants show toward Abruzzese, the way they relate it to Italian language and, eventually, to what extent they are aware of their passive and active competence of Abruzzese. Henceforth, we will refer to the variety of Abruzzese which the research focused on, namely Chietino, also by using the more generic name ‘Dialect’. This is also how Chietino is addressed in the interviews, since this is the way speakers call the language.

Since Abruzzo is a region without metropolis - the biggest city is Pescara, which counts around 120.000 inhabitants (ISTAT 2016) - we can consider the linguistic framework mainly as a ‘closed network’ (Grassi et al. 2003: 217); however, Chieti is a provincial capital, thus it is one of the ‘more open’ networks in the region. In the second part of 20th century, indeed,

⁵ Contexts are selected according to Grassi et al. (2003) and will be specified and explained in Chapter 3.

the internal migrations from rural areas toward bigger cities triggered contact between many dialectal micro-varieties. In the next paragraphs, we will see how micro-varieties still survive in small villages, despite the current dialect spoken in Chieti is oriented to phenomena of ‘simplification’, and seems to mutate into a new dialect *koiné*.

2.2. Linguistic framework and the focus: split auxiliary selection

Macro and micro-variation among all the dialects spoken in Italy are both extreme. This is also the case of the syntactic phenomenon which in previous work I focused on, that is, the person-driven auxiliary selection in Chietino. A survey, where Chietino native speakers were concerned, will be reported here as a preliminary work. In fact, in the second part of the interview, Romanians have been asked to complete a task with many Abruzzese sentences conjugated at present perfect - thus, a compound tense where the selection of the auxiliary is necessary, in Abruzzese dialect. Indeed, the current research is also meant to add some new knowledge about this syntactic issue. Let us better explain our focus.

2.2.1. Linguistic framework

Chietino is a variety spoken in Chieti, in the Abruzzo region; here we find two macro-varieties: the Central Abruzzese/Aquilano and the Abruzzese, which belongs to the Upper Southern Italian group of dialects.

Abruzzese includes Teramo, Pescara and Chieti linguistic areas, and the latter is the one we will refer to as Eastern Abruzzese (henceforth EA).

Ariellese and Chietino are the two varieties which have been compared in



this preparatory work. While the former is spoken in a small village in the province of Chieti, the latter is spoken in the provincial capital of the EA area: this means that many factors are concerned whenever variation occurs, both sociolinguistic and historical.

Starting with the most general classification, we can say that Abruzzese shows a “past-present” tense system (Giammarco 1979), while the future tense basically lacks: it is restricted to the 3rd person - just the singular, according to Giammarco (1973: 162), also the plural in D’Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 57) - and occurs only with an epistemic modal meaning or if it expresses doubt, e.g. *sendarrà!* ‘(s)he should hear it! (maybe)’; except for these cases, future is expressed by periphrastic forms with PRES+INF, such as *ajjə da magnà* ‘I have to (so I am going to...) eat’.

In our case, we were concerned with present perfect in EA, and how in this dialect the auxiliary verb is chosen. The comparison between Ariellese and Chietino moved from the recent work by D’Alessandro (2016), where Ariellese is taken as the sample variety for split auxiliary selection in EA. Some data in Giammarco (1979) show, although, that in Chietino this selection is different or has changed, as we will see in the further sections.

Before giving an overview on the variation that the auxiliary selection phenomenon shows in Italian Dialects and in other languages, it is worth mentioning that both BE and HAVE have a fully-fledged paradigm, as well as showing the evolution that took place from Latin to the current forms.

ESSE (BE) - Giammarco (1979: 190-2):

1st singular: *su(m)* > *sò* / *só*;

2nd singular: with initial /s/, which is the case of EA, we find /sí/, /ší/, /sié/; the second form is found in both Ariellese and Chietino;

3rd singular: *e(st)* > /é/; in the spoken dialect the outcome could either be /hé/, /ʎè/ (aspirate), either /jè/ (spirant). The latter form is not a diphthong (Rohlf 1949) - since in this dialect it just occurs with metaphony - but the result of the evolution of /g/ > /j/. The aspiration, instead, is a characteristic of the pronunciation of /a/, /o/ and /e/ initial stressed, or unstressed in hiatus;

1st and 2nd plural: *simus* / *sitis* > *SĪMUS, *SĪTIS > *SEMUS, *SETIS > /sèmə/ and /sètə/ (but in chietino the stressed vowel is /é/);

3rd plural: *sunt* > *SONT > *sò*, but see below D'Alessandro (2016) for the outcome /jè/⁶.

The present tense of BE showed in D'Alessandro (2016: 3) for EA is:

so/ si/ jè/ semə/ setə/ jè□
am/ are/ is/ we-are/you-are/ they-are
'I am, you are, (s)he is, we are, you are, they are'

HABERE (HAVE) - In Giammarco (1979: 190) just the 1st person singular is mentioned: *habeo* > *AY(Y)O > /ajə/, while the present tense in D'Alessandro (2016: 4) for EA is:

ajə/ jì/ a/ avemə/ avetə/ a□
I-have, you-have, (s)he has, we-have, you-have, they-have
'I have, you have, (s)he has, we have, you have, they have'

In EA, where HAVE is the auxiliary selected for the 3rdsg, the 3rd person singular and plural forms of BE, *jè*, are used in predicative constructions (*Marije jè bbellə*, 'Mary is beautiful') or in passives (*jè rrəspəttàtə da tuttə quìndə*, '(S)he is respected by everyone'). As for HAVE, other than as an auxiliary it is used as a possessive in some psych constructions (*Ch'a jì?* 'What's wrong with you?' *lit.* what do you have?). The possessive verb is instead *tenè* ('hold').

2.2.2. Split-auxiliary selection

Split (person-driven) auxiliary selection is a phenomenon which implies the selection of the auxiliary BE or HAVE in compound tenses depending on the person specification of the external argument, rather than, or in addition to, the more familiar pattern of auxiliary selection, where the choice depends on the argument structure of the verb (for an analysis see Burzio 1986).

Among the dialects of Central and Southern Italy, the split auxiliary selection shows an extreme variation. According to D'Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 44), some of them combine

⁶ The variation between these two forms was confirmed in this survey (see next sections).

person-driven and argument-structure driven auxiliary selection: in the 3rd person the choice depends on the the argument structure of the verb, while BE is preferred for 1st and 2nd person. This pattern is found in Colledimacine, Torricella Peligna, Borgorose-Spedigno, Amandola, Ortezzano and Tuffillo. In other varieties, like in Vastogirardi, the selection is person-driven in all persons except the 1sg and 3sg, which are argument structure driven. We also find varieties where singular persons present the two split patterns - with BE in 1sg and 2sg and argument structure selection in 3sg - but generalise HAVE in the plural (this happens in Agnone, Ruvo Bitetto, Popoli, Montenerodomo, Padula, Castelvecchio Subequo).

In some cases we also have an apparent free variation: varieties where only BE is found, while others choose only HAVE. Others, furthermore, show a combination of tense/person/number in choosing the auxiliary forms.

By observing the auxiliary selection phenomenon among European languages, we can find some Germanic languages (German, Dutch and Danish) with the argument structure based pattern, similar to the one we observe for Standard Italian among Romance languages. From both these families, some other languages restrict BE to the passive forms and choose HAVE as the only auxiliary of the perfect. But we observe that some of the latter, e.g. English and Spanish, opted for an argument structure selection in earlier stages (see D'Alessandro & Roberts 2010: 47).

In Table (1) of D'Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 42-4), present perfect auxiliary selection in Standard Italian (argument structure-driven) and the one in Ariellese (person-driven) are compared. In Italian, transitive and unergative verbs select the auxiliary HAVE, while unaccusatives select BE. In Ariellese, the argument does not constrain the selection, as we see in table (1f). They will be clarifying in the further cross-linguistic analysis, which will be developed starting from the data of Chietino collected in the survey.

f. Abruzzese unaccusative intransitive verb:			
Abruzzese unaccusative			
1st sg	ji	so'	cascate
	I	am-1st sg	fallen-pp sg
2nd sg	tu	si	cascate
	you	are-2nd sg	fallen-pp sg
3rd sg	esse	a	cascate
	she	has-3rd sg	fallen-pp sg
1st pl	nu	seme	caschite
	we	are-1st pl	fallen-pp pl
2nd pl	vu	sete	caschite
	you-pl	are-2nd pl	fallen-pp pl
3rd pl	jisse	a	caschite
	they	have-3rd pl	fallen-pp pl

[D'Alessandro & Roberts , 2010: 44]

By looking at the table (1f) above, we should also point out another aspect of EA syntax which concerns the pattern of 'omnivorous' *participial agreement in number*, i.e. the participle agrees with whichever argument is marked as plural, as we can see in examples (2a-d). By necessity, we will leave the analysis of this phenomenon aside here⁷.

(2)

a. *Giuwanne a pittate nu mure.*

John-sg has-3rd sg/pl painted-**pp sg** **a wall**

'John has painted a wall.' [sg SUBJ-sg OBJ]

b. *Giuwanne a pittite ddu mure.*

John-sg has-3rd sg painted-**pp pl** **two walls**

'John has painted two walls.' [sg SUBJ-pl OBJ]

c. *Giuwanne e Mmarije a (*pittate)/pittite nu mure.*

⁷ Cf. D'Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 45-6, 58) and to D'Alessandro (2016), where the syntactic analysis of the split auxiliary selection and the participial agreement shows how the two phenomena are related.

John and Mary-pl have-3rdsg/pl **painted-pp(sg)/pl** a wall

‘John and Mary have painted a wall.’ [pl SUBJ-sg OBJ]

d. *Giuwanne e Mmarije a (*pittate)/pittite ddu mure.*

John and Mary-pl have-3rd sg/pl **painted-pp(sg)/pl** two walls

‘John and Mary have painted two walls.’ [pl SUBJ-pl OBJ]

The data above are from Ariellese, and as we could see in our survey they are not representative for the whole EA area, but only for more conservative varieties⁸.

The setup of auxiliaries - Split auxiliary selection in EA is only found in the indicative mood in periphrastic tenses: the present perfect and the pluperfect. According to D’Alessandro (2016: 9), “auxiliaries can be thought as perfectivity markers with a mood restriction: there is in fact no reason to claim that *irrealis* would not allow for perfectivity. This means that mood and tense have a *portmanteau* exponent in Abruzzese auxiliaries”. As we can see in the tables above, Standard Italian represents, instead, the prototypical system for Romance languages with auxiliary selection, which is less complex than the EA system: EA auxiliaries are also person markers. We will resume, following D’Alessandro’s schema, the morphological information that Italian (3) and Ariellese (4) express.

(3)

- transitivity [HAVE]; inergativity [HAVE]; unaccusativity [BE]
- person and number of the subject of the transitive, unergative or unaccusative verb [-a vs -ete]
- present tense (which results in a present perfect when combined with the perfective past participle);

(4)

- the subject is 1/2 person [BE] vs the subject is 3rd person [HAVE]

⁸ Another distinction showed in some EA varieties is the participial gender inflection, which according to D’Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 59) is found in Guardiagrele. Again in this case though, from a brief interview that I did with a 30 years-old speaker from Guardiagrele with high proficiency in his dialect, it seems that also the conservative Guardiiese is losing the gender distinction.

- person and number of the subject of the transitive, unergative or unaccusative verb [-a vs -ete]
- perfectivity and non-irrealis (indicative mood)

According to the scheme in (4), auxiliaries encode the information about the person of the subject both in the choice of the root and in the inflectional ending. We will come back to this issue, as well as on the syntactic analysis that in D'Alessandro is proposed, after seeing what happens in Chietino auxiliary selection.

2.2.3. Split auxiliary selection in Giammarco

In this part, we will firstly compare the data from Ariellese with the classification that we find in Giammarco (1979: 204). As we can see in (5), Ariellese is consistent with Giammarco's data: Adriatic (or Eastern) Abruzzese (*) presents the split auxiliary selection described in Section 1, while Occidental Abruzzese generalizes HAVE, except for the 2nd person singular. □

(5)

ABR. ADR. (*)		ABR. OCC.
<i>èssə</i>	1st - sg	<i>avé</i>
<i>èssə</i>	2nd - sg	<i>èssə</i>
<i>avé</i>	3rd - sg	<i>avé</i>
<i>èssə</i>	1st - pl	<i>avé</i>
<i>èssə</i>	2nd - pl	<i>avé</i>
<i>avé</i>	3rd - pl	<i>avé</i>

Occidental Abruzzese - The generalization of HAVE that we observe in Occidental Abruzzese could be schematized as All-HAVE - [2SG-BE]. It has not been directly analysed among the literature we are referring to, but still we could try to understand how the choice of auxiliaries HAVE and BE takes place in languages. In D'Alessandro & Roberts (2010: 52), HAVE is considered the marked option. They find more than one reason for this fact:

“First, HAVE-auxiliaries are cross-linguistically rather rare; in Indo-European they are not found in Celtic or Slavonic (with the exception of Macedonian (David Willis, personal communication), or in Hindi (Mahajan 1994), for example. Second, any context where HAVE is found corresponds to one where BE can be found in some other language, but not vice-versa. For example, HAVE is never, to our knowledge, the basic passive auxiliary (see Keenan 1985:257–261 for a discussion of the varieties of passive auxiliaries attested in the world’s languages, which notably does not include HAVE).”

They also point out languages where BE appears in the perfect with all verbs and with all person-number-tense combinations; therefore, it can be considered the default auxiliary. They conclude with the following generalisation about auxiliary HAVE in Standard Italian and EA: “it is a morphological realisation of non-ergativity, an *anti-ergative* auxiliary”.

Further analysis about BE or HAVE auxiliaries selection are elicited for Spanish - which generalises HAVE - from Rosemeyer (2014: 36): Poutain’s (1982, 1985) analysis overlooks existing similarities between Romance languages, contrary to the typological explanation which “tends to discount the great disparity with regard to auxiliary selection” within those languages. According to the latter, the expansion of the use of HAVE+PtcP led to the replacement of BE+PtcP by HAVE in Spanish, while Poutain’s analysis hypothesizes that the “functional overload of BE+PtcP led to the replacement process”. Poutain also adds typological explanations to his hypothesis, noting that “the conservation of auxiliary selection in French and Italian correlates to the relative unimportance of periphrases based on Latin *tenere* and *stare* in these languages” (Rosemeyer 2014: 35). Since verbs did not overlap with the “functional domains of HAVE and BE in French and Italian, respectively, the use of HAVE was not strengthened and the use of BE not weakened. Consequently, the replacement process of BE by HAVE was attenuated or even inhibited in these languages”.

I would point out a flaw in Poutain’s analysis, which can easily be found if we look at Occidental Abruzzese (OA): in this dialect, Latin verbs *tenere*, ‘to have’ and *stare*, lit. ‘to stay’ but meaning ‘to be’, did intrude into the functional domains of HAVE and BE, but no inhibition in the generalisation of HAVE in split auxiliary selection of OA is observed. For now, we can consider the extreme variation in auxiliary selection among Romance languages - as well as among Upper Southern Italian Dialects - that D’Alessandro points out, and take as valid the possibility of unlimited combinations of HAVE and BE.

Eastern Abruzzese - Coming back to EA auxiliary selection, we can see that Giammarco's classification generalizes the data that D'Alessandro shows for Ariellese, that is, the 1/2-BE vs 3-HAVE scheme.

The problem arose when Ariellese data were compared with the more prestigious EA variety, i.e. Chietino. A transcript from one informer in Giammarco (1979: 273), Liliana Basciani, 52 years-old, reports the clauses showed in (6):

(6)

nu jòrnə érə na bbèlla jurnàtə e jiə só [BE-1st.sg] dèttə a la kumbàñña mè [...] e avémə [HAVE-1st.pl] itə a ffarcə šta kamənatə.

'One day the weather was good and I *have said to my friend [...] and we *have gone out for a walk'.

As we read in (6), the choice of the auxiliary in the 1st person singular *só* is consistent with the 1/2-BE vs. 3-HAVE scheme of EA, while the 1st person plural *avémə* chooses HAVE, apparently meeting the OA scheme.

2.2.4. Split auxiliary selection in Chietino: the survey

Whenever we compare a relatively prestigious variety - to the extent a dialectal variety can be 'prestigious' not considering the role of Standard Italian - like Chietino to a variety like Ariellese, spoken in a small village in Chieti province, the first factors that should be accounted, as they contribute to innovation and variation, are geographical and historical: Chieti has been, in the last 70 years, the destination of the 'internal immigration' from rural areas to the city; its geographical position almost coincides with the borders of the EA area, as we can find OA varieties in the mountain area of Chieti province. Therefore, from a sociolinguistic point of view, we could easily define the current variety both 'hybridized' and Italianized - i.e. affected from Standard Italian forms. As a native speaker, I would hypothesize that current Chietino presents overlapping forms in the auxiliary selection phenomenon. Nevertheless, by looking at the inconsistency with the EA auxiliary selection that we found in Giammarco's transcript (see p. 15), we cannot assume that these overlapping forms are just due to a recent OA varieties' influence: the participant interviewed by

Giammarco was, indeed, 52 years-old in 1970s, and a hybridized morphosyntactic repertoire would not be a credible explanation. This led to the necessity of a specific study, about the selection that different age groups of Chietino native speakers do of present perfect auxiliaries.

The survey: Methods - A brief questionnaire of 10 questions was created with an online survey development cloud-based software. The first three questions asked about age, education and employment of the participant, her passive proficiency in Chietino dialect, and her use of dialect as an active speaker. The following six questions entered into the merits of the research, asking *to what extent* - RIGHT, PLAUSIBLE, WRONG (or N/A) - the participant would judge the present perfect auxiliary in the clauses ‘grammatically right’. In (7) we can see, as an example, Q4:

(7)

Q: To what extent do you think the following clauses are grammatically right?

A1: *Jè (me) sò magnatë li maccarunë*

I (me) BE-1.sg eaten the pasta-pl

“I *am eaten the pasta”

A2: *Jè (m') aji magnatë li maccarunë*

I (me) HAVE-1.sg eaten the pasta-pl

“I have eaten the pasta”

A3: *Jè (m') ho magnatë li maccarunë*

I (me) HAVE-1.sg eaten the pasta-pl

“I have eaten the pasta”

Each question was dedicated to one of the six persons of the auxiliaries; each question had a different amount of sample clauses, depending on a preliminary investigation of the variation in the auxiliary selection of each person; not only the HAVE and BE options - for which the conjugation from D’Alessandro was used (see p. 8) - were presented, but also other forms, either Italianized either, for the 1st plural, syncopate. Consequently, there were:

- three sample clauses for the 1st person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /jè/, /aji/, /ho/ (which is the Standard Italian 1stsg of HAVE);

- three sample clauses for the 2nd person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /si/, /i/, /ai/ (which is the Standard Italian 2ndsg of HAVE);
- two sample clauses for the 3rd person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /a/, /jè/;
- three sample clauses for the 1st person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /sémə/, /avémə/, /amə/ (which is the outcome after /v/ deletion and /ae/ syncope in /avémə/);
- two sample clauses for the 2nd person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /sétə/, /avétə/;
- five sample clauses for the 3rd person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /jè/, /a/, /hannə/ (the Standard Italian HAVE form, with Abruzzese inflectional ending contamination), /sò/ and /sònnə/ (the Standard Italian BE form, with Abruzzese inflectional ending contamination)⁹.

A choice was done about the insertion of the reflexive pronouns - namely /mə/, /ti/, /sə/ (both for 3rd sg and pl), /cə/, /və/ -, which were added in brackets in order to present the clause as consistent as possible with the spoken forms. The necessity of the insertion is related to the presence of a Direct Object in the clauses (see Giammarco 1979: 150-1), but could be a bit confusing for the analysis of the Italianized forms, since Standard Italian only allows BE in presence of reflexive pronouns.

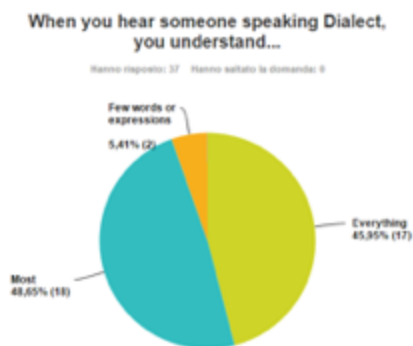
The survey: Participants - The questionnaire was shared on the social network 'Facebook' and individually sent to some participants who did not have a Facebook profile. Forty-two participants took part in the research, but just the data from 37 of them were considered valid, since the remaining five completed less than the 15% of the questionnaire. No gender variable was added.

Participants belonged to 5 different age groups: according to the results, the majority, 75,68%, was 18 to 30 years-old; then 13,51% were 30 to 50 years-old, 5,41% were 50 to 60, 5,41% were older than 60 years-old, and 2,7% were 14 to 18 years-old. The unequal distribution of the amount of participants for every age group was due to the restrictions that an online free survey inevitably has. A further research would be necessary, in order to enhance the reliability of the current data.

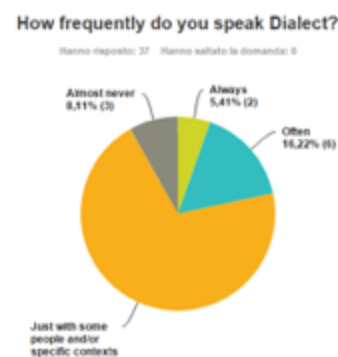
Among the 37 participants, 2,7% were High School students, 43,24% were graduate students, 27,03% were postgraduate students, 24,3% were graduate employers and 2,7% were undergraduate employers.

⁹ As we said at p. 7, the forms /jè/ (D'Alessandro) and /sò/ (Giammarco) seem to be coexistent in EA.

As was said before, participants were asked two questions about their Chietino (in the survey generalized as ‘Dialect’, since this is the common word) proficiency: one question aimed to investigate their passive knowledge (8), while the second asked how frequently they use Chietino in daily speech (9). According to the graphs in (8) and (9), to a high passive knowledge of Chietino corresponds a restricted use: 70,27% of the participants speak Dialect ‘just with some people and/or in specific contexts’. For the moment, we have to leave aside the sociolinguistic issues that these data imply, in order to be consistent to our focus. We can say, regarding to the level of proficiency that was required in order to understand the Chietino clauses and answer the following questions, that almost the totality of the participants was able to answer without difficulty.



(8)



(9)

The survey: Results and Analysis - From the acquired results of the survey, we can give a first panorama of the auxiliary selection in Chietino (see Appendix for the tables with the results). For the 1st person singular the ‘right’ auxiliary is mostly BE (80,56%), but still the HAVE is considered right according to 16,22% of participants, while 18 participants (48,65%) considered it ‘plausible’.

Same happens with the 2nd person singular, where BE is considered the ‘right’ auxiliary by 75% of participants, but almost 46% considered ‘plausible’ HAVE, while 24,32% said it was ‘right’. This is unexpected, if we consider that both EA and OA select BE for the 2sg. The reason could be either an influence of the Standard Italian “Tu **hai** mangiato la pasta” (but without the reflexive pronoun), either the form /i/ could be perceived from the speakers as a

/si/ with /s/ deletion. The hypothesis of a generalisation of HAVE for all the persons is plausible, but inconsistent with any Abruzzese variety.

Data for the 3rd person singular are consistent with the expectation we would have according to the auxiliary selection in both EA and OA, where HAVE is always the selected auxiliary. Nevertheless, 16,67% of participants judged 'plausible' the BE form, consistently with the Standard Italian selection.

The results for the 1st person plural, which in Giammarco is the signal of the coexistence of the two auxiliaries, are also coherent with our expectations: 63,89% of participants preferred the auxiliary BE, according to the EA selection, but 50% considered also HAVE a 'right' form, while according to 30,56% it is 'plausible'. The third form proposed, /amə/ (HAVE), was remarkably considered 'right' by 22,22% of participants.

The 2nd person plural shows results similar to the 1st person plural: 52,78% of participants preferred BE, but both the 'right' and 'plausible' answers were chosen for HAVE by 40% of participants.

The 3rd person plural results are consistent with the EA auxiliary selection, since the two preferred forms - i.e. the conservative /a/ (47,22%) and the Italianized /hannə/ (55,88%) - are both HAVE; at the same time, though, they clearly show the coexistence of HAVE and BE, since the forms /sò/ and /sònnə/ are considered 'right' respectively by 21,21% and 11,43% of participants, while they are judged 'plausible' respectively by 48,48% and 34,29% of participants.

We can also see that the 3rd person plural form /jè/ for BE - which was in D'Alessandro's conjugation - is only known by three participants, while the Giammarco's form /sò/ is widely recognized. We could hypothesize that /jè/ is the more conservative form, that was already confined in isolated rural areas in the second half of the 20th century.

If we observe the data about the 2nd person singular and the 3rd person plural, we can easily see that Standard Italian plays a role in the variation of auxiliary selection. What could this mean to our analysis? One hypothesis may be the following: Chietino could have always selected the auxiliary HAVE for present perfect, according to the OA scheme, but still been subjected to the Standard Italian selection of BE in presence of reflexive pronouns. The high percentage of young speakers (18-30 years-old) could explain the wide preference of the auxiliary BE. Otherwise, Standard Italian could have recently influenced the EA scheme, adding HAVE as a 'right' or at least 'plausible' auxiliary (see Tables in (1), p. 9-11).

Nonetheless, if we look at the 6 older respondents' answers, these two solutions cannot be considered valid: their answers show a general coexistence of BE and HAVE in both 1st and 2nd persons plural; but for the 1st singular BE is preferred, while for the 3rd plural HAVE is chosen more often, accordingly to EA. Still, they usually consider HAVE as a 'plausible' form. These data, added to Giammarco's transcript (see p. 10, (6)), would let us come back to the initial statement: Chietino auxiliary selection has originally followed the EA schema, but the coexistence and the overlapping of auxiliaries BE and HAVE is not a recent phenomenon.

2.2.5. *Syntactic analysis of person-driven auxiliary selection*

Since Chietino belongs to the EA varieties, we will now briefly and partially present D'Alessandro's (2016) syntactic analysis of the person-driven auxiliary selection in Ariellese. In D'Alessandro (2016), split auxiliary selection - as well as agreement mismatches - is considered the result of the presence of an extra probing head π in the v field (which she refers to as T-v field): this probe causes the person split. She also states that "we are in the presence of a genuine extra element which triggers the emergence of all these apparently unrelated phenomena. This in turn also means that split auxiliary selection and participial agreement can be attributed to the same factor, π , and are hence not unrelated (contra what has been claimed in D'Alessandro & Roberts 2010)".

According to this introductory concepts, the extra probe π merged in the syntactic spine, between v and T, should cause the person-oriented root selection, that is shown in (10).

(10)

[pers]	[pers, nr]
<i>So</i>	<i>s</i> (BE=1/2) + <i>-o</i> (1.sg)
<i>si</i>	<i>s</i> (BE =1/2) + <i>-i</i> (2.sg)
<i>a</i>	<i>a</i> (HAVE =3) + <i>a</i> (3)
<i>semə</i>	<i>s</i> (BE =1/2) + <i>-emə</i> (1.pl)
<i>setə</i>	<i>s</i> (BE =1/2) + <i>-etə</i> (2.pl)
<i>a</i>	<i>a</i> (HAVE =3) + <i>a</i> (3)

The π probe is defined as a head with ϕ -features (which are unvalued). D’Alessandro answers to Chomsky (1995, Ch. 4), who claims that heads encoding uninterpretable ϕ -features exclusively have no right to exist, by stating that, in the case of the π probe, “this head does exist, but in order to be ‘legible’ it must have merged/incorporated into another, semantically non-empty, head, before the interface is reached”.

The result is a table (11) with the paradigm for the auxiliary present tense, which shows the morphological exponent of a T head made up of T’s verbal features (V), plus π plus T’s ϕ -features. In (11) the Ariellese pattern is shown: “s- is the exponent of both plural and singular π . HAVE is taken to be the absence of π (hence, the absence of subject doubling in the root)”.

(11)

π	T (V+ ϕ)
s-	-o
s-	-i
0	-a
s-	-emə
s-	-etə
0	a

This syntactic analysis should have been valid also for Chietino, if the Ariellese pattern can be considered valid for EA varieties. But if we consider the present perfect auxiliary selections of Chietino, Ariellese, Occidental Abruzzese and Standard Italian, we could eventually state that the former is a *crossroads* of varieties. If a variety such as Standard Italian can be considered a recent influence, the importance of OA influence should be investigated deeply, in order to obtain a wider framework and try to structure, if necessary, an alternative scheme for Chietino.

Chapter 3

3. Methodology

3.1. Pilot study

In a first planning, this study aimed to collect data also by means of an elicitation task, which is commonly chosen in language contact studies (see, as the most recent examples, Cohal 2014; Irizarri van Suchtelen 2016; Moro 2015). Elicitation, narrative tasks, free conversation and interviews are considered, on one hand, successful methodologies (Bower 2007), since they permit the researcher to gain an extremely rich corpus of data at once; whereas, the first can be a risky method when eliciting natural speech from non-native users (Tomokiyo & Burger 1999).

3.1.1. Design

The pilot study included, in addition to the questionnaire (see § 3.2), an elicitation task which was constructed starting from the contexts or ‘domains’ (Grassi et al. 2003: 183) where code-switching (inter-phrasal) and code-mixing (intra-phrasal), as well as single vernacular loanwords, between Italian and dialect normally occur; the domains are the following:

1. auto-correction;
2. starting of a new conversation or storytelling;
3. greetings;
4. courtesy expressions;
5. deictic expressions and addressing;
6. interjections, blasphemies, imprecations;

7. emphasis aims;
8. insults;
9. showing the interlocutor complicity / familiarity / grudge/ rage;
10. directive function (Appel & Muysken 1987: 118-121), which occurs when two interlocutors want to exclude a third person, which does not understand vernacular;
11. quotes, multiwords expressions;
12. interlayers and discourse fillers, sayings;
13. loanwords, used when a concept is considered better expressed in vernacular than in Italian, or when the Italian word does not exist at all.

The task showed a set of thirteen pictures (see Appendices), each representing one of the above domains; when considered not evocative enough, pictures were juxtaposed with a sentence in Romanian, as an additional hint.

Not all the domains were represented, taking into account the peculiarity of the involved participants - as non-native speakers and as immigrants - and the limits of visual elicitation: thus, domain 1 (auto-correction) was rated too difficult to represent in a picture and to bound, since it is typically produced almost unconsciously by native speakers; the directive function (10) is highly perceived by participants, as they remark often in the questionnaire, but is not represented in this task; sayings (12) and loanwords (13) were also left out, since the principal aim was to test if Romanians could recognise the most common contexts where dialect is used by Italians. From this perspective, it was not necessary to collect only one particular outcome for each picture, while test if Romanians would have at least tried to answer with dialect.

The task took place after the end of the questionnaire. As we will see in the further sections, in the last part of the questionnaire participants were asked to answer some questions about their perception, as well as self-estimated competence, of dialect. Thus, when approaching to the next task, they were already aware of the focus of the interview.

The elicitation task was presented as follows:

Now, I will show you a set of pictures where people are doing and saying quiet recognisable things: they either are in a particular context/situation, either they are manifesting a thought or a strong feeling. So, I just ask you to guess what

someone would typically say in that case and, more importantly, “how” (s)he would say it if (s)he is from Chieti. To give you a hint, above some of the pictures I put a typical sentence that a Romanian person would say; a Romanian friend of mine helped me to select them.

The task had generic instructions, which was an intentional choice made for two reasons: first of all, to avoid to influence participants about the register and the code-switching; second of all, to bypass participants’ inhibition, which would occur asking directly “How would you say it/ what would you say in Chietino?”.

3.1.2. Results

Despite the extremely common occurrence of the expected outcomes - to notice, many expressions which were foresaw to occur, were used as distractors in the definitive task (see § 3.2.2.) - the visual stimuli did not trigger satisfying responses.

Just two participants were tested for this task (see § 3.2.1.): they both lived in Chieti for many years - one arrived in 2007, while the second in 2009 - and showed a remarkable awareness of dialect both in the questionnaire and in the second task. One participant married an Italian from born and raised in Chieti; both participants stated that they use Chietino dialect expressions sometimes.

The task was not assigned to more participants because the first two refused to perform it and expressed a high linguistic inhibition: compared to the other task results, we can say that they show a good passive competence of dialect, while their active competence seems almost null. This could happen for uncontrolled inhibition or because participants choose to avoid dialect production. The last hypothesis is consistent with the general attitude towards dialect acquisition that emerged from the questionnaire (see § 4.1.).

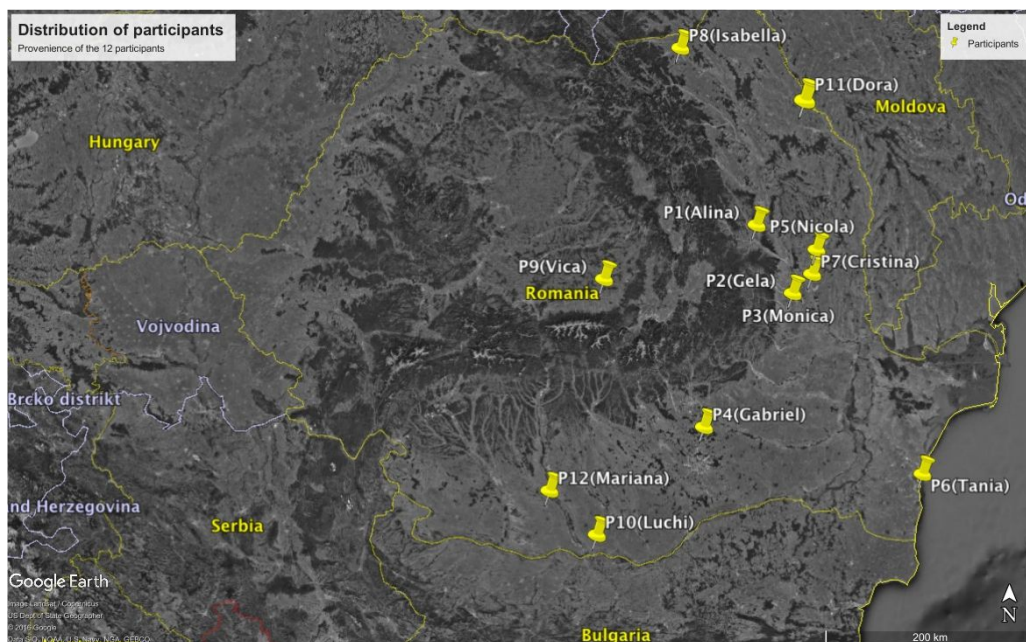
3.2. Overview of the second phase

The definitive arrangement of the research involved 12 Romanian participants and 8 Italian participants (control group); the interviews materials consisted of two main parts: an oral questionnaire and a task of 29 questions focused on split-auxiliary selection in Chietino.

In the further sections, let us go more into the merits of the selection of participants and materials.

3.2.1. Participants

Romanian group - Considered the aim of the research - i.e. to test to what extent acquisition of Italian by a group of immigrants is mixed to an, either conscious either unconscious, acquisition of the local dialect - and considered the extreme dialectal microvariation (see § 2.2.), the selection of Romanian participants was restricted to those who learned Italian mostly in Chieti. Thus, participants should live in Chieti or at least have a strong and daily contact with people from Chieti. There was no control on participant provenience, which resulted, anyhow, to be consistent with previous work data (Cohal 2014; Cingolani 2009), and is showed in the map below.



Another factor which determined the choice of participants, was their arrival time: they were asked to have lived at least three years in Italy and, if they did not live only in Chieti, at least three years in Chieti after the previous place. Nine participants out of twelve, indeed, arrived in Italy ten or more years ago, while three of them arrived eight years ago. Among participants, 33,4% have always lived in Chieti, while 24,9% lived in other regions before.

The remaining participants have not always lived in Chieti, but they came to Abruzzo region, and four out of five lived in Chieti province. Even though the nearby villages experience a strong linguistic influence from the provincial capital, it is still important to consider the difference among dialectal micro-varieties - which are spoken in the villages and are more conservative - and Chietino variety; in the same way, we should take into account the more spread use of dialect, in daily speech, in the countryside, which could imply a different acquisition of dialect by Romanian immigrants who lived in small villages.

The last two features which constrained the choice of participants, were the age of acquisition of Italian and, more importantly, the way in which they learned Italian; they should have learned the spoken Italian similar conditions: thus, participants were asked to have arrived in Italy in adulthood (i.e. after turning 18 years-old), which means that they did not attend Italian compulsory schooling. Indeed, 91,7% participants have never attended a course of Italian language; moreover, 83,3% stated that their competence of Italian was null before their arrival, while the remaining participants said that, in a scale from 1 to 5, their level was 2.

Also, in order to better define the age boundaries, participants older than 50 years-old were not preferred; still, at the beginning of the research, two participants, respectively 57 and 63 years-old, were interviewed: they have been the only two who did not perform the second task at all¹⁰.

Of all participants, 66,6% (8 participants) are between 30 and 50 years-old, with just two of them older than 40 years-old. Just two participants were younger than 30, respectively 26 and 28 years old. In fact, it was particularly difficult to convince young people to be involved in the survey.

Regarding to participants' gender, both men and women were involved. Nevertheless, just two men attended the research; also, even though of the married participants 58,3% have a Romanian partner, just in one case both spouses were interviewed: apparently, men work too much and often far from home, thus, they were never available.

There was no control regarding to the school level reached by participants, since a high school level does not seem to prevent Romanian emigration (Cohal 2014): in fact, just three

¹⁰ Major (2014) provides a complete overview of studies focused on age effects in second language acquisition (p. 5) and underlines that cognitive abilities (Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson 2003; De Keyser 2013) and social and affective factors (Moyer 2003) are seen as the most relevant constraints in late second language acquisition.

participants did not even finish primary school; two participants, on the other hand, graduated, one attended a university and the remaining participants completed their high school diploma.

Italian group - A control group, composed of seven Italian participants, was involved to test the reliance of the split-auxiliary task (§3.2.2.). They were men and women born and raised in Chieti, of various ages. Five age ranges were marked, namely from 18 to 30, from 30 to 40 - although none of participants belonged to this range -, from 40 to 50, from 50 to 60 and older than 60 years old.

Participants were not asked to necessarily live in Chieti, as well as to have a particular level of education or employment. As in the first split-auxiliary selection survey (see § 2.2.4.), they were not asked to be proficient in Chietino dialect.

Considering that a sufficient amount of data - 37 valid responses were registered in the first survey - was already available, the control group was involved, above all, in order to test the new structure of the task (see § 3.2.2.). We will go into the merits of the different outcomes, which may be related to modifications in the task, in the next chapter.

In the control test, four men and three women were interviewed: three participants are included in the 18-30 age range, two of them in the 50-60 age range, one in the 40-50 and one in the 60>; five of them are graduated, while the remaining two finished high school studies and attended the university, but did not graduate.

Just two participants do not currently live in Chieti.

3.2.2. Materials

As was already mentioned, part of the materials used for the interviews have been improved *in fieri*. The final structure consisted of a questionnaire and the split-auxiliary selection task.

Questionnaire - The questionnaire aimed to test, with a qualitative approach, attitudes shown towards Italian and dialect (Chietino) by Romanian immigrants. It can be labeled 'sociolinguistic questionnaire', since participants' integration in the host community, as well as their community of origin, is considered crucial for their linguistic choices. Thus, the

construction of the interview focused on the collection of sociolinguistic data, such as social network, linguistic habits, identity.

Questions asked in the questionnaire were formulated mostly referring to Irizarri van Suchtelen (2016) and Cohal (2014). Specially, the former study gave the idea of collecting spontaneous speech data by means of the questionnaire:

“The questions in the interview were formulated in such a way that they stimulated the participant to start telling, instead of just giving short answers. For example, rather than asking three questions: ‘Where did you grow up?’, ‘With whom?’ and ‘How did you usually spend your holidays, which could elicit short answers like ‘In Amsterdam’, ‘With my father, mother, and brother’ and ‘In Morocco’, one question was asked: ‘Can you tell something about how you grew up?’. The participants then were more likely to start a narrative in the past, with habituais, progressives, imperfectives, etc. Meanwhile the interviewer check-marked whether the necessary sociolinguistic data (home country, region, family composition, holidays, etc.) were mentioned, and if something was not mentioned, he would ask for the specific data more directly after the participant had finished telling.” (Irizarri van Suchtelen 2016: 68)

The questionnaire was divided in two parts (see Appendices). The first part was presented to all participants and consisted of twenty-one questions, of which nine were introductory questions focused on collecting personal information - name, age, provenience, date of migration, family, education, employment, etc. -, and the last eleven asked about linguistic competence, both of Italian and Chietino: participants have also been asked to self-grade their Italian proficiency (on a scale from 1 to 5) that they had before their arrival and the proficiency that they currently think to have reached; last questions focused more on dialect attitudes, such as ‘Do you think that is important, if you live in Italy, to have some competence of dialect?’ or ‘Do you like dialect? Do you prefer Italian or dialect?’.

Regarding to participants’ integration in the local community, questions such as ‘Do you spend time with Italians here in Chieti?’, ‘If you lived/have been in other places in Italy, did you notice a difference between Italian accents and/or dialects?’ and ‘How often do you think people speak dialect in Chieti?’ were asked.

The second part of the questionnaire is called ‘Languages spoken in the family’, and was applied to those who cohabit with a partner and/or have children. Even though all participants

have sons, there was an obvious distinction between those whose sons are grown-up and live in a different town or country, and those who are currently raising their children.

Participants from the latter group, were asked to talk about their linguistic choices, both with their partner and their children. The first questions asked about the nationality of the partner, her Italian proficiency (if not Italian) and her employment. The last two questions focused on children's dialect competence, namely 'Do your children also use or understand dialect?' and 'Where did they learn dialect? (contexts, people)'

Split-auxiliary selection task - The third section of the interview consisted of performing a task in order to test participants' passive competence of Chietino.

Participants had to listen to a set of audio stimuli, some of them labeled as 'distractors', namely common expressions, greetings or single words in Chietino, while the others were sentences or small dialogues where one verb was conjugated at present perfect, thus, the auxiliary selection took place.

29 audio stimuli were recorded by two men, both born and currently resident in Chieti, with my supervision: they were told to say the sentences with their natural local accent, without emphasizing the dialect. Overall, 13 stimuli were distractors and 16 were sentences where the selection of the auxiliary occurs; stimuli were also written in the third section of the interview, even though participants never needed to look at them. It was mostly used by the interviewer, to check if all the stimuli were played. The task form, together with the translation of the audio stimuli, is reported in the Appendices.

In the creation process of this task, sentences for the auxiliary selection stimuli have been constructed paying attention to three main aspects:

- concepts expressed are as concrete as possible, and they are easy to be heard in daily speech (i.e. food and meals, cars, mobile phone, work);
- the mixed register which characterizes spoken language in Italy was imitated, that is, some words switch to Italian;
- simplicity is pursued, person and number of the conjugation are always clear, by using names instead of pronouns as subjects, presenting brief dialogues (5 stimuli) or sentences with deixis (5 stimuli); also, tense is suggested often by means of temporal adverbs (i.e. *domènica scòrsə* en. 'last sunday'; *ieri* en. 'yesterday', etc.).

A typical stimulus used in the task is exemplified here below:

(12)

Ieri *io e* [IT] *Andòniə* *sémə* *vištə* [D] *l'amico tuo* [IT]

Yesterday-temp.adv. I and Antonio-pl BE-1st.pl. seen your friend

‘Antonio and I have seen your friend, yesterday’

By looking at the example, we see that code-switching between Chietino and Italian occurs, as well as a mixed register for the name ‘Andòniə’, which in Italian would be *Antonio*, while in Chietino would be *Ndònjə*.

Compared to the previous survey (see § 2.2.4.) the options for the selection of auxiliaries BE and HAVE were reduced, in order to simplify the task and avoid forms which, statistically, were not recognized in the first study; consequently, they are the following:

- three sample clauses for the 1st person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /jè/, /aji/, /ho/ (which is the Standard Italian 1stsg HAVE);
- two sample clauses for the 2nd person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /si/, /i/;
- two sample clauses for the 3rd person singular of HAVE and BE, namely /a/, /jè/;
- three sample clauses for the 1st person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /sémə/, /avémə/, /amə/ (which is the outcome after /v/ deletion and /æ/ syncope in /avémə/);
- two sample clauses for the 2nd person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /sétə/, /avétə/;
- four sample clauses for the 3rd person plural of HAVE and BE, namely /a/, /hannə/ (the Standard Italian HAVE form, with Abruzzese inflectional ending contamination), /sò/ and /sònnə/ (the Standard Italian BE form, with Abruzzese inflectional ending contamination).

3.2.3. Procedure

Romanian group - Participants were interviewed in Chieti during two main interviews sessions, in November 2016 and between January and February 2017. Starting from few intermediaries who knew Romanian people living or working in Chieti, a first group was interviewed, which then introduced me to more participants; this resource got soon exhausted, though. Finding new participants by means of word of mouth, asking to

organizations and associations in contact with immigrants, contacting the local Orthodox Church or directly trying to approach people, turned out to be a fail, in most cases.

After making contact with participants, an appointment was arranged. The meetings took place wherever the participant felt more comfortable to be interviewed: mostly, I was invited at their place, but some interviews were performed in cafeterias and one in a car.

Participants have been interviewed individually and recorded with the laptop webcam, even though the device was directed to the interviewer, for a matter of privacy.

Participants were told, before starting, that the interview focused on Italian linguistic, but no particular 'skills' were required. The questionnaire started without more explanations.

While performing the questionnaire, participants were able to look at the screen of the laptop and read the incoming questions.

The length of the interviews was really variable, depending on how much participants' answers were accurate, since they were let to speak freely. The minimum time for the questionnaire part was 20 minutes, while some interviews took until 2 hours.

The 'split-auxiliary selection' task was presented right after the end of the questionnaire. The task was introduced as follows:

In this task, I will play some audio recordings, where sentences in Chietino are performed. You will probably notice that they are really easy to understand, but I ask you to pay particular attention to how the verb is said. After hearing each of them, you should just tell me if, according to you, the sentence is likely to be said by an autochthonous person. You don't have to decide about its grammaticality, thus, label the sentence 'right' or 'wrong'. Just ask yourself: 'Have I ever heard this sentence here in Chieti?', and then answer either 'yes', either 'no', either 'plausible'. You will judge them one by one.

After the end of the interviews, the recordings have been played and the answers reported manually and saved in the google form. A summary of the results was instantaneously available.

Control group - As mentioned before, the Italian group was asked to perform the 'split auxiliary selection task' only. Participants were more straightly introduced to the topic, after answering some introductory questions - age, education, employment, residence.

The task was described as follows:

In this task, I will play some audio recordings, where sentences in Chietino are performed. They are really easy to understand, but I ask you to pay particular attention to how they are constructed. After hearing each of them, you should just tell me if, according to you, the sentence is likely to be said by an autochthonous person: answer 'yes', 'no', 'plausible'.

As well as the Romanian group, participants have been interviewed individually and recorded with the laptop webcam. Nevertheless, answers of this group were immediately written on a sheet of paper and, at a later time, registered in the google form.

Chapter 4

4. Results

The structure of the research was meant to collect data from a sociolinguistic perspective and, at the same time, to attempt a first analysis of language acquisition in the Italian multilingual context. Since the beginning, the aims have been consciously restricted to a partial observation of the outcomes: even if a big amount of spontaneous speech has been recorded, by means of the individual questionnaire, we will leave it to further research.

The test was controlled, in order to focus on passive acquisition of dialect, which is actually a second language that people, both the immigrants and the autochthonous, acquire ‘inadvertently’, because of the social stigma that it carries - or used to carry. This phenomenon causes many contradictions, which will be evident in the outcomes.

Although this study brought to the surface interesting results, we should remark that, being the number of participants too exiguous, data are not representative for the population. Also, the amount of female (10) and male (2) participants is not balanced, which means that results for men really need to be improved.

4.1. Qualitative analysis

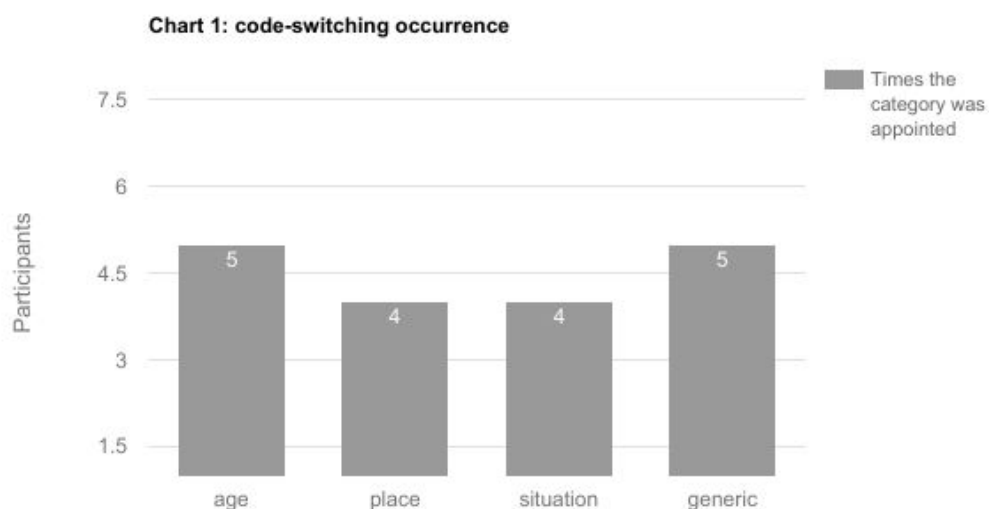
Overall, the analysis of attitudes towards dialect shows that Romanians do think that learning dialect eases linguistic integration in the community. Nevertheless, they perceive dialect as an obstacle to the learning process of Italian, and consequently refuse to learn it. Dialect is seen as something to use ‘just for fun’; also, dialect has been defined ‘a stupid thing’, which

‘belongs to traditions’ and is intended to disappear, because of its ‘uselessness’. Remarkably, this was an observation made by the only participant who perfectly speaks Chietino dialect. Apart from this general view, results prove the coexistence of many contradictions, which manifested in the lack of homogeneity of participants’ competence of dialect, in the actual use of dialect, in some characteristics of their social integration.

4.1.1. Code-switching occurrence

The first question about dialect has been, not by chance, inserted late in the questionnaire: the 15th question asked the participant if (s)he had ever noticed a difference between Italian accents, while Question 16 asked ‘How often do you think people speak dialect in Chieti?’; although, participants always introduced the argument first, right before the 15th question, usually when they were asked to tell about their moving to Italy, which triggered often spontaneous reflections about the role of dialect for their integration in the community (§ 4.1.2.).

All participants stated that people in Chieti speak dialect really often. When asked about the contexts that, according to their experience, trigger code-switching from Italian to Chietino, they mainly referred to situations of public relations and to people’s age. In the chart below, we ranked the categories that participants introduced, while arguing about code-switching occurrence: apart from those who did not specify it (5), participants mostly think that mixing



Chietino and Italian depends on the *age* (5 mentions) and the *situation* (4 mentions), as well as on the *place* (4 mentions). The last category is ranked separately from the one called *situation*, since it includes particular places such as ‘bus’, ‘village’, ‘street market’, ‘party’; on the other hand, *situation* includes broader contexts like ‘in group’, ‘with friends’, ‘among locals’.

Regarding to the *age* factor, some participants think that everyone speaks dialect, even if young people do it ‘in a different way’: according to them, old people speak Chietino better and more often, while young people and adolescents shift ‘just for fun or to look cool’.

One last context where code-switching occurs, which was not mentioned while participants were asking Question 16, but emerged from stories told during the interviews: it is, practically, the *directive function* mentioned in Chapter 3 (§ 3.1.1.), namely when two speakers switch to Chietino in order to not be understood. This situations seem to occur quite often with foreigners, which consequently see dialect as a code or “secret language” that natives use in order to hide information or badmouth them. Significantly, the three participants who talked about this category were caretakers and caregivers, being them ‘intruded’ into the private sphere of local families.

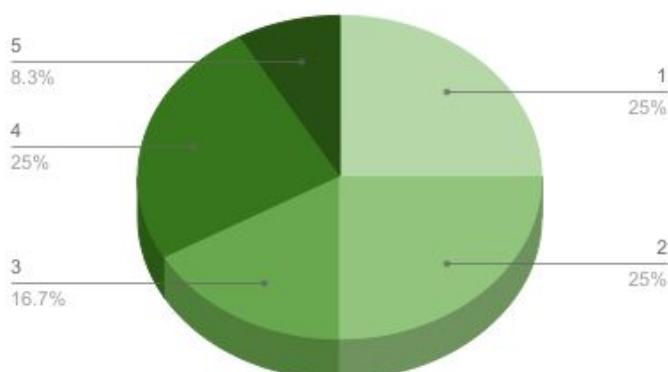
4.1.2. Competence and use of Chietino

In the first section of the interview, Questions 17 to 20 ask participants to judge about their own competence and use of Chietino.

The first ‘approaching’ question asks ‘Do you think that is important, if you live in Italy, to have some competence of dialect?’, which 91,7% answered ‘yes’. Although, there were some differences among responses: namely, those who think that knowing dialect is absolutely useful (5) and those who add that, despite the importance of dialect in the Italian linguistic repertory, they are not willing to learn dialect, since Italian is more important and is understood everywhere in Italy (3) (see also § 4.1.3.).

Consistently with the second group of responses, participants gave inhomogeneous answers to Question 18, which asks if they understand dialect, and to what extent, on a scale from 1 to 5. Responses are summarized in Chart 2.

Chart 2: self-graded passive competence of Chietino



Inhomogeneous are, as well, responses to Question 19, ‘Do you use dialect?’ (also intended as a sporadic code-switching). Indeed, 41,6% answered ‘no’, while 24,9% stated they use it ‘often’, and the same percentage answered ‘sometimes’; just 1 participant (8,3%) answered ‘always’. In Table 1, we put in relation the kind of interlocutors that participants use dialect with (Question 20) with the frequency of use that they stated in Question 19.

Table 1: Interlocutors and use

<u>Interlocutors</u>	<u>Mentions</u>	<u>Use of Chietino</u>
Employers (caregivers)	2	sometimes (1); often (1)
Market sellers	2	often
Family	2	sometimes (1); often (1)
Friends	3	sometimes (1); often (2)
Patients	1	often

Overall, from the table we can deduce that ‘market sellers’ and ‘patients’ are the only interlocutors mentioned only by participants who use dialect ‘often’; this may be related to contextual factors: indeed, while ‘employers’ - that caregivers have a daily contact with -, ‘friends’ and ‘family’ are part of comfortable contexts, ‘market sellers’ and ‘patients’ fall

within the sphere of public relations, which requires a more confident approach to code-switching.

4.1.3. Linguistic repertoire in the family

As said in Chapter 3 (§ 3.2.2.) a second section (henceforth, ‘family section’) of the interview was addressed to those who live in Chieti with their family - partner and/or sons -, namely ten out of the twelve participants: eight of them have a foreign partner - just one not Romanian (Albanian) -, while two have an Italian partner. According to responses, in 62,5% of cases participants’ partner migrated to Italy *before* them, while in 25% *after*, and in one case (12,5%) they moved *together*.

Regarding to partners’ employments, the two male participants stated their wives are respectively ‘unemployed’ and ‘nurse’; female participants’ husbands, whereas, are ‘masons’ in 62,5% of cases, while only one of them works in a factory. The two participants with an Italian partner - both women - said one partner is a whitewasher, the other is a high school teacher.

Participants were also asked to estimate partner’s competence of Italian; the question was formulated ‘Does your partner have the same competence of Italian as you?’. Responses were not homogeneous: four participants answered ‘no, more’, three answered ‘no, less’, one ‘yes’. Remarkably, three participants who answered ‘no, more’ and the one who answered ‘yes’, added that partners have a good competence of Chietino; then, if we look at partners’ employment, since all of those who, according to participants’ answers, speak Chietino, are masons. As well, the only participants who speaks perfect dialect is a mason (see further § 4.1.4.). What also seems interesting, is that the judgment about partner’s competence, when it is perceived as higher, seems to be more related to integration, from a communicative perspective. That is, linguistic competence is not knowing grammatical rules of Italian, but knowing the linguistic repertoire of the Italian community in Chieti, which is highly mixed with vernacular.

Between partners, Italian seems to be preferred only when they are not Romanian native speakers both - namely, when the partner is Italian (2) or when (s)he is from another country (1). Nevertheless, out of the seven participants with a Romanian partner, four say that in daily conversation Romanian is often mixed with Italian and, sometimes, regionalisms or Chietino.

As a consequence, children seem to have a ‘hybrid’ linguistic acquisition; usually, in 77,7% of cases, Romanian is not preferred: two participants asserted that they speak only Romanian with their sons, while the rest speak both Italian and Romanian, but mostly Italian. Three participants said that Romanian was the ‘just born language’ that they used to speak to children, while after two or three years, when they started nursery school, Romanian was tried to be abandoned in favour of Italian. Indeed, five participants out of nine (the other three do not live with their sons) stated that children prefer to speak Italian, one Romanian and the remaining three answered ‘both Romanian and Italian’. To notice, Question 8 of the ‘family section’ asked ‘Which language do your children prefer to speak?’, not necessarily intending ‘at home’. This is why participants could talk about preferred registers both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’.

Looking in detail to the reasons for the ‘preferred language’ answers, there are some interesting factors to underline, both when Italian and when a mix of Romanian and Italian are preferred. In the first case, we should notice that:

- when Italian is preferred, this is, according to participants, caused by *inhibition* toward Romanian, which was acquired as the first language but lasted just as passive knowledge;
- Italian is also said to be preferred because ‘makes children feel integrated’ with the Italian community;
- participants stated that, even when they speak Romanian, children answer in Italian, which can be linked to both *inhibition* and *willingness to integrate*.

On the other hand, when children prefer to mix languages, this happens either because they are still not confident with Italian, either because they consciously split the ‘home’ language (Romanian) and the ‘outside’ language (Italian), without having any preference. This should be, of course, considered as based just on parents’ observation.

Going back to Question 7, participants were asked ‘Do you think it is important to teach them [your children] Romanian?’. Except for one participant, whose daughter reached her in Italy one year ago, so is not concerned with this question, everyone answered ‘yes’ to the question, apart from one. According to responses, the importance of handing down Romanian is motivated by three reasons:

- knowing Romanian helps to keep in touch with relatives who still live in Romania - grandparents in particular;

- Romanian language also keeps children in touch with their mother country, and it will be useful whether the family will return to Romania hereafter;
- knowing one more language 'is always better'.

The last two questions of the 'family section' focused on comprehension and/or use of Chietino: remarkably, 88,9% of participants said that their children speak or, at least, understand Chietino, and two participants say they have learned many Chietino expressions thanks to their sons. Contexts or people that children learned dialect from are said to be 'school', 'home' and 'friends'.

4.1.4. Gender related issues

We remarked at the beginning of this chapter that male and female participants are not balanced in numbers; still, it is interesting to notice that, compared to females, the two male participants showed peculiar attitudes towards dialect, as well as a higher competence.

In fact, while the two male participants self-graded their competence of Chietino respectively 4 and 5, six out of ten women evaluated their competence 1 or 2.

The participant who speaks dialect perfectly, stated that his level of Italian, on a scale from 1 to 5, is 3, since for his job (mason) it is not crucial as dialect is. If we look at the previous paragraph (§ 4.1.3., p. 47), we indirectly find data which add reliance to this participant's linguistic repertoire; it would be interesting to hold in consideration, for further research, that dialect acquisition is related to employment.

The other male participant, despite being more proficient in Italian (self-grade: 5), also states that dialect is extremely important for his job (nurse), in order to be able to communicate with his patients.

Regarding to participants' opinion about dialect, the latter says he likes it, but still prefers Italian, while the former made an apparently incoherent reflection, that we partially introduced at the beginning of the chapter: according to him, dialect is a "stupid thing", something which is not useful and is going to disappear, because is just a local language. He prefers dialect though, because Italian is not "natural" to him, he is not comfortable with it.

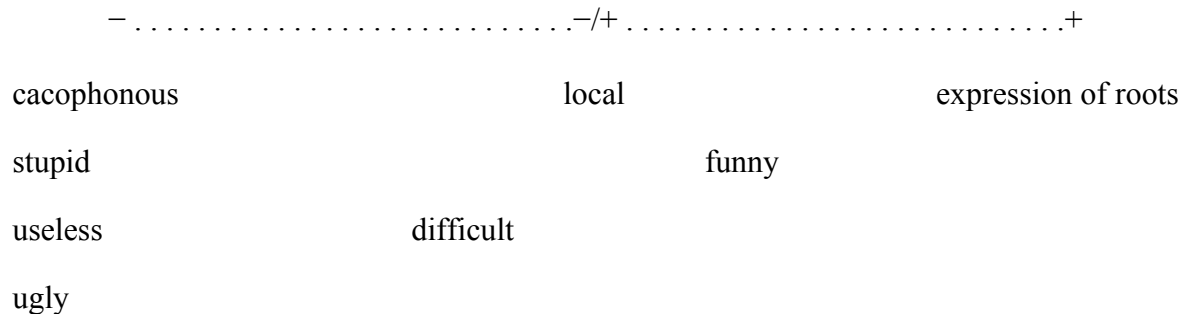
Regarding to female participants, they all said to prefer Italian, and two of them added that they do not like Chietino.

Moreover, dialect is perceived as confusing, since it is highly mixed with Italian, so “you do not know if you are speaking dialect or Italian”; dialect interferes, according to participants, with acquisition of the “correct” Italian.

What from the interviews emerged is that, despite male a female’s opinions are similar, their approach to Chietino is different: women refuse to learn dialect - caregivers, who live with old people, explicitly ask their employers to speak only Italian to them - and try to control their acquisition of the language, while men are aware of a difference between “correct Italian” and Chietino, but still, they learn what seems them more useful for daily conversation with the local community.

4.1.5. Pictures of dialect

Ultimately, we schematized descriptions of Chietino, given by participants during the interviews, on a scale of values going from a negative [-] to a positive [+] label. [-/+] represents a ‘neutral’ judgement.



4.2. Quantitative analysis

Results scored in session 3 of the interview, namely the ‘split auxiliary selection task’, will be here overviewed and compared to results of the control group. In order to ease the eventual comparison with the previous survey (§ 2.2.4.), we will present results in percentages, even though the exiguous number of participants has, like we said before, no statistical reliance.

In this task, participants had three possible answers to the question ‘Can you hear this [word/ expression/ sentence/ dialogue] from a person in Chieti?’ (see ch. 3, § 3.2.3.), namely ‘yes’, ‘plausible’, ‘no’. In the google form, responses have been reported on a scale from 1 to 5, so, conventionally, 1 equals ‘no’, 3 equals ‘plausible’, 5 equals ‘yes’.

4.2.1. Results for distractor stimuli

Overall, results of *distractors* differ in homogeneity from results of the *split auxiliary selection* stimuli.

Ideally, distractors should be easily recognized by all participants, so no answer should differ from ‘yes’. Although, there were different outcomes for some stimuli. Among the 13 distractors, control group responses split for three stimuli:

- stimulus 34 *Oh lo zzi!*, with one ‘no’, three ‘plausible’ and three ‘yes’ - in fact, some participants stated this is not a Chietino expression, even though it is Abruzzese;
- stimulus 36 *Ma che si scémə?!*, one ‘plausible’ and five ‘yes’; the participant who answered ‘plausible’, though, was just uncertain about the structure of the sentence, which was too Italianized to him, since ‘che’ (It.) substituted ‘ca’ (Ch.);
- stimulus 39 *Turdacò!*, which seems to be a neologism or, considered the responses, a word from youth language: indeed, younger participants answered either ‘yes’ (1) either ‘plausible’ (2), while the three oldest participants answered ‘no’.

Romanian participants, on the other hand, answered different from ‘yes’ to seven distractors; while five of them are not in relation with answers given by the Italian participants, two of them are consistent with control group ‘split’ responses to the stimuli 34 and 39. Indeed, stimuli 32 *Bbongiòrnə, gna šti?* (one ‘plausible’), 35 *Chi ssi dèttə?* (one ‘no’), 38 *Ndundì!*

(two ‘no’) and 44 *Bardàsca* (two ‘no’) should be just a lack of knowledge of few participants; whereas, two participants answered ‘no’ and one ‘plausible’ to stimulus 40 *Chi ši ‘ccisē!*, which is in fact an idiomatic expression but, still, it does not have a transparent meaning. Thus, participants may have heard of it, but do not remember the expression since it is not meaningful to them; indeed, also participants who answered ‘yes’ have occasionally asked for the meaning.

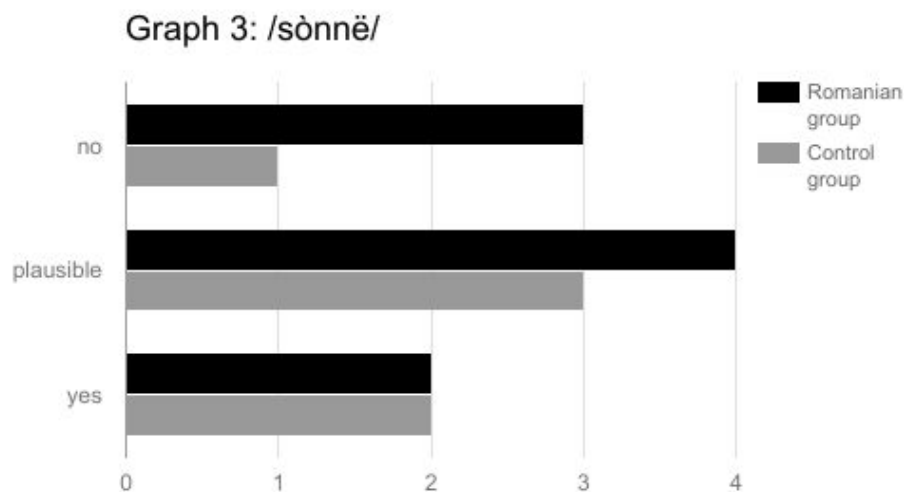
Regarding to stimuli 34 and 39, the former was answered just two times ‘no’, and then always ‘yes’, so it seems negatively related to results of the control group: this could be due to the fact that Romanian participants, hearing the sentence in Chieti, do not feel it as a loan expression from another Abruzzese variety. The latter stimulus, contrariwise, is related to the answers given by the older Italian participants, since Romanians answered nine times ‘no’ and one time ‘plausible’.

4.2.2. Results for ‘split auxiliary selection’ stimuli

Regarding to the stimuli with split auxiliary selection occurrence, there are some of which results are related between Romanian group and control group. We will list them here below (to notice, answers to stimuli 53, 56, 58 and 59 are reported for nine Romanian participants, since one did not answer):

- 45 /sò/, reported ‘yes’ from the 90% of the Romanian group, 100% of the control group;
- 47 /ò/, 60% ‘no’ and 20% ‘plausible’ according to Romanian participants, 83,3% ‘no’ to Italians;
- 48 /si/, answered ‘yes’ by 90% of Romanians and 83,3% of the control group;
- 51 /à/, which was the only stimulus for which the answer was ‘yes’ in 100% of cases, for both groups;
- 53 /avémə/, which was answered either ‘yes’ either ‘plausible’ by both groups, even though Romanians chose ‘plausible’ more times (44,4%) compared to Italians (16,7%);
- 56 /avétə/, answered ‘yes’ by 88,9% of Romanians and 83,3% of the control group;

- 58 /sònnə/, for this stimulus results report ‘split’ answers, but in a matter which quite relates the Romanian group to the control group (see chart 3 below), although Romanians’ ‘no’ responses have a higher occurrence;
- 59 /ànnə/, which was answered ‘yes’ by 77,8% of Romanians and 100% of Italians, but still the remaining Romanian participants answered ‘plausible’.



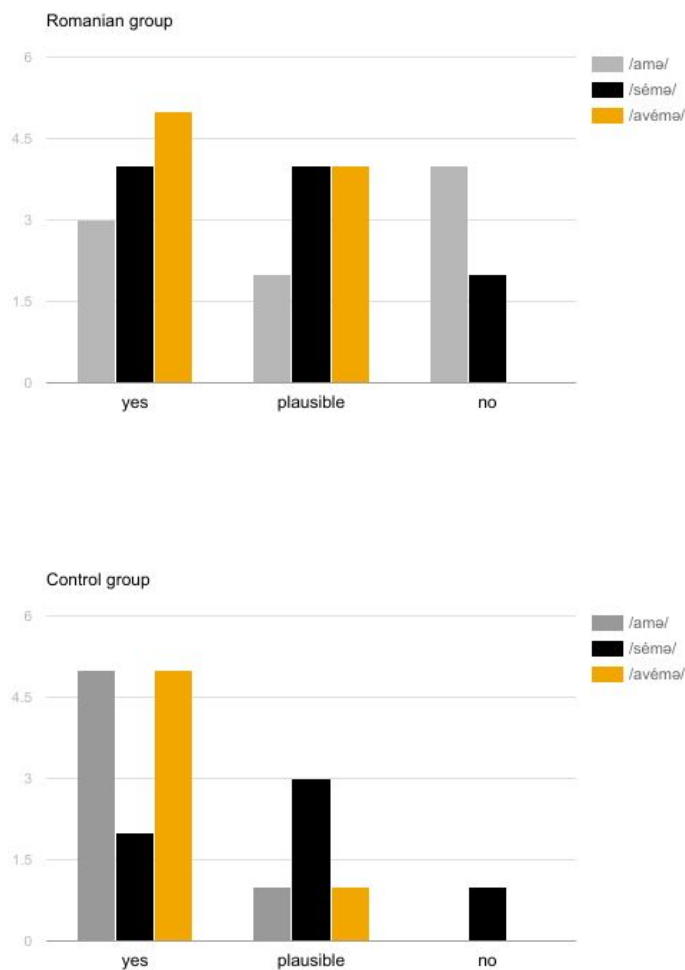
Outcomes registered for stimuli 50 /jè/ and 60 /sò/ are almost opposite for Romanians - which answered ‘yes’ or ‘plausible’ 70% of cases to 50, and ‘yes’ in 77,8% of cases to 60 -, in comparison with the control group, which answered ‘no’ 83,3% of times to 50 and plausible in 66,7% of cases to 60. Responses to these two stimuli are likely to be linked, since both of them are Italian forms said with dialect intonation¹¹: as a consequence, Italians refuse them as ‘real’ Chietino, while in contrast Romanians rely on them, since they recall Italian.

One of the forms of the HAVE 1st-pl, namely /àmə/ (s. 54), was recognized as a contracted form (see ch. 3 § 3.2.2.) by Italians - 83,3% ‘yes’ and 16,7% ‘plausible’ -, while Romanians did not recognize in 44,4% of cases and one participant did not even answer, while ‘yes’ was chosen in 33,3% of cases.

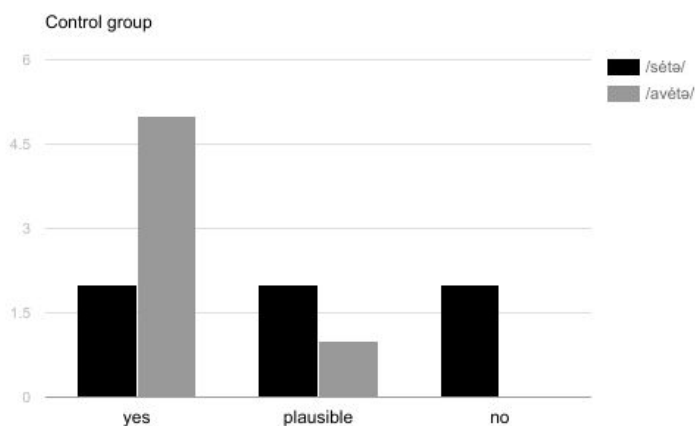
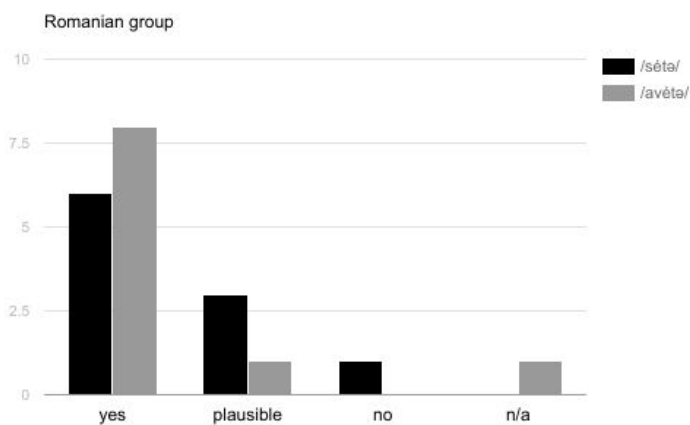
¹¹ In particular, /jè/ is a palatalized pronunciation of /è/, while /sò/ truncated the Italian BE 3rd-sg /sóno/, and consequently opened the vowel (/o/ > /ɔ/).

To end this overall analysis (see Appendix for the complete list of results), we will put in comparison results for BE and HAVE 1st-pl 52 /sémə/, 53 /avémə/ and 54 /amə/, and, afterwards, 2nd-pl 55 /sétə/ and 56 /avétə/.

In both groups, HAVE is the preferred form for the 1st-pl, as is shown in the graphs below. To notice, the Italian translation of the sentences would have required, in the first two cases, the opposite auxiliary, namely HAVE *abbiamo* for stimulus 52 and BE *siamo* for stimulus 53.



As well, materials used for the 2nd-pl would have required the opposite choice of auxiliary, namely HAVE *avete* for stimulus 55 and BE *siete* for stimulus 56. Results are shown in the graphs. Compared to 1st-pl, the Romanian group and the control group gave a more similar pattern, but HAVE is still preferred:



4.3. Discussion

In summary, Romanian participants do not seem to be competent enough to answer about the selection of the auxiliary; except for some isolated cases, they were always able to translate the stimuli - which was not required from the task, but they did spontaneously whenever they were in trouble with the choice of the answer - but it was not natural to them to feel the difference between the choice of HAVE and BE. Consequently, answers were given on the base of what ‘sounds better’: even the participant proficient in dialect did not show to have a ‘grammatical representation’ of dialect. He was really sensitive to microvariation of dialect

varieties, as well as to variations of the auxiliary in the stimuli; when judging the sentence, though, he could not guess the grammatical and logical analysis¹².

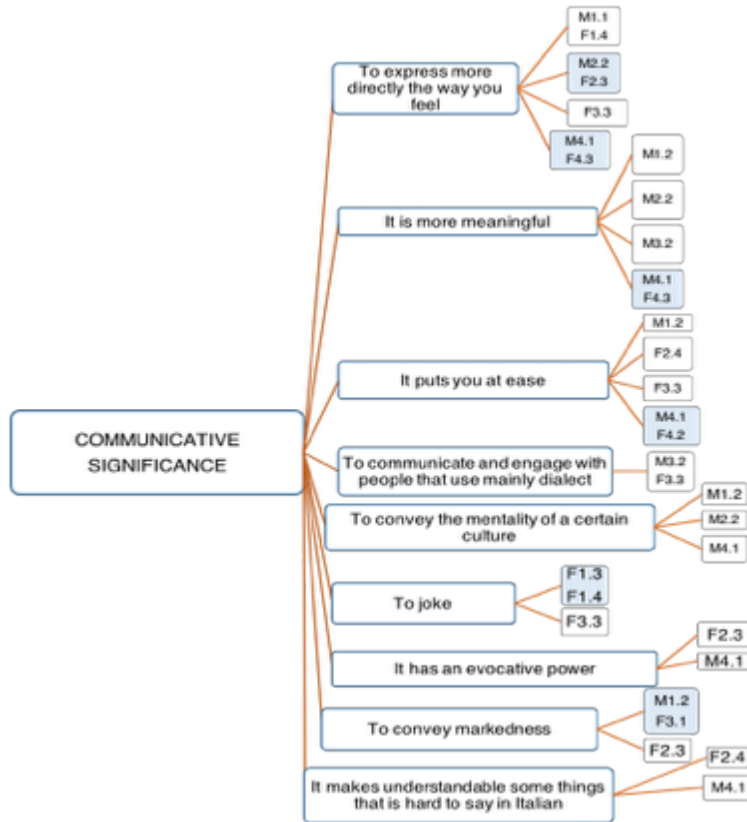
Chietino is not a written language for participants and, moreover, participants do not feel comfortable when asked to judge about a language that they do not want to learn. Nevertheless, they showed a good passive competence, even those who, in the questionnaire, stated to be completely unaware of dialect knowledge: this passive competence is consistent with answers to Questions 16 and 17 (see § 4.1.1.).

Participants, as a foreign linguistic community (Consani et al. (ed.) 2009: 288-91), aim at linguistic integration. From this perspective, Chietino is useful in daily contact with the local community, while is misleading if a foreigner addresses the whole Italian society. Chietino does not match the instrumental and integrative motivations (Gardner & Lambert 1972) which push speakers to language learning. The social stigma that dialect carries seems to have an important role, currently increasing for foreigners; contrariwise, autochthonous have started considering dialect as a part of tradition to save (De Mauro 1994; Grassi et al. 2003; Iannaccaro & Matera 2009).

The mental representation of dialect that Romanian participants have, comes to surface also by means of their reflections about the factors that influence code-switching occurrence (§ 4.1.1.); if we compare them to previous research (Domenicucci 2016)¹³, we see how Chietini mention really different things, when asked about the communicative significance of dialect - which is strongly related to the reasons of switching from Italian to Chietino. If Romanians see dialect use from an ‘external’ point of view, autochthonous show a sort of ‘internal’ perspective. In the further page, the “Illustration of the category Communicative Significance” is reported.

¹² To notice, this participant has a high school diploma and studied foreign languages at school.

¹³ What we mention here, is a MA dissertation named *Social Significance and Social Representation of Abruzzese: Language Attitudes in Chieti*, recently submitted by Elena Domenicucci. I thank Elena for providing me the research outcomes, and for always being supportive.



Unfortunately, our questionnaire did not focus on participants' use of Romanian and Italian, and when code-switching occurs. Although, when asked to talk about their link to Romania (Question 9) or languages spoken with their families (second section, § 4.1.3.), they provided some information about contexts of switch to Romanian, which were really similar to categories of communicative significance listed in the figure above. Thus, we could say that what dialect is to Italians, is what Romanian is to Romanians introduced in the Italian linguistic context. More comparisons should be introduced, by means of further research.

Chapter 5

5. Conclusions and suggestions for further research

So far, this research has been a first attempt to study contact between an ‘immigrant language’ and a local dialect in the region. Although many studies have focused on the acquisition of Regional features of the dominant language by immigrants (see Lee 2001; Östman & Ekberg 2016; Røyneland & Jensen 2016; Berthele 2016; Cutler 2016, etc.), this one approached language acquisition by immigrants, but from a different perspective: we tried to test what is *unconsciously* learned by Romanians who *consciously* want to acquire Italian. The linguistic repertoire in Italy is in constant alternation with a second language, namely dialect. Thus, the unconscious acquisition does not only comprehend local features of the linguistic repertoire, but a completely different code.

Results do not show a clear pattern; still, we registered interesting findings that would be interesting to extend.

Overall, what should be avoided in further research is the focus on ‘split auxiliary selection’: compared to the control group (§ 4.2.2.) and the previous survey results (§ 2.2.4.), many responses given by Romanian participants meet our results expectations, but they also appear conditioned by their ‘immigrant status’. We should start from the acknowledgements about passive competence of dialect, as well as attitudes towards Chietino, in order to structure a new task and change the stimuli used to get data. Active competence of dialect, which failed to be registered with the pilot study (§ 3.1.), could be tested by using different methodologies - e.g. the discourse completion task (DCT) (cf., e.g., Blum-Kulka et al. 1989), although problems would occur since dialect is not considered a written language; consequently, the task should be performed orally.

On the other hand, gender oriented research may be conducted, focusing on dialect acquisition by masons: they seem to learn dialect proficiently (§ 4.1.4.) and, moreover, to acquire the accent as dialect native speakers, even though they have a foreign accent when speaking Italian.

Further research may focus, furthermore, on dialect acquisition by heritage speakers of the immigrant community: this may add new findings to studies stating that people with a foreign background do not use dialect (cf., e.g., Auer 2016).

By means of the interview recordings, a considerable data store is now available to start an analysis of spontaneous speech of Romanians speaking Italian: further research should take this into account.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, it would be interesting to deepen the immigrants' integration process (cf. Rizzo 2015), starting from the results registered for the 'sociolinguistic part' of the interview.

Finally, further studies will involve more participants, since, as we remarked already, the exiguous number of participants has substantially reduced the reliability of this research.

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Appendices

Appendix I

‘Split auxiliary selection in Chietino: first survey’ Results

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Jè (me) sò magnatè li maccarunè	80,56% 29	8,33% 3	11,11% 4	0,00% 0	36	1,31
Jè (m') aji magnatè li maccarunè	16,22% 6	48,65% 18	32,43% 12	2,70% 1	37	2,17
Jè (m') ho magnatè li maccarunè	2,78% 1	5,56% 2	88,89% 32	2,78% 1	36	2,89

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Tu (ti) si magnatè li maccarunè	75,00% 27	16,67% 6	8,33% 3	0,00% 0	36	1,33
Tu (t') i magnatè li maccarunè	24,32% 9	45,95% 17	27,03% 10	2,70% 1	37	2,03
Tu (t') ai magnatè li maccarunè	5,56% 2	19,44% 7	72,22% 26	2,78% 1	36	2,69

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Essè si jè magnatè li maccarunè	8,33% 3	16,67% 6	72,22% 26	2,78% 1	36	2,66
Essè s'a magnatè li maccarunè	83,78% 31	2,70% 1	13,51% 5	0,00% 0	37	1,30

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Nu (ce) semè magnatè li maccarunè	63,89% 23	19,44% 7	16,67% 6	0,00% 0	36	1,53
Nu (c') avemè magnatè li maccarunè	50,00% 18	30,56% 11	19,44% 7	0,00% 0	36	1,69
Nu (c') amè magnatè li maccarunè	22,22% 8	27,78% 10	44,44% 16	5,56% 2	36	2,24

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Vu (ve) setè magnatè li maccarunè	52,78% 19	27,78% 10	16,67% 6	2,78% 1	36	1,63
Vu (v') avetè magnatè li maccarunè	40,00% 14	40,00% 14	20,00% 7	0,00% 0	35	1,80

	RIGHT	PLAUSIBLE	WRONG	N/A	Totale	Media ponderata
Issè sè jè magnatè li maccarunè	8,57% 3	11,43% 4	71,43% 25	8,57% 3	35	2,69
	47,22%	30,56%	22,22%	0,00%	36	1,75

Issè (s') a magnatè li maccarunè	17	11	8	0		
– Issè (s') hannè magnatè li maccarunè	55,88% 19	17,65% 6	26,47% 9	0,00% 0	34	1,71
– Issè sè sò magnatè li maccarunè	21,21% 7	48,48% 16	30,30% 10	0,00% 0	33	2,09
– Issè sè sònnè magnatè li maccarunè	11,43% 4	34,29% 12	51,43% 18	2,86% 1	35	2,41

Appendix II

Copy of the Google Form Module of the interview to Romanian participants

Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

Use of Dialect/Italian and language attitudes by Romanians resident in Chieti (Abruzzo, Italy)

1. **Name**

.....

2. **Age**

.....

3. **Can you tell something about how you grew up?**

Where? With whom? Origins of parents?

.....

.....

.....

.....

4. **Can you tell something about your moving to Italy?**

When? How old? Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. **Before living in Chieti, did you live in other places in Italy?**

Where? For how long?

.....

6. Can you tell something about your education and job(s)?

Education level / Previous jobs / Current job

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

7. Are you married or do you cohabit with a partner?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Yes
 No

8. Do you have children?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Yes
 No

9. Can you tell me something about your link with Romania?

How often do you visit it? How often do you talk to friends/family? Do you use Romanian media?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

10. Which languages do you speak and how well?

Languages? Level? L1/L2?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

11. Which was your level of Italian before moving to Italy?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

	1	2	3	4	5
Italian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. Have you ever attended an Italian course?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

Yes
 No

13. Which level of Italian do you have now, according to you?

Writing, Reading, Speaking, Comprehension

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

	1	2	3	4	5
Italian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Do you spend time with Italians here in Chieti?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

Yes
 No
 Altro:

15. If you lived/have been in other places in Italy, did you notice a difference between Italian accents and/or dialects?

To what extent? Can you describe differences?

.....

16. How often do you think people speak dialect in Chieti?

Contexts and kind of people

.....

17. Do you think that is important, if you live in Italy, to have some competence of dialect?

.....

18. Do you understand dialect? To what extent?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

	1	2	3	4	5
Comprehension	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Do you use dialect?

Examples

.....

20. Which interlocutors do you speak dialect with?

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- Employers
- Friends
- Shop sellers
- Barmen
- Markets sellers
- Altro:

21. Do you like dialect? Do you prefer Italian or Dialect?

Why, what is better/worse

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Passa alla domanda 22.

Questions about languages used with family/children.

If they answer "YES" to questions 6 and/or 7

22. What nationality is your partner?

.....

23. Which language(s) do you speak with your partner?

.....

24. If not Italian, when did your partner move to Italy?

.....

25. Does (s)he have the same competence of Italian as you do?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Yes
- No, less
- No, more
- Altro:

26. Which is her/his employment?

.....

27. Which language(s) do you speak to your children?

.....

28. Do you think it is important to teach them Romanian?

Why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

29. Which language do your children prefer to speak?

.....

30. Do your children also use or understand dialect?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Yes
- No

31. Where did they learn dialect?

Contexts, which kind of people

.....

Appendix III

‘Split auxiliary selection task’, performed by Romanian group and Control group: stimuli in dialect, English translation of the stimuli. The transcription of Chietino is not in IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet), but we used diacritics for peculiar sounds, which are listed below:

- - ë = [ə]
- - è = [ɛ]
- - é = [e]
- - ò = [ɔ]
- - ó = [o]
- - š = [ʃ]

Stimulus 32

Ch. *Bbongiòrnë, gna štì?*

En. Good morning, how are you?

Stimulus 33

Ch. *Compà!*

En. Hey mate!

Stimulus 34

Ch. *Oh lo zzi!*

En. Oh uncle! (lit.)

This expression is not necessarily used with the speaker’s uncle, it is a generic affective addressing, which expresses intimacy and sympathy.

Stimulus 35

Ch. *Chi ssi dèttë?!*

En. What did you say?!

Stimulus 36

Ch. *Ma che si scemë?*

En. Are you stupid?

Stimulus 37

Ch. *Ma si ppàzzë?*

En. Are you crazy?

Stimulus 38

Ch. *Ndundì!*

En. Hey booby!

Stimulus 39

Ch. *Turdacò!*

En. Hey booby!

Stimulus 40

Ch. *Chi ši 'ccisë!*

En. I hope you'll get killed!

Stimulus 41

Ch. *Ma vattë a ddurmì!*

En. Go to sleep! (lit.)

Impolite expression used, more or less, like 'fuck off!'/ 'piss off!'.

Stimulus 42

Ch. *Frèchete!*

En. Oh fuck!/Oh my god!

Stimulus 43

Ch. *'Ngulo!*

En. Oh fuck!/Oh my god!

Stimulus 44

Ch. *Bbardàšë*

En. Child

Stimulus 45

Ch. *Uè Nicò! So vištë a mmàmmëtë oggi*

En. Hey Nick! I saw your mother earlier today

Stimulus 46

Ch. - *Stai male Ggiuvà?*

- *No no, aij magnatë tròppë*

En. - Do you feel bad, John?

- No no, I just ate too much

Stimulus 47

Ch. *A ppranzë m' ho cottë ddu savëciccë*

En. I cooked (for myself) two sausages for lunch

Stimulus 48

Ch. - *Oh Lucìa, nin si fatijatë oggë?*

- *No, dumanë!*

En. - Hey Luke, didn't you go to work today?

- No, tomorrow (I will go)!

Stimulus 49

Ch. - *Albè, tu t' ì magnatë li maccarunë?*

- *Sci a pà!*

En. - Did you eat the pasta, Albert?

- Yes, father

Stimulus 50

Ch. *Maria jè cascatë pe le scalë!*

En. Maria fell down from the stairs!

Stimulus 51

Ch. *S'a fattë nottë presto oggi.*

En. Night fell early, today.

Stimulus 52

Ch. *Ieri io e Andonio semë vištë l'amico tuo.*

En. Yesterday, me and Tony saw your friend.

Stimulus 53

Ch. *Io e papà c'avemë magnatë la pizzettë.*

En. Me and dad ate the pizza.

Stimulus 54

Ch. *Ij e fratëmë amë liticàtë.*

En. Me and my brother had a fight.

Stimulus 55

Ch. *Voi ddue setë rottë li cujun!*

En. You two broke my balls! (lit.)

Expression used, impolitely, to say 'I'm sick of you!'

Stimulus 56

Ch. *Tu e Giuvannë v'avetë bbevutë tuttë lu vinë.*

En. You and John drank all the wine.

Stimulus 57

Ch. *Maria e Michele s'a spusatë domenica scòrsë.*

En. Mary and Michael got married, last Sunday.

Stimulus 58

Ch. - *Signò, che ti štrilli?!*

- *Ssi ddu scemi sonnè lasciatè nu šchifè in cucina!*

En. - Why are you shouting, Madame?

- That two stupid guys left the kitchen so messy!

Stimulus 59

Ch. *Mammètè e patrètè s'hannè pijatè la macchina.*

En. Your mother and your father took the car.

Stimulus 60

Ch. - *Oh Simò, si parlate co' quelli?*

- *Nonè, si sò persè lu cellulare!*

En. - Hey Simon, did you talk to them?

- Nope, they've lost their phone!

Appendix IV

Results for the ‘split auxiliary selection task’.

Romanian group

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qywdj-qVcNcD40RLY4cN6ZNt-vKhLD_BrvW0xWE6VI8/viewanalytics

Control group

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1LsuHmeU38gLjfaxdRshjDU7A3SD9DGri5PaVJBZaWkU/viewanalytics>