

**LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE/SHIFT
OF A THREE-GENERATION ITALIAN FAMILY
IN THREE MIGRATION COUNTRIES:
AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract

This thesis is a comparative investigation into the use of Italian of an extended Italian family in language contact situation in three countries: the United States, Australia and France. This study is undertaken and described in the context of the different policies on migrant integration and minority languages in the three migration countries.

The investigation uses the 'Case Study' methodology in the format of an *embedded multiple case-study project*.

The third generation was made the focus of the study to investigate Fishman's "intergroup social dependency" theory. According to this theory, when the immigrant experience is viewed from a perspective of *three* or more generation time depth, the immigrant group generally loses its language due to its dependency on the host society for its survival. Fishman contends that only an effective and strict '*compartmentalisation of language functions*' between the minority language and the host language can help the minority group maintain its language.

The findings indicate that for people of Italian background living as a minority group in language contact situation compartmentalisation is not a viable alternative. Nor do they consider the 'maintenance' of their community language important. When in the migration country bilingualism is valued, it is the standard variety of the heritage language that is chosen for maintenance and further learning.

The study presents recommendations towards the achievability of bilingualism beyond the limitations of compartmentalisation.

This is to certify that

- i. the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD;*
- ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used; and*
- iii. the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length , exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.*

Signed

Carla Finocchiaro

March, 2004

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter the rationale behind the study is explained and the circumstances that made this international study possible are described. There follow the explanation of the study's aims and the formulation of the research questions the investigation endeavours to answer. An overview of the content of the remaining chapters is given.

1.1 Rationale

The study of Language Maintenance (LM) and Language Shift (LS) became an independent field of investigation in the early 1960s and its beginnings are closely associated with Joshua A. Fishman. Fishman described the study of LM/LS as a field which draws its data from the situation that eventuates when two linguistically different populations come in contact.

When two linguistically different populations come in contact and the interaction is viewed from a perspective of three or more generations of time depth, Fishman (1989) predicts that the immigrant group will lose its language due to intergroup social dependency. According to this theory, the dynamics of intergroup relationships between the two linguistically different groups work in such a way that the incoming group will soon be dependent on the use of the language of the host society even if the country does not have specific laws that

forbid the use of the immigrants' languages. *The intergroup social dependency* theory is explained by Fishman as follows:

In a language contact situation, the speakers of the minority language (B) can reap the rewards, be they material, professional, governmental or educational, of their relationships with the host community only if they communicate in the majority language (A). Thus, intergroup social dependency and relationships conducted in language A will also, in time, impact on intragroup relationships. People in the community B, who are speakers of A, are given status because they speak A. Mastery of this language in the community B becomes a desideratum and, finally, a hallmark of leadership status within the community B itself (Fishman, 1989: 206). At this point the spread of language A is accompanied by language shift from language B. In the last phase of the shift, the majority language reaches the family unit *per se*. A is learned in the home itself. Bs learn A as a mother tongue from their parents who have become A speakers. *Within three generations* the majority language will become the language of the crib for the speakers of the minority language. Fishman says that this will happen even if the nation has a democratic context and a pluralism-permitting policy.

Fishman advises that there is one way of avoiding LS, and that is through the implementation of compartmentalization of language functions between the minority and the host language. Fishman's concept of compartmentalisation, fully reviewed in Chapter Three, is a revised version of *diglossia* (Ferguson, 1959). Contrary to the classic concept of *diglossia* enunciated by Ferguson, Fishman's diglossia allows several unrelated codes in a given society.

According to Fishman, diglossia is possible also in societies which employ separate dialects, registers, or "*functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind* (Fishman, 1972: 72; italics in the original)". The theory of compartmentalization of language functions between the minority and the majority language is one way of applying the diglossia concept as viewed by Fishman. Where LS has already eventuated, Fishman (1991) suggests that Reversal of Language Shift (RLS) can be achieved if the minority group is willing to undertake an assessment of its own minority language situation and implement steps (steps carefully outlined by Fishman in a Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale [GIDS]) towards its reversal. The GIDS, featuring eight *stages*, substantially relies on the compartmentalisation/diglossia concept as the main strategic remedy to reverse language shift.

Both of Fishman's theories have encountered differences of opinions. Firstly, according to other prominent scholars (i.e. Clyne, 1982 & 1991; Giles *at al*, 1977; Haugen, 1980; Kloss, 1966; Smolicz, 1979) even when in "intergroup social dependency" situations, not all minority groups react similarly to the overt or covert pressures to change imposed on them by the host society. They argue that LS is not a foregone certainty for all immigrant groups who reach the in-host-country-third-generation. The outcome of the relationships between minority groups/ mainstream society is based on the interplay of structural, social and psychological factors. LS is one of the *probable* outcomes for some of them. Secondly, and Fishman himself readily acknowledges it, linguistic compartmentalization is not accepted as a realistic option towards LM by most of the minority groups living in multilingual settings.

In the 1990s (1996/1997 were the years of data collection for this study) most of the ethnic groups who left Europe during the big migration wave of the 1950s

reached the third-in-host-country-generation. Sociolinguistic researchers of the 1990s and beyond can now draw from a wide range of data which can help in the investigation of Fishman's theory and its possible alternatives.

Hence this study: the participants in this study are migrants who left Italy in the 1950s and who presently live with their extended families in three different countries: the United States, Australia and France. These participants not only belong to the same ethnic group, they are also members of the same family. The following section explains how my relationship with the participants played a central role in the realisation of this project.

1.2 Background to the study

The seminal events for the realisation of this study originated in a small *paese* (town) in Sicily, where a large family, henceforth referred to by the fictitious name of "Satra", lived led by an authoritarian father. The mother had died soon after the war. Having given birth to 21 children (including several sets of twins), had developed a heart condition and died in her early forties. Only seven children reached adulthood: four brothers and three sisters. Of the four brothers one was killed in action during the war. The oldest of the sisters was married and lived not far from the family home. The remaining brothers and sisters were living at home with their father. When the brothers married they brought their brides to live in their father's home. However, the father always remained the uncontested head of the household as well as the boss of his small clay-brick factory in which his sons worked. The daughters and the daughters-in-law all shared in the household duties. Besides home duties, the main occupation of the two unmarried sisters was sewing and embroidering for their

own dowries in readiness for marriage. They were never allowed out on their own, sisters and sisters-in-law acting as chaperones for each other.

In the way he judged best, the father took care of everyone's well-being. The house was big enough to allow the married couples some privacy and there was no lack of food. However, times were hard. As the rest of Italy, the town was trying to recover from the destruction left behind by the Second World War. The work in the family factory was not plentiful. The money earned through the factory was carefully monitored by the father. The strings to his purse were very tight and, although full-time workers in the factory, his sons did not have much money they could call their own and use as they pleased.

At the time, there was excitement in the small town. Many young people were leaving, migrating to far-off lands - described as the lands of plenty - sure to find/make their fortune in no time at all. These young people would tell anyone who wanted to hear that, in due time, they would come back and show everyone left behind how rich they had become.

The migration fever began to have an effect on the Satra brothers and sisters who were becoming increasingly restless and resentful of their father's total control over their lives. Against their father's wishes, the brothers began to talk about migrating to other countries; the sisters knew that only through marriage would they find a way of leaving their house and possibly their town.

Between the years of 1950 and 1956, the three Satra brothers emigrated to different parts of the world. One went to the United States, one to Australia, one to France. All three were married and two of them had young children. Their families joined them in their new land after a couple of years. Of the two sisters

at home, one married an army man and moved to the North of Italy. The remaining unmarried sister was involved in a relationship which she was sure would not have met with her father's approval. The couple envisaged a way of leaving town separately. The man emigrated to Australia. The Satra sister (Mariella) had been sought in marriage by a distant relative living in the USA. She refused to marry by proxy, which was the usual procedure at the time. She insisted that she wanted to meet her 'promised' man before getting married and that she could do so by going to the USA and staying with her brother's family. In due course, after making clear that she had no intention of marrying the distant relative, she went to visit her "Australian" brother. Here she met again with the man she loved and shortly afterwards they were married. However, when pregnant with her first child and close to the time of delivery, Mariella insisted on returning to the US, since she wanted her baby to be born on American soil. About a year later her husband also left Australia to be reunited with his wife in Philadelphia, where they have lived ever since. By the late 1950s, the only one of the Satra siblings remaining in the small Sicilian town close to her father's home was the oldest sister, who, by that time, had a big family of her own: four sons and four daughters.

About twenty years later, one of the daughters of the eldest Satra, myself, the author of this study, married with two children, was affected by the same restlessness displayed earlier by the Uncles and Aunts. The desire on the part of my husband and me to leave our home could be described more as a search for adventure, a wish to change our lifestyle rather than an actual necessity due to hard times and lack of work. We could be described as a different breed of migrants. While, as illustrated by the literature on the topic (see for example Lopreato, 1967; Loh, 1980; Foster, 1984) most of the Southern European migrants of the 1950s, including the Satra brothers and sisters, had a rather

basic education, my husband and I were professionals. My husband had a good position in an engineering firm and he was well on the way to establishing his own independent firm. I, a teacher, stayed at home to take care of our two children aged three and one year, helped by a maid who came in six days a week. We had a good home, a comfortable middle class existence, a supportive network made up of our extended family. Nevertheless, we, I in my early twenties, my husband close to thirty, headed towards the unknown, without a thought of what we were leaving behind. We certainly did not understand or take heed of the advice given by friends and relatives of what it would mean to be in a country where most of what we had (including the power of communication) would be unattainable or rendered useless, at least for some time. For better or for worse, we decided we wanted to go and go together. The country of our destination: Australia.

The next twenty years saw us go through many adjustments and respond to many challenges. The supreme one was to overcome the communication barrier and become fluent in the language spoken by the host society: English. Overcome that barrier we did. Actually I took my interest in language further than just using it as mere means of communication. After taking residence in Melbourne in the middle 1970s, near one of my Satra uncles and his family, I became fascinated by the ways in which my Italo-Australian relatives, as well as my own family and other acquaintances of Italian background (not necessarily from the same geographical region), dealt with the use of the three languages present in our environment: Italian, a dialect of Italian, and English. Each generation, the original migrants, their children and, later in time, their grandchildren had its own idiosyncrasies in the use and alternation/ mixing of the three languages/varieties. Also, the level of proficiency displayed by the speakers of different generations in each of the languages with which they were

in contact differed greatly. In addition, a further most interesting variety was developing from the contact of the languages known to the speakers. This variety (discussed in Chapter Three section 3.2.3) has been termed as 'Italo-Australian', 'Austro-Italiano' or 'Australitaliano' by researchers interested in this linguistic phenomenon (Andreoni, 1967 and 1978; Leoni, 1981; Bettoni, 1985a, 1987, Finocchiaro, 1995a). Helped by the path my career had taken (I had become a lecturer in second language teacher education), I made language and languages my research interest. My research reading explained that the phenomenon I was witnessing was the process of language contact as experienced in everyday life by ethnic groups in multilingual situations.

The idea of exploring in a systematic manner our use of language/s became very appealing to me. At first, I considered only my relatives living in Australia as informants for a case study. Then, the thought occurred to me that I was in a position to be able to conduct a multinational case study of LM/LS, if my other relatives, who lived in similar language contact in other parts of the world, were willing to participate to my study.

Whilst I had been living in Italy, I had lost all contact with my mother's siblings. When in Australia, through my "Australian" uncle I started hearing news about his other siblings spread around the world. Following all the necessary ethical procedures stated by the regulations for conducting research with humans, I contacted my relatives and explained my plans. All of them demonstrated joy in renewing their relationship with me, great interest in the study and eagerness to be a part of it. At this point the project began to take shape and its distinctiveness began to emerge. Undoubtedly, each research project has something unique to contribute towards the successful exploration and acquisition of new insights into a given field. The uniqueness of this project lies

in the fact that the investigation is conducted within one family which has spread over three continents. In the chosen host country, each member of the family has built his/her own family which in the 1990s has reached the third generation. In each country of adoption, consciously or subconsciously, each new family has had to juggle communication in three languages: Italian, an Italian dialect (Sicilian) and the host country's national language. I set out to investigate the linguistic outcomes of their language contact situation, the factors which the informants felt influenced those outcomes and their comparability across the three countries in the light of Fishman's theory, outlined in section 1.1

1.3 This Study and its scope

This study is a comparative investigation into the use of Italian of an extended Italian family in language contact situation in three countries: the United States, Australia and France to ascertain their level of "language maintenance/language shift" (LM/LS).

It is almost four decades since the terms "language maintenance/language shift" have been firmly established in the literature of language contact. From that time (the 1960s) many scholars, have explored this field of study. The research produced through the past four decades investigates a vast range of minority groups living in language contact situations. There are numerous studies investigating the various degrees of acculturation of Italians abroad to their adopted society. They range from general histories of Italian immigration in a given country by authors such as Bosi (1980), Cresciani (1985), Cecilia (1987), Pascoe (1987) to research conducted in specific fields such as linguistics and sociolinguistics (Bettoni, 1981, 1985b; Kinder, 1987; Gutt-Rutter 1992, Rubino

1987; Rubino & Bettoni, 1991) which includes investigations in the use, maintenance or shift of the Italian language or its dialects when used as minority language in a multilingual situation.

Both fields of study, linguistics and sociolinguistics, have generated a vast amount of research, with Bettoni leading the field in relation to the Italian group in Australia. However, the bulk of the research concentrates on the investigation of the use of the Italian language by the first and/or second generation. There are a few exceptions to this. In Australia, one is the study conducted by Cahill (1985) who assesses the Italian language proficiency of 100 third generation children of Italian background living in Melbourne. Filipi (1993) herself a second generation Italian speaker, analyses the bilingual proficiency (Italian/English) of her own third generation pre-school child. A third example is a sociolinguistic study conducted by Finocchiaro (1995b) who through a case study investigates the attitudes to and action taken by first and second generation families from Italian background towards maintenance of their mother tongue in Australia for their children. However, to my knowledge no comparable studies exist in Italian or any other language of a minority group in different countries, who has reached the third-in-country generation.

This is the scope of this study: to explore and compare across countries the use of the mother tongue of a minority group living in a language contact situation. As the informants are all part of the same extended family, a high level of comparability is guaranteed. To be able to assess Fishman's "social intergroup dependency", the model chosen as the framework for this study, it was necessary to ascertain *if, how, when, why* and *with whom* the third generation of the group used their grandparents' /parents' language: Italian. At this point it is necessary to qualify what it is meant in this thesis when referring to "Italian"

1.3.1 Terms referring to the Italian language

Italian, used as a broad term, is what the informants call the language of their ethnic background. It does not mean that they consider their “Italian” speech as the sole variety of Italian. On the contrary, they are aware of a range of varieties existing in the continuum of the Italian language, including the Dialect continuum. Most of them are also aware that due to the language contact situation in which they live, the variety of Italian used in their community has changed and developed into a particular type of variety of Italian, which, while it may serve their local network communicative needs perfectly, could not be entered in the continuum of the varieties of Standard Italian (discussions about the personal, social, cultural and linguistic factors which determine these changes are undertaken in the literature review chapters as well as the analysis chapters).

When discussing language use, in the course of the thesis, the context usually helps to distinguish to which variety of Italian the informants are referring. When reporting about the use of their heritage language, they distinguish between their Dialect (Sicilian) and Italian in broad terms. However, some of them do not have a clear vision of the influence that the mainstream language has had on their “Dialect” or “Italian”, so they do not have a term for it. Those among them who are aware of the linguistic changes usually have a rather negative attitude towards them, with negative terminology to match. When the informants want to refer to the national Italian language, they usually describe it with adjectives such as “proper” and “formal” Italian.

The nature of the thesis will also require me, the researcher, to refer often to the different varieties of Italian, therefore I have adopted the following terms:

- ◇ *Italian*: as a general broad term (multivariant).
- ◇ *Dialect*: the informants' regional variety (Sicilian).
- ◇ *Community Language (CL)*: the particular realisation of the range of Italian varieties used by the informants in their migration country.
- ◇ *Standard Italian*: the national Italian language (which includes standard regional varieties).

Having clarified how to refer to the language whose use is under investigation in this thesis, the research questions (section 1.4) were set to guide the data collection.

The investigation was multifaceted, taking into account many factors affecting mother tongue use when living in a language contact situation. To undertake this kind of broad investigation, several means of data collection had to be adopted. Case study methodology seemed the most appropriate means of undertaking field work as it encourages a multiplicity of approaches to data collection. As Yin (1994:79) states, a varied approach to the collection of information helps to deal with design problems such as "construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability". The case study approach, as applied to this project, is detailed in Chapter Five.

1.4 Research questions

The framework for this study is Fishman's theory of "intergroup social dependency" of minority groups towards the mainstream society. The theory is interpreted for this study through the following proposition: *By the time a minority group living in language contact situation has reached the third-in-host-*

country generation, its third generation members will have shifted from the use of their forebears' mother tongue to the predominant use of the majority society's language.

Exploration of this proposition required a thorough investigation of the third generation informants' use of Italian as well as insights into the factors which may have affected that use, guided by specific questions which translated Fishman's theory in working terms for this project. However before formulating the research questions, an explanation is needed in regard to the terminology used when referring to the informants.

1.4.1 Terminology referring to the participants

Four of the participants in this study in the second generation (two in the US – brother (10) and sister (9); two in France – brother (10) and sister (9)) were born in their parents' homeland.

Haugen (1953: 334) coins the terms *generation 1b* and *generation 1a* to distinguish between those migrated *before* and *after* their speech habits had become fixed. He sets the age boundary at about fourteen years of age. Other scholars, who adhere to the Critical Age Hypothesis (CAH), have set an age boundary earlier, around 10 -12 (Cook, 1991). Members of the *Generation 1a* are readily recognized by their pronunciation as non-native speakers of the target language, but *not* the members of the *Generation 1b*. Although children are thought to be better at acquiring a native like pronunciation than adults, the CAH could not be substantiated by research (Cook, *ibid*, Ellis 1994). The CAH was mostly based on the biological/neuro-physiological considerations but it is now recognized that many other factors influence second language acquisition including cognitive, personal and attitudinal ones (Littlewood, 1989, Ellis, *ibid*). Data

analysis of tests conducted by Stock (1979) on the speech of German immigrants in South Australia reports of a grey area between eight and twelve, where there is much variation between speakers. However, those who migrated after the age of twelve are invariably recognised as non native speakers of the target language (Clyne 2003:5). I accept this age, twelve, as the boundary between *generation 1b* and *generation 1a* and therefore define the informants in this study born in their parents' homeland as

The age at which my *generation 1b informants* arrived in the migration country should not have caused them any disadvantages and, by all accounts, it did not. Their speech is that of native-like mainstream individuals and they are integrated fully in the mainstream society. However, the attitudinal and personal factors may have influenced their proficiency in acquiring the mainstream language. For example, in the USA, the *generation 1b informants* do not consider themselves proficient users of English, whilst the *generation 1b* in France define themselves as highly proficient in French. The self-reports by these informants in later chapters will reveal that there are factors other than age which may have influenced their proficiency. Whatever the reasons, when I refer to them I cannot call them "second generation". However, they are indistinguishable from the other same generation informants born in the migration countries. Therefore, I shall refer to the *generation 1b* in this study, as well as the migration-country-born second generation as the "Parent generation". For the purpose of this thesis to maintain consistency with intergenerational references when reporting about the informants the terminology is the following:

- ◇ Grandparent Generation (GPG) for the First Generation.
- ◇ Parent Generation (PG) for the *Generation 1b* and Second Generation.

◇ Child Generation (CG) for the Third Generation

Having decided on all the terms of reference for the informants and their language in this thesis, I outline next the study's specific research questions:

1. Do the informants of the Child Generation (CG) use and/or comprehend any of the varieties of the Italian language used by their forebears?
2. If they use one or more varieties of Italian
 - ◇ *Where, with whom, when and why* are they most likely to use it/them?
 - ◇ *What* do they use?
 - ◇ *How* do they use it/them?
3. What are the attitudes of the CG informants towards their forebears' language and cultural heritage?
4. How do the outcomes of the findings related to the above questions vary between the three countries in which the investigation was conducted (United States, Australia and France)?

1.5 Overview of the remaining chapters of the thesis

The remaining chapters of the thesis are organised as follows: *Chapter Two* provides a description of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic background of the Italian migrants of the 1950s period in which the participants of this study migrated. *Chapter Three* reviews in depth the theoretical perspectives of LM/LS. *Chapter Four* outlines the sociocultural and sociolinguistic context of the study and assesses the language situation of the Italian group in each country. *Chapter Five* introduces the participants, outlines the research methodology used and discusses the criteria for the interpretation of the study's findings. *Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight* are dedicated to the informants of each country. These three chapters introduce each branch of the Satra family in their migration country, analyse the data, discuss findings and draw conclusions related to each group

of participants. *Chapter Nine* reviews the study and compares the findings of the thesis across the three countries. *Chapter Ten* interprets and discusses the findings, draws implications for LM/LS of minority groups in language contact situations and indicates directions for further research in the LM/LS field of study.

CHAPTER TWO

Italians migrants of the 1950s: their sociocultural and sociolinguistic background

2.0 Introduction

In the first part of this chapter the literature on the socio-cultural conditions which caused the European mass migration of the 1950s is reviewed.

In the second part the sociolinguistic background of the Italian emigrants is explored with particular emphasis on the period in which the informants grew up and received their education. Concluding this section is a brief literature review regarding the process of change which the language emigrants speak undergoes when it comes in contact with the language spoken in the country of settlement.

2.1 The sociocultural background: Italian migration

In the 1950s Italians were leaving their country in the thousands. To the ones remaining, the lands of destination of the adventurers seemed far away and mysterious. From these far-away-lands great stories of wealth and success would bounce back. The ones who had remained in the "*paese*" (village/small town) repeated them to each other with a mixture of wonder, jealousy and incredulity. More often than not many more people were spurred by the stories to follow the example of those who had left. However, to be able to emigrate, these people needed the support of those who were already in the host country. This process of emigration, which was subsequently defined as "chain-migration", worked as follows:

The established settler would write to his village or town telling his relative and friends about prospects in the new land. He would also sponsor an emigrant, giving him help with work and accommodation (Cigler, 1985:133).

Very early in their new adventure, the migrants would discover that the process of settlement in a new country was not an easy task. Cresciani (1985:96) reports:

The cultural shock of arriving in a country vastly different from theirs in climate, customs, religion, language and even food made lasting impact upon Italian migrants. Many were unable to adjust to the change and returned to Italy as soon as they could afford the sea or air fare.

Those who chose to remain in the country of migration had to overcome appalling experiences before they could begin a normal living pattern, but invariably, bar a few exceptions, the migrants would overcome their difficulties and succeed in building for themselves the "better future" for which they had left their country (Cresciani, 1985: 96 & 100)

Disregarding or simply unaware of the negative aspects of the migrant experience, Italians continued to leave their country challenging whatever odds may have come their way. However, the 1950s, the years which are impressed in my memory as the years in which everyone I knew seemed to leave, were not the beginning of Italian emigration *en masse*. The events of this period (1950s) were a reverberation of a phenomenon which had been bleeding Italy of its people since the 1860s. This emigration phenomenon was halted for a time between 1925 and 1945, during the Fascist regime. Mussolini, believed it to be

undignified for Italians to go and work for the benefit of other countries, therefore no emigration was allowed (Lopreato, 1967). After the 2nd World War and the end of the Fascist regime in 1945 emigration started again with renewed vigour. The South was the most affected by emigration. Lopreato (1970) argues that of all the negative aspects of feudal Italy, the South had always suffered the worst and its population was the one which needed the most relief from poverty and the desperation it caused.

The informants in this project originate from the southernmost region of Italy: Sicily. A brief review of the history of the Italian south is therefore helpful in understanding the general social and economic situation which led the informants to the decision to emigrate.

2.1.1 The Italian south: a brief overview of its history

The informants of this study originated in a *paese* (about 20,000 people) in Sicily. The *paese* (alternatively called by its inhabitants *città* or *cittadina*) Randazzo, province of Catania, lies at the foot of Mount Etna, the highest active volcano in Europe.

Through the centuries Sicily has seen a multiplicity of cultural presences as the island was used as a stepping-stone up to the peninsula by almost every civilisation coming both from the surrounding Mediterranean regions and from the European North choosing to invade Italy via sea and the island. Greek, Romans, Arabs, Scandinavians, Spanish, French all left reminders of their presence of the island, be it in the buildings' architecture, Greek and/or Roman amphitheatres or medieval churches. Also, the physical appearance of the people on the island as well as much of the lexis of the different dialects can

often be traced back to one of the civilisation of Sicily's rich cultural past. Randazzo has many reminders of this eclectic past and, as many other similar towns in Sicily nowadays has a well developed tourist industry.

In 1981 Italy became a unified nation. Previously, within its confines there was a collection of small kingdoms, dukedoms, several independent states as well as vassal states to European superpowers (Cresciani, 1985:11). This unification did not bring about any benefits for the masses in general and for the Italian south in particular. Lopreato (1970) reports that, although the south was primarily an agricultural region, Naples and its surroundings had developed considerable industrial activity before unification, which, under reasonable customs protection, enjoyed relative prosperity. With unification, customs barriers were dropped exposing southern firms to the overwhelming competition of northern industry. While the North profited from accessibility to the larger national market many of the previously prosperous southern firms had to be shut down, while others survived only at the cost of further exploitation of the worker. In addition, the new Italian state imposed new, additional taxes on the population to pay for the expenses of the wars which were fought to unify the nation. However the new Italian government understood that to unify the nation the problems relating to some parts of it, for example the southern problems, had to be addressed. But it was only after the 1st World War that some small advantages and some progress reached the Italian South. For example, a most important reform was the advent of the "collective contract" (Lopreato, 1967). With the advent of this reform many of the privileges of the landowners, which dated back to feudal times, were abolished and the peasants were able to have a better share and payment for their work on the land. Further improvements were stopped, however, when Mussolini resolved the Southern Question by decree in 1925, and imposed a silence which lasted twenty years.

In effect, the Fascist regime tried in various ways to help the cause of the peasants of the South, but according to Lopreato (1967:29) ignorance of the life and conditions of the South on the part of the legislative powers, rendered the measures taken to improve the South, at best useless, at worst detrimental. One of these measures that were seen as detrimental to the life of the South was the prohibition to migrate internally, not even from one city to another in the same region, as well as abroad. "With this law, the fascist regime practically compelled the overpopulated and underemployed masses of the South to remain in a state of overpopulation and underemployment (ibid: 31)".

With the Second World War came for the South the last invasion of modern times. Sicily, and afterwards the rest of the peninsula, became once more the battleground for enemy parties, in this case the American & British allied army fighting to "liberate" Italy from the German army. The fighting started in Sicily and continued all the way to the North leaving in its wake death and destruction.

After the war, Randazzo and the entire South, where the fiercest battles were fought, was left in "a state of total economic and political chaos" (Lopreato, 1967: 32). The need to look into "the Southern Question" became more pressing than ever for the democratic government which followed the Fascist regime.

The democratic regime took the Southern Question seriously and undertook a set of positive measures which were supposed to bring relief to the region. First of all, the government removed restrictions to migration and then it set about to answer the immediate basic demand for food and work by the whole population. It took a long time to see some improvement. At the time, it was believed that the government was slow in applying the necessary remedies.

Eventually, the reforms undertaken succeeded. In the 1970s Italy enjoyed a period of economic boom. The South also prospered with the creation of industries in its regions, changes to its social structure and land reforms.

Nowadays, even if the differences with the industrial and economic power of the North are still felt, the South is not any longer the downtrodden region of the past centuries. However, for the millions of Southerners who left Italy before and after the Second World War the improvements came much too late for them to benefit.

2.1.2 The people who left Italy in the 1950s, why they left and where they went

Pascoe (1987:11) claims that "Twenty-six million Italians have emigrated abroad, nine million never to return." The emigrants did not leave from the great cities of Rome, Florence or Milan. Pascoe (1987) explains that, although predominantly from the south, Italian emigrants to the world originated from all parts of rural Italy. Before the Second World War, "favourite destinations were Europe (especially France and Switzerland), North America (United States and Canada), and South America (Argentina and Brazil) (Cecilia, 1987: 82)".

Although there is a well documented pattern of Italian emigration to Australia since the landing of the First Fleet and Captain Cook in 1788 (see for example Bosi, 1980, Cecilia, 1987, Finocchiaro, 1982, Martinuzzi - O'Brien, 1988) the number of Italian emigrating to Australia before the second world war was minimal (according to Cecilia (1987) less than 5% of total emigration as compared to 51% to other European countries and 44% going to North and South America).

After the Second World War, whilst the pattern of emigration from Italy to other European countries remained mostly the same, the pattern of emigration outside Europe underwent drastic changes. As early as 1921, the US government, preoccupied with the great influx of immigrants to American shores, established the first "Quota Act" to limit entrance from any given country to only 3 percent of the number of the American residents who in 1910 were found to have been born in that country (Lopreato, 1970). This "quota system" was not applied to people wanting to enter the USA for family reunion reasons. It followed that emigration to America was greatly reduced. However, due to the fact that in the late nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth great numbers of Italian males had emigrated to America, in the late 1940s, the 1950s and mid-1960s, small numbers of Italians were still able to join their husbands/families/ relatives there.

At this point, for most of the great number of Italians wanting to leave Italy in the 1950s, America was out of reach. As in the period before the Second World War, North and North-West European countries, such as Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, remained the chosen destination of many migrants. Others chose to migrate internally, to the rich, industrialised parts of Italy such as Milan, Turin, Genoa.

With the restrictions placed on immigration into the USA, emigration outside Europe had to change destination. Australia, contrary to America, after the Second World War, found itself in need of adopting a policy of "populate or perish" and when Australia's first minister for immigration, Arthur Calwell, was appointed in 1945 "with the task of increasing the population by a target of 1% each year by immigration" (Martinuzzi-O'Brien, 1988: 67), a new door

opened up for the many migrants wanting to leave war ravaged Europe. Calwell's first choice was to attract mostly immigrants from the British Isles. When that failed he turned firstly to Eastern Europe and then Southern Europe.

In 1951 an agreement was reached with Italy which extended the assisted passage scheme to Italians.

Before assisted passages became available, 33,000 Italians had come to Australia. But the 1950s were the years of most arrivals from Italy, with 170,420 arriving between the censuses of 1951 and 1961. In these years, Italians made up 20% of the total number of immigrants, a figure exceeded only by those from the British isles (Martinuzzi-O'Brien, 1988: 67).

As for the informants in this study, who emigrated in the 1950s, the ones who had ties with people in the USA decided to emigrate there, some of those who could not do so opted for France or Northern Italy. One of them decided that the "new continent", Australia, was the land for him. He applied for and obtained assisted passage to Australia in 1951.

2.2 The sociolinguistic background

Even a superficial description of the sociolinguistic situation in the Italian peninsula would mention an Italian national language which every Italian is supposed to speak and understand and many dialects of which every Italian is supposed to speak and/or understand at least one. However, whilst it is acknowledged that the national Italian language and its varieties (discussions about these varieties follows later in this and following sections of this chapter) serve the general means of communication across all Italian geographical

territory, the speakers of the various dialects may not be able to comprehend each other depending on the proximity of their geographical region. This is explained by the 'dialect continuum' as follows:

speakers of Dialect A can be understood by speakers of Dialect B, and C by B, and so on, but at the extremes of the continuum speakers of A and Z may be mutually unintelligible (McArthur (ed.) 1992:290).

The dialect continuum related to the law of geographical proximity, allows the Italian dialects to be divided into two major groups. As Maiden (1995: 234) explains: "It is generally accepted that the romance dialects of Italy are divisible into two sectors whose mutual boundary is marked by the so-called 'La Spezia-Rimini Line'. This line running along the Apennines approximately from Carrara to Fano represents a bundle of isoglosses which constitutes a delineation of the geographical limit of some linguistic feature separating the dialects of Northern Italy from the rest. In each of the two sectors of dialects there are subdivisions. The following subdivisions are usually recognised, but they all conceal "an exuberance of local subdivisions" (Maiden, 1995: 234-235), as well as some transitional zones which are not easily classifiable:

NORTHERN DIALECTS:

- 'Gallo-Italian' (Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria and Emilia-Romagna)

- Venetian

(FRIULIAN)

TUSCAN DIALECTS (including Corsican)

CENTRAL-AND SOUTHERN DIALECTS: (*dialetti centromeridionali*):

- Central dialects (Marche, Umbria, Lazio)
- Upper southern dialects (Abruzzo, northern Puglia, Molise, Campania, Basilicata)
- Extreme southern dialects (Salento, southern Calabria and Sicily)

(SARDINIAN)

This “exuberance of local subdivisions” and the communication difficulties between the many different geographical regions rendered the existence of an Italian standard national language a necessity. However, firstly, it took centuries to decide which dialect had the potential to become the unifying national Italian "Standard" language. Secondly, when linguists decided upon a "Standard", a model of language, suitable to express all the facets of cultural life as well as daily life, it took a long time for the standard to reach all social classes (see Berruto, 1990; Bettoni, 1985a; De Mauro *et al* (1980); Durante 1981; Maiden, 1995; etc). Thirdly, when the "Standard" reached the population at large, it diversified so as to meet the needs of the people who tried to speak it. It followed that several varieties of that "Standard" came into existence and linguists had to create new terminology to aptly describe the ensuing national Italian language *continuum*¹

¹ Often the dialect varieties and the Italian varieties of the sociolinguistic Italian *continuum* are investigated and described by linguists as separate entities. However, although arbitrary given *la compenetrazione che vi è sempre fra italiano e dialetto* (the interpenetration always existing between Italian and Dialect) (Berruto, 1990: 14), this separation is dictated by the need that linguists or researchers have to focus on the part of the *continuum* which is more relevant to the scope of their treatise.

2.2.1 One nation, one language? The Italian language from the nation's unification (1861) to the end of the twentieth century

Communication through Standard Italian could not, and did not, happen easily. At the time Italy became one unified nation in 1861, the Italian language was the privilege of very few and it could only be learnt through books and in schools. De Mauro (1963) estimates at 2.5% the proportion of the Italian population that in 1860s could speak Italian. Castellani (1982, 25 -26) considers De Mauro's percentage of Italian speakers to be a pessimistic projection of what was actually happening in that period. He calculates that in 1861 the Italian speakers would be at least 10% of the population and notes also that Italian language could be used, when needed, by many others at all levels of society. Based on these facts, Bianconi (1985) and Berruto (1990) reach the conclusion that in the 1800s, as well as in the preceding centuries, the use of oral Italian was more widespread than it is generally assumed. However, this could not counteract the high level of illiteracy existing at the time of Italian unification (De Mauro, 1963). In the southern regions, as Sicily and Calabria, 90% of the population was illiterate. The Northern regions fared better. Illiteracy among the population of the Northern regions varied between 50% and 75%. The introduction of compulsory schooling in 1877 was the proposed strategy to remedy this. However, the scope of this legislation was very limited (it covered only the first two years of schooling) and had a very limited success since most of the population ignored the decree.

Nevertheless, even if the compulsory schooling did not meet the expectations of its promoters, it was around this period that began the decisive phase which would see the promotion of Italian as a truly national language. Durante (1981: 247) reports:

Stimolavano una conoscenza più o meno approssimativa dell'italiano le sempre più frequenti occasioni di contatto tra individui di regioni diverse: il servizio militare obbligatorio, l'afflusso degli operai e dei burocrati nelle grandi città, l'allargamento dei traffici. (A more or less approximate knowledge of the Italian language was stimulated by the ever more frequent occasions of contact among individuals of different regions: obligatory military service, the flow of workers and bureaucrats into the big cities and the growing trades).

The Italian language was expanding into all domains of discourse. When Italian was used prevalently only in written discourse, Italian and dialect were two distinct entities. When the modern use of Italian reached the oral spheres, the presence of dialectal influences, e.g. the accents, was strongly felt. Furthermore there were borrowings and exchanges between dialects and Italian which went both ways. It was not only Italian which was influenced by the dialects, the dialects were also influenced by Italian. Regional dialect words filtered into the Italian language and became known and accepted nationally. Italian was used to communicate about common topics of everyday life. As Durante (1981:247) says: "*l'italiano non è più un idioma riservato ad argomenti sublimi* (Italian is no longer a language reserved for sublime topics"). A similar observation is made by Maiden (1995:10) when he writes: "The once remote and relatively homogenous literary language has begun to show systematic variation according to region, social group, topic and context of discourse, and so forth."

In Italy, the first twenty years of the twentieth century were a period of intense economic, political and cultural growth. The increased need for communication in the Italian language further helped its expansion. With the advent of Fascism, in the 1920s, the education system was employed to play a much bigger role

than ever before in the government efforts to make the nation literate and speaking the one unifying language. The Fascist language policy was spurred on by the ideal of "one nation, one language" (Klein, 1986). Language policies, by education ministers of the time, dealt with the Dialect-Italian dichotomy. Lombardo-Radice (Klein, 1986: 46), honouring the sound pedagogical principle of taking the child from the known to the unknown, formulated an initial, transitional bilingual program to ease the students from their dialect to the standard language. He had many adversaries. Klein (1986) reports of pedagogists such as Camilli, Marsili, Lucaroni, who were against Lombardo-Radice's proposals. These pedagogists thought it better to use Italian from the beginning of the child's education. In any case: "*Ambedue le posizioni hanno come obbiettivo quello di unificare linguisticamente il paese attraverso la diffusione dell'italiano considerato come varietà linguistica unitaria* (Both positions have as their objective the linguistic unification of the nation through the diffusion of the Italian language considered as the unifying linguistic variety)" (Klein, 1986:47).

The push for the use of Italian language in the Fascist period was enormous and reached all fields of possible communication, verbal or written. In 1938 *Fu ordinato alla stampa di non occuparsi in nessun modo di dialetti e produzioni dialettali* (the press was ordered not to occupy itself in any manner with dialects and dialectal products.) (Durante, 1981: 262). Teachers in schools had strict orders to use only Italian. The first generation informants in this study, who received their education in the Fascist period, remember very clearly the efforts they made to speak Italian at school and the humiliations received when not able to do so. One of them recalls an anecdote when, in his second year of schooling, he was asked to write "ten proper names". Being in a large family, he started writing the names of his brothers and sisters. He wrote the names by which

they were called at home. These happened to be the Sicilian version of the names. He was severely reprimanded by the teacher and his fellow students would not stop making fun of him. He laughs at the memory now. But the mere fact that after more than sixty years he still remembers the event clearly, indicates the impact it had on him at the time. As Bettoni (1985a:28) writes: "*Fu tale scuola che istericamente instaurò una vera e propria fobia antidialettale*" (It was this type of schooling which hysterically established a real phobia against dialects).

The push for the use of Italian continued even after the fall of Fascism. The new mass-media such as radio, television and the cinema reached where the school could not. De Mauro (1963) assigns a particularly important role to the cinema. He claims that the cinema, especially from the years of the Second World War, helped to create a new kind of popular folklore which helped to unite the nation. Also:

Insieme a questi nuovi contenuti popolari unitari, il cinema ha determinato il sorgere di un italiano popolare unitario (Together with the unifying popular content, the cinema has brought about a new unifying popular Italian language) (De Mauro, 1963:109).

The socio-linguistic upheaval of the first half of the twentieth century and the misinformed pedagogical practices of that time ensured that generations of Italians grew up believing that their regional dialect was a far less worthy language than the Italian language. They also had to come to grips with the fact that to be accepted as an educated individual, they had to strive to reach the linguistic ideal imposed by the programmes of the Italian post-elementary

school. They had to learn to speak Italian «*come un libro stampato*» (like a book) (De Mauro: 1963:95). Under these circumstances it is understandable that dialect speakers, given the opportunity, would make the linguistic shift to Italian as soon as they could. If for economical, social or geographical reasons they were deprived of the possibility of learning it or they learnt it only *approssimativamente* (in an approximate way) (De Mauro, 1963), they would live with a "sense of guilt and shame" (Bettoni, 1985a:28) at not being able to communicate well enough in Italian.

When in the 1950s the first generation informants left Italy, they were enriched, or perhaps some of them would say encumbered, by the kind of linguistic baggage explained above. After they left Italy, the expansion of the Italian language in Italy continued and entered all domains of people's life. However, for most of the Italians living in Italy the greater use of the Italian language did not mean that they did not use dialect. During the second half of the twentieth century, Italian national statistical bodies (e.g. ISTAT [Istituto Nazionale di Statistiche] and DOXA [Istituto per le ricerche statistiche e l'analisi delle opinioni pubbliche]) have conducted periodical sociolinguistic surveys which show (see below) that dialect is still very much part of the Italian linguistic landscape.

Table 2.1 Percentage of Italian people speaking dialect in the home ²

	1974	1982	1988	1991	1996
Speak dialect with all family members	51.3	46.7	39.6	35.9	33.9
Speak dialect with some members of the family and Italian with others	23.7	23.9	26.0	30.5	32.4
Speak Italian with all family members	25.0	29.4	34.4	33.6	33.7

Table 2.2 Percentage of Italian people speaking dialect outside the home³

	1974	1982	1988	1991	1996
Speak usually or more often in dialect	42.3	36.1	33.2	22.8	28.2
Speak usually or more often in Italian	35.6	41.9	47.3	48.1	49.6
Speak as much dialect as Italian	22.1	22.0	19.5	29.5	22.2

The data shows that dialects have not disappeared. The data also shows clearly that the Italian population of the second half of the twentieth century was by and large a bilingual population. Actually, De Mauro speaks of *plurilinguismo* evident in the Italian society, a theme he introduced in his second version of the *Storia linguistica dell'Italia unita* (1976) and continued to develop further in his numerous treatises on the topic. In one of these, (1977: 124) he offers an explanation on what he means by *plurilinguismo*

Con plurilinguismo intendiamo qui la compresenza sia di linguaggi di tipo diverso (verbale, gestuale, iconico ecc.) ..., sia di idiomi diversi, sia di diverse

² DOXA data 1996 – Tables adapted and translated from Vedovelli *et al* (1996: 207)

³ DOXA data 1996

norme di realizzazione d'un medesimo idioma. (With plurilingualism we mean here the parallel presence of both different paralinguistic aspects of communication (verbal, body language, iconic etc) ..., as well as of different idioms and of different norms of realisation of the same idiom)

For the majority of modern Italians the above situation is part of their daily life and they have come to appreciate the freedom of communication available to them through the use of their multiple “idioms”. This is exactly what the first generation informants in this study did not have in their youth and this is what they marvel at every time they go back to visit “their” Sicily. Now, as D’Agostino *et al* (1995: 72) report

Il 90% circa dei siciliani si ritiene ... capace di percorrere liberamente lo spazio comunicativo a sua disposizione, riservando la selezione dei codici alle sole esigenze funzionali. (About 90% of Sicilians consider themselves, ..., able to cross freely the communicative space at their disposal, reserving the selection of codes only to functional exigencies.)

And of course, as it is for the Sicilians, the freedom to use freely the language codes available to them is the prerogative of almost every Italian in modern times (on the basis of surveys by ISTAT and DOXA De Mauro *et al* (1994: 23) estimate the percentage of monolingual dialect speakers in the 1990s at around 12-13% concentrated mostly in the North-East and in the South. Old age is one of the variables that strongly influences the use of dialect only. Maiden (1995: 9) also reports that monolingual dialect speakers are mostly restricted to rural areas and to older generations.

The sociolinguistic situation in Italy cannot be defined as 'diglossia' (for discussion on bilingualism and diglossia see section 3.1.1.1) where the division of use of idioms/languages is neatly found between a "high" and a "low" variety. The sociolinguistic situation of modern Italy is complicated by the vast range of language varieties to which De Mauro referred when talking of *plurilinguismo*. These varieties are part of a *continuum* which has the local dialect at one extreme and the national standard Italian language at the other. The varieties in the part of the *continuum* which deals with the national Italian language are the focus of the discussion in the following section.

2.2.2 Varieties of the Italian national language

Pellegrini (1975:37) describes the communicative range "*di un parlante italiano medio* (an average Italian speaker)" as having four fundamental registers of expressions (*registri espressivi*): local dialect, regional dialect, regional Italian, standard Italian). He adds:

In molti casi un 'italòfono' [...] nel nostro secolo è passato attraverso l'esperienza di quattro registri [o 'tastiere'], ed è ancora in grado di poterli utilizzare tutti e quattro in determinate circostanze. (In most cases an Italophone [...] in this century has gone through the experience of using the four registers and has the potential of being able to use all four in determinate circumstances.)

De Mauro (1980) and Sabatini (1985) also propose a range of Italian varieties. De Mauro's *continuum* is as follows: *italiano scientifico, italiano standard, italiano popolare unitario e italiano regionale colloquiale* (scientific Italian, standard Italian, unitary popular Italian and colloquial regional Italian) Sabatini's classification

is: *italiano standard*, *italiano dell'uso medio*, *italiano regionale delle classi istruite*, *italiano regionale delle classi popolari (italiano popolare)* (standard Italian, Italian of average use, regional Italian of the educated classes, regional Italian of the popular classes (popular Italian)).

Berruto (1990: 21), who puts forward his own elaborated schema of Italian varieties, has objections to all of the above descriptions of the varieties of the Italian language. Berruto's objection to De Mauro's range of Italian varieties lies in the positioning of *italiano regionale* down the continuum, which undervalues the pronunciation of the speaker (and therefore the geographical aspect of the variety), and promotes to a higher level what De Mauro appear to consider as the nationally unifying qualities of the other varieties. The objection to Sabatini's classification, which Berruto defines as very interesting and opening new perspectives, lies in the separation that Sabatini makes between '*italiano regionale* (regional Italian)' and '*italiano dell'uso medio* (Italian of average use)' especially because Sabatini himself (1985:174) observes that

nulla toglie il fatto che l'uso orale di questa varietà (l'italiano dell'uso medio parlato e scritto) si accompagna anche nei parlanti colti, a tratti specifici di pronuncia regionale (this does not exclude the fact that the oral use of this variety -the spoken and written Italian of middle use- is accompanied even in the speech of educated speakers by regional pronunciation).

Maiden (1995: 231) emphasises that regional phonology does not carry the 'stigma' of sub-standard or inferior language. Bettoni (1985a) speaks of the regional variety as 'standard regional Italian' since, she explains, this is the variety that Italians acquire as a first language, learn at school and speak,

unless, due to some specific reason (for example professional/employment reasons) an individual has undertaken special tuition to disguise the regional pronunciation. However, linguistic and social distance exist between standard (regional) Italian and popular Italian, which indicates differences in education and class status.

In the second half of the twentieth century, popular Italian has been widely analysed and accepted as a variety of 'Italian'. However, its presence as a variety of Italian with its own special systemic connotations which differ from the Standard has been noted from the beginning of the century (Bettoni, 1985a). According to Bettoni (ibid), the linguistic characteristics of popular Italian, can be briefly outlined in the following manner:

- ◇ At the phonological level - the pronunciation differs only marginally from that of regional Italian.
- ◇ At the lexical level - popular Italian is also influenced by the regional dialect in a manner similar to regional Italian.
- ◇ At the grammatical level - the greatest differences are noticeable at this level. Examples of these differences are: the use of the agreement between subject and verb; the polyvalent use of the relative pronoun *che* (used often as a connective when it would not be mandatory in Standard Italian); the use of pronominal forms; the use of comparatives (e.g. use of a form such as *più migliore* comparable to the English 'more better'); the use of subjunctive/conditional forms; choice of auxiliary with the past participle of a given verb.

Two eminent Italian linguists, Cortelazzo and De Mauro, have conceptualised popular Italian as follows:

Il tipo di italiano imperfettamente acquisito da chi ha per madrelingua il dialetto (A type of Italian imperfectly acquired by someone who has dialect as their mother tongue) (Cortelazzo, 1972:11)

De Mauro defines it

il modo d'esprimersi di un incolto che, sotto la spinta di comunicare e senza addestramento, maneggia quella che, ottimisticamente, si chiama lingua "nazionale", l'italiano ([popular Italian] is the way an uneducated person, pushed by the need to communicate and without any teaching, expresses him/herself using what is, optimistically, called the 'national' language, Italian). (De Mauro, 1970: 47)

Cortelazzo highlights the grammatical features of the popular Italian. Underlying his conceptualization of this variety is the understanding that, given enough education, this variety of Italian may disappear. De Mauro focuses on the communicative function of the speaker and shifts the attention from the grammatical features to the dynamics of social classes because it is here that, as Bettoni (1985:41) colourfully explains, *"tutti i nodi vengono al pettine"* (all the issues come to a head). Also, De Mauro contends that, given the great number of Italians (millions) using popular Italian in modern Italy, it is far from being a transitional language. On the contrary, it is the precursor of new developments in the 'national' Italian.

However, in the words of Maiden (1995:233) to conclude and clarify further the concept of popular Italian:

it must be stressed that so-called 'italiano popolare' is not a coherent, self-contained, linguistic system. It is not a kind of 'alternative language' to standard Italian, on a par with, say, French or German, or a local dialect. Rather it represents the attempts of Italians to speak and write standard Italian, and in this respect, at least, is 'unitario' (cf. Lepschy, 1983) but also reflects the interference of the dialects which they (or their recent ancestors) speak. What scholars may term 'italiano popolare' is, for most Italians, simply 'italiano'.

Thus, on the overall Italian sociolinguistic *continuum* "popular Italian" could be considered as the intermediate point between the dialect varieties and the Italian varieties.

2.2.3 The Italian speakers abroad

A description of 'Italian varieties' would not be complete without a review of what the literature has reported about the Italian speakers abroad. This topic, which could be categorised as part of the topic "minority languages in contact situations", will be also reviewed in greater depth in Chapter Three.

Abroad, whenever Italian migrants use their mother tongue they define it as *italiano*, regardless of which variety of the *continuum* described above they might use. But how close this variety of 'Italian' spoken by migrants in language contact situation is to 'Standard Italian' or 'Standard regional Italian' or how

many migrants speak both their regional Dialect and 'Standard Italian' is something open to debate.

Prior to emigration, most Italians from the 'lower classes' either did not attend school or did so for a very short period of time. This would lead to the assumption that these Italians would be monolingual speakers of Dialect. However, Bettoni (1985a) reports that most *Italian migrants*, including early migrants (from the 1900s onwards), who usually belonged to the lower social classes, were bilingual in their Dialect and at least 'popular Italian' when they left Italy. She quotes the research of Sobrero (1978) who in the case of migrants, speaks of a *socializzazione anticipatoria* (anticipatory socialization) which precedes the departure from one's own *paese*. As Bettoni explains, in this preparatory phase, the young people ready to venture into a new life, whether in Italy itself - but outside the confines of their own village - or abroad, undergo a desire for complete change: the learning of Italian was the first step towards the opening of their horizons. In addition to this, the migrants who left Italy in the 1940s/1950s had been brought up in the Fascist period and had absorbed in their cultural make-up the anti-dialectal phobia of the time. It follows, as Bettoni (1985a:44) explains, that among the emigrants of the time "*la conoscenza dell'italiano spesso accompagnasse quella del dialetto, anche se si trattava per lo più di italiano popolare*. (The knowledge of Italian often accompanied that of the Dialect, even if, in the majority of the cases, it was popular Italian.)"

When communicating among compatriots in the new land, dialect and 'Italiano' served the Italian migrants well. Dialect was used among people who came from the same geographical region; 'Italiano', as explained previously, was a necessity when communicating with compatriots who originated from another,

geographically distant Italian region. Popular Italian became the 'lingua franca' used among Italian compatriots and according to Berruto

si viene ad avere fuori d'Italia una situazione in cui l'effettiva e fondamentale varietà d'italiano è rappresentata dall'italiano popolare...L'italiano popolare (o una varietà fondamentale da ricondurre all'italiano popolare) è normalmente impiegato all'estero presso fasce sociali più alte che non in Italia (per es., presso studenti universitari, figli della piccola borghesia emigrante), mentre l'italiano standard è semmai patrimonio di una piccola élite intellettuale (separata, in genere, dal grande resto della popolazione emigrata). (Outside Italy the fundamental variety of Italian is popular Italian... Popular Italian [or a variety which fundamentally leads back to popular Italian] is normally used abroad within social classes higher than those in Italy [e.g. university students, children of the lower-middle class migrant community] whilst the 'standard Italian' is, at the very best, the patrimony of a small intellectual élite [usually removed from the rest of the emigrant population] (Berruto, 1990: 180).

However, when communicating with members of the host society, both Dialect and Italian became subordinate to the national language which becomes *the* prestigious variety and the one used for most of life's communicative needs.

Berruto explains that the Italian used abroad soon undergoes phases of *involutione* (involution). He outlines several reasons for this process. One of them is certainly the language contact situation of Italian with other languages.

Another could be ascribed to its use in a limited context of functions and domains. Certainly, the absence of the model *in praesentia* constituted by the evolution of the language in the homeland and the communicative habits in the host society play an important role towards these phases of "involution". Gonzo and Saltarelli (1983) have proposed a *continuum* of the migrants' language to explain the "involution" process which comprises four stages:

- ◇ the "standard" or, as Berruto (1990) describes it ' the original stratum', is the native language of the first generation, which may include one or more varieties of the Italian language system, including regional dialects;
- ◇ the "fading" in comparison with the "standard" shows lexical reduction, ignorance of neologisms created to match new concepts in the Italian national context, a general weakening of the Italian language system (still used by the first generation);
- ◇ the "pidgin" – applicable to the second generation- shows a drastic reduction in lexis and in morphological transformations (eg, inflection of words, conjugations of verbs), also the syntactic system tends to merge with the second (locally national) language;
- ◇ the last stage, the "fragment" – pertinent to the third generation - has, as distinctive characteristics, a very fragmented lexical, morphological and syntactic system and usually precedes the disappearance of the home language - at least in the productive forms.

Gonzo & Saltarelli explain that each stage is the basis for the language acquisition of the next. In particular the last two stages are acquired "on the basis of the 'fading' rather than an original stratum". Berruto (1990) says that matters could be further complicated when, instead of the 'standard', in the

"original stratum" there are dialectal varieties of Italian and the strong influence of the host language. Also, it appears that the *continuum* can be applied across all nations to which Italians have emigrated (Saltarelli (1986: 12).

The *continuum* may need some modifications. For example, the definition of a stage as "pidgin" appears inaccurate. Perhaps "pidginized stage" may be more suitable as "some investigators claim that any two languages in contact may result in a degree of linguistic improvisation and compromise and so lead to pidginization." (McArthur, 1992: 778). This stage is common to language acquisition and language attrition. Others argue that only in cases where more than two languages are in contact true pidgins spring up. This is usually a situation where speakers of more than two languages must converse in a medium native to none of them. In this case, if a systematic use of the variety eventuates, it can be defined "pidgin".

As far as Italian is concerned, there is not stable transfer or adaptation across the various categories of language to be able to produce the rules of a new 'pidgin' variety. Clyne (1991: 162), discussing the many local speech varieties developed in migration countries among minority groups, argues that "there are as many varieties of CL as there are speakers", since the adaptation of the base language of each individual to the local language will depend on their life activities, needs and experiences. However, there is enough evidence and description of the Italian used by the emigrants to be certain that the influence of the majority language on the first language is strong enough to produce "tendencies" (Clyne, *ibid*), which contribute similarities (for example, with grammatical integration and lexical transfers) to the development of a local variety of the CL.

In the light of these premises, the statement by Gonzo& Saltarelli that there is one local variety of Italian or, as defined in this thesis CL (see 1.3.1), for each country of emigration could be accepted as valid. Furthermore, it is important to clarify that the stages of the *continuum* do not necessarily follow generation after generation. It could be the case, Berruto (1990) reports, that second generation individuals are not always limited to the "pidgin stage". On the contrary, it is often the case that the Italian language they use, due to interest and study in the language, is closer to the "standard" than that of their parents (some examples of this are found in this study). Therefore, it could be theorised that the third generation has as input for their learning the "original stratum". The process of "involution" could in this case become "evolution" or, at least, the process of shift from the "original stratum" could be slowed down. Regardless of the many issues raised by the *continuum*, Berruto claims it is:

un primo interessante tentativo di inserire la problematica dell'italiano nel quadro generale dei processi di mescolanza linguistica, pidginizzazione e acquisizione delle lingue seconde. (An interesting first attempt to insert the problems of Italian language in the general picture of the processes of language mixing, pidginization and acquisition of second languages.)
(Berruto, 1990: 182).

2.3 Summary and conclusion

Millions of Italians have left Italy permanently to settle elsewhere. In the first part of this chapter I have reviewed the literature exploring the reasons which have pushed so many people out of their home-country, paying particular attention to the emigrants from the South of Italy, the region from which the

informants to this study have originated. The second part is dedicated to the exploration of the first generation informants' sociolinguistic background. This has been achieved through the review of the literature tracing the sociolinguistic history of Italian from its beginning to modern times. The review also includes a section dedicated to the use of Italian language abroad.

This study aims to unfold the pattern of mother tongue use followed by the informants in their migration countries. Therefore a review of the literature related to the use of mother/first language when in language contact situations and its intergenerational maintenance/shift are the foci of the literature review conducted in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical perspectives on language maintenance and language shift

3.0 Introduction: The study of language maintenance and language shift

When two linguistically different populations are in contact, there are demonstrable consequences of this contact with respect to habitual language use. In order to study these consequences and the degree of LM and LS, linguists, psychologists and anthropologists have developed a large number of quantitative and qualitative characterisations of variance in language behaviour. According to Fishman (1989) originally the quantitative and the qualitative inquiries into bilingualism were kept well separated.

Fishman (1989:234) explains that the quantitative inquiries were concerned with ascertaining the degree of bilingualism of individuals through 'the study of phonetic, lexical and grammatical proficiency, as well as speed, automaticity or habit strength'. The qualitative inquiries were concerned with total performance contrasts in different contexts and settings. Fishman reports that while linguists, psychologists and anthropologists had used the former for a long time, the latter was a rather new field of inquiry. The qualitative aspects of bilingualism came to be studied as the location of bilingualism or, as Fishman defines them, *domains of language behaviour* (the concept of domains of language behaviour will be explained later in this chapter).

According to Fishman (ibid), the quantitative inquiries were undertaken with a 'global' view of language and determined, using different kinds of measurements, if bilingual persons were dominant in language X or Y or

balanced. It was believed that the language that was 'globally' stronger would 'issue forth more quickly, more effortlessly, more flawlessly' (Fishman 1989: 234). The following decade, the 1970s, was to bring about a great change. The global approach was abandoned almost completely. All measurements of degrees of bilingualism from then onwards were 'sociofunctionally contextualized, i.e. measures of degree (of bilingualism) are still employed but with as much societal embeddedness as possible' (Fishman, 1989: 234). In other words, the linguistic skills of the bilingual individual were examined in terms of how much of one language or the other s/he speaks, reads, hears or writes in one context (domain) or another (at home, at school, at work, etc.). This meant that the artificial division of quantitative and qualitative research was abandoned (Fishman, 1989). Domains (contexts) of language behaviour were fully accepted for analysing and determining LM and LS.

As Fishman, Li Wei (1994) emphasizes the notion that bilingual language choice is "*essentially a social phenomenon* (p. 5)" (Li Wei's italics). However, he argues that among the social studies of bilingualism there are also different perspectives. Li Wei, following Grimshaw (1987), divides the studies in bilingualism according to two perspectives: the macro-societal perspective and the micro-interactional perspective, which, Li Wei thinks, have been "fundamental to the way in which many investigators of bilingualism and language choice have conceived and located their work (1994: 6)", for example they represent the dichotomies of structural versus interactional, or positivistic versus anti-positivistic approaches in sociological research. To the above perspectives he adds a third one: the Social Network perspective, which he regards as the perspective in bilingual research capable of integrating the apparently opposing view represented by the macro-societal/micro-interactional approaches.

I also believe that to be able to understand and explain the language behaviour of the study's informants, the data collected should be viewed in the light of the findings provided by sociological research as they provide "a general, interpretative framework within which various data sets can be analysed and compared (ibid: 6)". The analysis and comparison of data should then provide a reliable means to predict intergenerational language maintenance and shift among the informants.

Therefore, this chapter continues with the review of studies of bilingualism and language choice following the distinctions in sociological bilingual research provided by Li Wei (1994), namely: the macro-societal perspective; the micro-interactional perspective and the social network perspective. The social network perspective is one model of investigation into language maintenance and shift of minority groups in contact situations. There are other perspectives which present models that seek to provide adequate explanations of variation and change in minority language use and to account for the fact that some of the minority groups maintain their language better than others. These perspectives will also be reviewed in this chapter.

3.1 The macro –societal perspective

The macro-societal perspective, Li Wei (1994) states, is based on the assumption that individuals' language behaviour is influenced greatly by the structures of the society in which they live. "Thus, factors affecting the societal arrangement of languages are the central concern of the macro-perspective (ibid:7)" Within this perspective Li Wei identifies two main analytic models which he defines as *the complementary distribution model* and *the conflict model*. The two models deal

both with the relationship between language and society. However, the explanations they give of the causes of 'how' and 'why' languages in contact function the way they do differ.

3.1.1 The complementary model

Diglossia, compartmentalisation of language use, domains as locations of specific language choice by bilingual people and further functional differentiation of use of languages in a given society are concepts that help explain the complementary distribution model. They are fundamental to the understanding of the research Fishman defined as "sociofunctionally contextualized" (as this study is) and therefore it is important to explain their meaning and societal application in more detail.

3.1.1.1 Diglossia and bilingualism

Fundamental to the macro-societal perspective is societal acceptance and functional application of individual bilingualism. The societal phenomenon resulting from this functional application of individual bilingualism has been defined as *diglossia*. Ferguson (1959) developed the notion of diglossia to depict situations of relatively stable use at societal level of individual bilingualism. His full definition of diglossia is (Ferguson 1972 [1959]:245)

DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in

another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.

The highly codified, superposed literary language, in Ferguson terminology, was called the High (H) variety, the primary dialect became the Low (L) variety.

Whilst Ferguson's terminology has been widely accepted and used by sociolinguistic researchers when investigating binary language use in society, over time his stringent, rather limiting definition of 'diglossia', has been subjected to many modifications. In 1967, Fishman revised and expanded the concept of diglossia in two crucial ways. Contrary to Ferguson, he does not think that diglossia obtains only in societies that use for communication purposes a literary variety and a vernacular. Fishman's concept of diglossia allows several separate codes in a given society. Furthermore, Fishman states that diglossia is also possible in societies which employ separate dialects, registers, or "*functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind*" (Fishman, 1972: 92; italics in the original)". In other words, Fishman's concept of diglossia can be applied to any degree of linguistic difference from the most subtle stylistic difference within the same language to the use of two totally different languages. Fasold (1984) called this kind of diglossia "leaky diglossia" and Pauwels (1986) defined it "fluid diglossia" and this is the kind of "diglossia" which may be encountered in migrant bi/trilingual settings where the use of more than one language, without well defined functional boundaries, is common.

However, individual bilingualism cannot be considered diglossia. It becomes diglossia only when as '*an enduring societal arrangement*' extends itself 'at least

beyond a three generation period, such that two "languages" each have their secure, phenomenologically legitimate and widely implemented functions' (Fishman *et al*, 1985: 39; italics in the original). Fishman *et al* (1985:39-41) offers a list of 'a dozen or more' of societies which have relative stable and widespread societal bilingualism (diglossia) outside the classical parameters. He points out that the classical situations are good examples of diglossic societies, but sociologically speaking, they are not examples of "classicism *per se* but of a stress on *social compartmentalisation*" (1985: 41- italics in the original) and social and linguistic compartmentalisation is where the answer to cultural and linguistic maintenance in minority groups lies. Non-compartmentalisation would lead to inter-group dependency and language shift (see for details section 1.1).

3.1.1.2 Compartmentalisation of language use

Societal compartmentalization and consequent linguistic compartmentalization, occur when strict boundaries are maintained between the functions performed by the mother tongue (usually associated with the 'low' language in the concept of diglossia) and the official or more widespread language (usually associated with the 'high'). According to Fishman(1989), some possible bases for compartmentalization in societal arrangements are sanctity/secularity (eg the functions of the mother tongue are limited to only the study of religious classics while the dominant language is used in everyday interactions), indigenusness/foreignness (a group that has economic independence can have most interactive functions of the group conducted in the mother tongue while the dominant language is used for transaction with the outer groups) and traditionalism (maintenance of linguistic and cultural boundaries between the minority groups and the dominant group, eg the Hasidic or Amish groups).

This type of compartmentalization would assure language maintenance in the group implementing it. However, even if minority groups realise the importance of compartmentalization of language functions for the maintenance of their mother tongue, the practicalities of achieving it in everyday life are doubtful (Fishman 1989).

In minority groups which are not protected by major philosophical or religious ideologies or physical distance from urban centres (i.e Sprachinseln (linguistic enclaves) – as in the closed rural German groups established in Australia in the late 19th century (Clyne 1982) compartmentalization is almost impossible to implement in the everyday, interactive life. Furthermore, as compartmentalisation implies a high degree of alienation from the mainstream society, it is not considered to be a suitable alternative by most immigrants seeking full membership in the host society. Nevertheless, a limited form of compartmentalisation may encounter the favour of immigrants hoping to maintain a certain degree of their mother tongue without paying the high price requested by compartmentalisation. This form of compartmentalisation, which also deals with functional and complementary allocation of language use, is known in sociolinguistics as 'domains of language behaviour'.

3.1.1.3 Domains of language behaviour

Domains of language behaviour were identified by Schmidt-Rohr (1932) as a means of analysing the language behaviour of people living in multilingual settings in pre-World War Two. He is believed to have been the first to write about the need of dominance configuration to be able to discern the language choice made by bi/multilingual speakers in the various domains of their existence. In 1932, Schmidt-Rohr called domains 'spheres of activity'. In 1972,

Fishman defines 'domain' as the "Cluster of social situations typically constrained by a common set of behavioural rules" (1972: 30).

He claims that "domains originate in the integrative intuition of the investigator" (1972: 28). To illustrate this he gives the example of an investigator who notes that student-teacher interaction in an all education related environment is always conducted in a given language (be it the high variety in a diglossic society or the dominant language in a multicultural society). The investigator, in this case, may begin to think of the interaction as a (educational) domain. Further, if the informants tell him/her that:

the predicted language or variety would be appropriate in most of the examples he can think of that derive from his notion of the education domain, whereas they proclaim that it would not be appropriate for examples that he draws from a contrasted domain, and finally, *if the construct* (in this case the educational domain) *helps clarify and organise his data, and, particularly if it arises as a compositing feature of his data* - then the construct is usefully validated (Fishman, 1972: 28).

However researchers have endeavoured to ascertain if similar principles for categorisation of domains could be applied across investigations. For example, Greenfield (1970), who was among the first to implement domain analysis, after more than a year of participant observation and other data-gathering experiences thought that five domains could be generalised from the innumerable situations he had encountered: 'family', 'friendship', 'religion', 'education' and 'employment'. Greenfield then proceeded to determine whether a typical situation could be presented for each domain as a means of collecting self-report data on language choice. The research was conducted within a

bilingual Puerto Rican community living in New York whose members spoke both Spanish and English equally well. Greenfield's hypothesis was that the informants' home language would be associated with 'family' and 'friendship' (intimacy value cluster) and English with 'religion', 'work', and 'education' (status stressing value cluster). The hypothesis was fully confirmed by the data.

Further research (Fishman, 1972), aimed at consolidating Greenfield's findings in ascertaining if domains were more than "the investigator's etic reclassification of situations" (Fishman, 1972: 26), arrived at the conclusion that the domains' utility for inter-society comparisons and for gauging language shift "would seem to be quite promising" (Fishman, 1972: 28).

Research (as shown below) prior to and post Greenfield and Fishman has demonstrated that the domain construct was more than 'promising'. Although, lately, the domain construct has encountered criticism and other forms of data analysis (discussed later in this chapter) have also been shown to be successful, for several decades it proved to be almost a necessary one to be able to collect and categorise linguistic data. The number of domains usually identified by different researchers for analysis varied. However the ones extrapolated by Greenfield are almost always among the chosen ones. For example, Schmidt-Rohr (1932), in studying German settlers in contact with many non-German speaking populations in various types of contact settings, suggested a list of possible domains in which to conduct the linguistic investigations. The 'family' domain was at the top of the list followed by:

the playground and street, the school (subdivided into language of instruction, subject of instruction, and language of recess and

entertainment), the church, literature, the press, the military, the courts and the governmental administration. (as reported by Fishman,1972:18).

Mak (1935 as reported in Fishman, 1972), used more domains than Schmidt-Rohr, but still overlooked the work domain. Frey (1945 as reported in Fishman, 1972) used only three domains (home, school, church). Mackey (1972), recommended using only five domains to investigate language use. However, regardless of number or type of domains, the domains of home/family and school were always present and ranked at the top of the list. Later studies (Bettoni 1981a, 1987; Clyne,1982; Pauwels, 1986; Rubino, 1987) have continued to demonstrate the importance and the utility of the domain construct. These latter researchers have also primarily chosen for their investigation and data analysis the family/friendship, the education and the employment domains. 'However, domains themselves are not the only significant factor in code selection (Clyne: 1991; 113).' Language selection within one domain is influenced by participants, setting and topic, 'possibly in that order' (Sankoff and Poplack, 1979:35).

As Sankoff earlier, recent research (Bell, 1984; Li Wei, 1994) stresses the role of the interlocutor over 'setting' and 'topic' when choosing the code to use in linguistic interactions. However, in multilingual settings speakers and interlocutors are not always in the position of being able to *choose* the code they prefer. Their choice of any of the codes used for communication in their environment is constrained by the knowledge they have of them (and the ability they have to use them). It so happens that in one setting, in one domain, it is possible to find a congregation of people with preference/need to use one language rather than another. In this case both the setting and the interlocutors work towards the choice of a given code. For example, the home domain in

most immigrant communities appears to be conducive to the maintenance of their community language. This was the case with the Italian communities abroad. Smolicz (1981) argued that in the Italian tradition the family is the central cultural 'core value'. The "core value" theory argues that all ethnic groups have some values that are central to their identity and therefore every attempt is made to preserve them in whatever situation they may find themselves. Smolicz argued that some ethnic groups have language as a central core value, whilst others would not consider language as an important marker of their culture. This, according to Smolicz, divided ethnic groups residing in multilingual communities into 'language centred' and 'not language centred' groups. "Language centred groups", concluded Smolicz had a greater chance of maintaining their language. Smolicz's theory was supported by some surveys (Johnston, 1976; Pauwels, 1986) but also contradicted by others. Clyne (1982) showed that some 'language centred' groups (eg Polish and German) exhibited a greater language shift than those groups (eg Italian) which were described as 'non language centred'. Clyne explained that core values cannot be seen in isolation but must be seen as interdependent. For example, the value the Italians give to the family unit transcends that of their language. However to be able to communicate with the family and to keep it united, migrant Italians of first and second generations need to use their language. This situation helps Italians maintain their community language, at least until the need to use/understand it in the family domain continues to exist. Clyne (1982:30) highlights that for language maintenance the 'extended family structure may be more conducive to language ecology than the nuclear family'. This extended family structure not only includes, for example, grandparents and other close relations, but often also distant relations and friends. An example would be *comari e compari* (children's godparents) who frequently are people from the same or neighbouring home town in Italy. Also, when an Italian family lives in

an all Italian neighbourhood, a few selected neighbours may also come to be recognised as 'family'. Since a great part of the linguistic interactions in this big 'family domain' would be conducted in the first generation's mother tongue, it makes the home environment of Italian families, as mentioned above, very conducive to mother tongue maintenance. Bettoni (1981, 1985, 1989) reports that Italian people of second generation try to speak Italian to their parents, first generation relatives and friends. However, even in the cases where second generation Italo-Australians do not speak their community language, it has been demonstrated (Bettoni, 1985b, 1989) that they comprehend it when used by the older generation.

To illustrate, when first generation and second generation people socialise in the home/friendship domain, Bettoni reports that in the Italian community, as well as in many other ethnic communities, it is common for the first generation persons to speak in their own mother tongue to the second/third generation ones and for the second/third generation individuals it is normal to reply in the language of the host country. The communication flows smoothly with the participants to the conversation completely at ease producing one language while comprehending the other.

Li Wei (1994) combined and explored anew the concepts of domains of language behaviour and the role of the interlocutors in linguistic interactions to postulate the "social network" perspective of language maintenance/shift/choice, reviewed later in this chapter (see 3.3). In a similar vein, Bettoni and Rubino (1996) investigate the LM/LS process of the Italian community in Australia. Specifically, the study aimed to ascertain the existing level of language shift of two regional Italian communities living in Australia from their native tongues (regional dialect and Italian) to that of the host country

(English). The two regions of origin were Veneto and Sicily (the latter being also the region of origin of my informants). The interregional comparison of language behaviour added a new dimension to their study which had not been explored in other studies. Whilst examining all variables affecting the linguistic interactions in the specific domains, as Li Wei had done in his study, Bettoni and Rubino chose to focus on the interlocutor variable. They hypothesised that in the migrant community context, this variable would be of particular significance in explaining the variations of language use. The results indicated that the shift towards English by the Italian community could be defined as having *un' intermedia velocità* (an intermediate speed) (e.g. not as fast as the language shift by the Dutch community but not as slow as that of the Greek community). The domain that appeared to be slowing down the speed of the shift was the home/family, where the older people and the women played a significant part in the process of maintaining the language. The other domains slowed down the shift only minimally and only when certain conditions were present (e.g. the interactions in Dialect or Italian between friends helped to slow down the shift, but this was only notable in the first generation) (see Bettoni & Rubino 1996: 176).

In regard to the comparison between the Sicilians and the Venetians the variables that affect the language behaviour of the speakers are the following:

In the first generation:

- ◇ the use of English is slightly favoured if the speaker is: *uomo, siciliano, di età media, con istruzione universitaria, con moglie non italiana, negoziante o professionista, con minimi contatti comunitari o italiani*. (male, Sicilian, middle aged, with tertiary education, with non-Italian wife, shopkeeper or professional, with minimal community or Italian contacts). (Bettoni and Rubino, 1996: 177)

- ◇ The use of Dialect is favoured if the speaker is: *donna, di origine veneta, sposata con un veneto, con bassa scolarizzazione, emigrata nei primi anni Cinquanta, ormai anziana, casalinga o pensionata dopo lavori manuali con rete interazionale decisamente etnica.* (Female, of Venetian origin, married to a Venetian, with low formal education, emigrated in the first years of the 1950s, by now elderly, housewife or pensioned after manual labour with an interactional network completely ethnic). (ibid)
- ◇ The use of Italian is favoured if the speaker is: *uomo, di origine veneta, con istruzione universitaria, di età media, con moglie italiana ma di diversa regione, emigrato recentemente, con occupazione qualificata e regolari contatti con l'Italia.* (Male, of Venetian origin, with tertiary education, middle aged, with an Italian wife but from a different region, recently emigrated, with a qualified occupation and regular contacts with Italy). (ibid)

In the second generation

- ◇ The speaking of English is pervasive and therefore the divisions are not clear.
- ◇ Where the use of Dialect and Italian is concerned the differences remain relatively strong. *“le donne meglio degli uomini e i veneti meglio dei siciliani differenziano tra dialetto e Italiano marcando il confine diglossico tra spazio privato e spazio pubblico.* (the women differentiate between Dialect and Italian better than the men and the Venetians better than the Sicilians marking the diglossic boundary between private and public space). (ibid)

Overall, the results indicate that the general shift from Dialect/Italian towards English is certain to continue. Of the two ethnic languages:

- ◇ the dialect appears to have the weaker position since it is used mostly by the first generation whose presence is declining. The younger generation

does not tend to use the dialect as it is associated with older and regional family traditions.

- ◇ Conversely, Italian appears to be in a stronger position favoured by the cross-generational use and the growing interregional interactions.

Therefore, Bettoni and Rubino conclude that if language maintenance cannot be tied to generations or domains, it is the personal characteristics of the speakers that could help slow down or reverse the shift. These same personal characteristics also favour the use of English and the authors hope that the welcome outcome of this situation will be English/Italian bilingualism by the descendents of the Italian migrants of the 1950s who want to maintain their heritage but at the same time live in the present with an eye to the future.

Recently, Smolicz et al (Smolicz , Secombe and Hudson 2001) conducted a study with different ethnic groups including Italian. The findings of this study induced Smolicz and fellow researchers to moderate the previous postulation of the “core value theory”. The findings of the study, which was related to the issues discussed above (the home-family-community domain linguistic interactions), strengthened the theory of “interdependency” of cultural core values for language maintenance/ shift/choice. It follows that although in linguistic interactions the interlocutor plays a major role in the choice of code, when researching language maintenance/shift/choice in minority communities, the concept of domains of language behaviour is at least as important as that of the interlocutor.

3.1.1.4 GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale)

Whilst the concept of 'domains of language behaviour' allows insights into intergenerational Language Maintenance (LM)/Language Shift (LS) at the individual level, the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)(Fishman: 1991) assesses LM/LS at the societal level. It was devised by Fishman with Reversal of Language Shift (RLS) in mind.

Substantively, the GIDS relies on the compartmentalisation/ diglossia concept as the main strategic remedy to combat language shift and power sharing in the higher levels of the scale. However, to reach that optimal stage of functional differentiation of language use in society (diglossia), the strategies suggested at the different levels of the scale are to be applied systematically and judiciously as not to compromise the whole process of intergenerational language maintenance.

Fishman resorts to an analogy to determine the levels of the GIDS. The 'Richter Scale' measures the intensity of earthquakes, writes Fishman. High numbers in this scale are indicative of stronger tremors and therefore more dangerous to the people living in the vicinity of the quake. Similarly, in the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale higher numbers mean greater linguistic disruption in the minority community. There are eight levels in the scale and they are reviewed as follows:

Stage 8

most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults

Stage 7

most of the users of Xish are socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age

Stage 6

the attainment of intergenerational informal oracy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement

Stage 5

Xish literacy in the home, school and community, but without taking on extra-communal reinforcement of such literacy

Stage 4

Xish in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws

Stage 3

use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside the Xish neighbourhood/community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen⁴

Stage 2

Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in higher spheres of either

Stage 1

some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence) (Fishman, 1991: 88 - 109)

Fishman warns of the pitfalls inbuilt in the various levels of the scale. He stresses the 'first thing first' approach, although it is not meant by it that RLS

⁴ This is Fishman's (1991) terminology. In 2001:451-481 Fishman changed the terms Xmen and Ymen to Xians and Yians, which I will use when assessing the Italian language situation in the USA, Australia and France through the GIDS.

has to pass through each intervening step until it gets as far as it can go. On the contrary, writes Fishman, "it means that pro-RLS efforts should carefully gauge what stage they are at (in a particular location or neighbourhood) and undertake to repair lower, foundational stages before moving ahead to more advanced ones" (1991: 109). In other words, Fishman warns RLS agents to beware of the allure of concentrating their efforts on the levels of the scale that appear to be glamorous/powerful /immediately rewarding (for instance media/education stages) if gains have not been made at the family and neighbourhood/ community level. Building a vibrant Xish community is the first priority, Fishman stresses, "for only such a community can provide the basic mechanisms that safeguard the processes of intergenerational mother tongue transmission" (ibid: 111).

The GIDS works as a "quasi-implicational scale, i.e. higher (more disrupted) scores imply all or nearly all of the lesser degrees of disruption as well" (ibid: 87). Fishman used it as an evaluation tool for both indigenous languages and immigrant languages, even if the latter may not be considered "threatened" (meaning in danger of extinction) as the former are. Because of its flexibility, the scale provides an analytic framework and a means of comparison that can be applied to any LM/LS situation, as demonstrated by Fishman, in *Reversing language Shift* (1991). For these reasons, I have used it (in conjunction with the Ethnolinguistic Vitality model by Giles *et al* (1977) when evaluating the current state of Italian language in the Italo-Australian/American/ French communities. Evaluation and discussion are reported in Chapter Four.

Diglossia, compartmentalisation, domains of language use, reversal of language shift through re-establishment of compartmentalisation of language functions are the concepts behind the *complementary model* put forward by Fishman when

explaining language maintenance/shift /change and choice among minority groups living in multilingual societies. They are also the strategies which, according to Fishman, would ensure intergenerational mother tongue continuity. However, Li Wei (1994) suggests that Fishman has not asked an important question, namely, why the functional differentiation of languages which led to diglossia came about in the first place. In other words, what are the social origins of the differentiation that has assigned H and L functions to the languages in a given society. The *Conflict Model*, the other facet of the macro-societal perspective of bilingual language use, is concerned with the social origin of functional differentiation of language and it is reviewed in the following section of this chapter.

3.1.2 The conflict model

Sociolinguists aligned with the conflict model argue that the diglossia model, as presented by Ferguson and Fishman and discussed in the previous section, has several shortcomings. For example, Martin-Jones (1989) discussing Fishman's model of diglossia argues that there are four central problems in the model. The first concerns the language choices of bilinguals. Martin-Jones writes that Fishman uses the term 'choice' quite liberally in describing the language practice of individual bilinguals since the model actually denies the possibility of choice. All community members are restricted to 'proper usage', meaning that each of the two languages in the community has a clear function and both fall into a neat pattern of complementary use. The second and fundamental problem deals with *power*. Martin-Jones argues that in Fishman's model power is treated as a secondary phenomenon while norms and values are seen as being the most basic features of social activity.

Diglossia is characterised as a natural and common sense reality. No account is given of the social origins of the functional division of labour between the H and the L language. The model merely represents this division of labour as a natural form of social and linguistic order, thereby implicitly reinforcing the legitimation of the H language. (1989:109).

The third problem with the diglossia model concerns 'domains of language use'. Fishman defined these as abstract 'socio-cultural construct'. However, Martin-Jones writes, he has failed to explain "what connection there might be between domains as abstract socio-cultural constructs and actual speech events and their interpretation; or between widespread cultural norms and expectations and the language choices of individual bilinguals"(1989:110). The fourth problem with the complementary diglossic framework, according to Martin-Jones, is that it does not offer any explanation for linguistic changes over time. Modifications to the concept of diglossia to accommodate change in bilingual settings described as 'leaky' or 'fluid' diglossia (see above) "have only served to highlight its deficiencies".

The researchers incorporating the conflict perspective in their work want to stress that the two languages involved in diglossia are unequal in terms of social status (Eckert, 1980: 1056). When the dominant or majority language has established its supremacy as the language of prestige/power/status, the dominated/minority language has lost the battle and soon, when in time total shift occurs, the war. This is certainly relevant to immigrant groups and Fishman (1991) is well aware of the power that the *reward system* of the dominant society can have on the minority groups. As a matter of fact, it is the main reason for which he strongly advises to adopt the functional

compartmentalisation model of language use (or modified diglossia) if maintenance of the minority language is the desideratum of the group.

To sum up, the macro-societal perspective comprises two models. Both models analyse societal diglossia and they have in common the fact that individual language choices are being determined and constrained by higher-order social structures. However, the models give two different interpretations of diglossia. One, the complementary, offers an orderly, almost idyllic, functionally divided use of the two languages; the other, the conflict perspective, gives an interpretation of diglossia which is less utopian. In the latter model, language choices are socially determined but power struggles are at the core of those choices. However, language use among bilinguals is complex and variable and generally involves much more than a two way choice. Communicative resources are combined and juxtaposed in subtle ways. The activity of using language resources to meet the changing demands and contradictions of concrete social encounters is a creative one. The micro-interactional perspective is the area of sociolinguistics which studies the ways in which individuals manage the constraints present in the many communicative situations encountered in their daily life. The literature related to the micro-interactional perspective is reviewed next.

3.2 The micro-interactional perspective

The informants in this study live in a trilingual environment (a dialect of Italian, standard regional Italian and the majority language spoken in the country in which they live). Linguistic exchanges in any of the three languages (either as active users or passive listeners) are part of their daily reality. This situation leads inevitably to a language repertoire that shows characteristics of the three

languages present in their life. The situation in which this study's informants find themselves is not abnormal and the recent growing literature on trilingualism (e.g. Cenoz and Genesee, 1998; Cenoz, Hufeisen and Jessner, 2001; Herdina and Jessner, 2002), which has developed its own field of study apart from that on bilingualism, attests to this. Multilingual contact situations are a reality for all minority groups. Sociolinguists investigate language habits of individuals belonging to minority groups to ascertain how they use their multilingual repertoire. Also of great importance for sociolinguists is to examine what factors influence that use. Based on the knowledge of how and what, the sociolinguists' aim is to draw models which analyse and define most of the possible phenomena encountered in language contact situations. The emphasis in sociolinguistics studies seems to be on "the overall skill *in using* language for natural purposes in realistic situations and the way(s) in which the investigator/assessor collects and interprets/assesses data" (Li Wei, 1994:105). A sociolinguist does not set standards in advance and then measure how closely the informant/s meet them. In Li Wei's words: "sociolinguists typically define communicative norms on the basis of detailed observation of social interaction and take into account both stylistic (or intra-speaker) and social (inter-speaker) variation" (Li Wei, 1994: 105).

Accordingly, in my study I did not intend to formally test my informants. I intended to find out how effectively the third generation informants use their grandparents and parents' language in structured and unstructured linguistic interactions in everyday life. However, when analysing the data collected to describe what language the informants use and how they use it, required knowledge drawn from the review of the literature pertaining to the domain of the micro-interactional perspective of sociolinguistics. What follows is a review of the literature in this field relevant to my study.

3.2.1 Aspects of the micro-interactional approach

There appear to be three currents of thought (Tabouret-Keller, 1995) that researchers subscribing to the micro-interactional perspective of studies of bilingualism traditionally follow. These are

- i. socio-pragmatism or the social and interactive properties of social systems in general
- ii. linguistics or the study of the formal properties of linguistic systems in contact
- iii. psycholinguistics or the relation between linguistic systems in contact *and* the properties of the human mind.

The three aspects of micro-interactional approach to the study of bilingualism (for the purpose of this review, this term also implies multilingualism as bilingual also implies multilingual) are not kept rigidly separate. Bilingual work on any bilingual community would have to refer to both the micro and the macro theories of language use and to their interdependencies. Nevertheless, depending on the emphasis given to their research projects, some researchers can be readily aligned with one framework rather than another.

Regardless of the current to which they subscribe, to be able to describe the phenomenon they are investigating, researchers need to develop (or adopt/adapt) an analysis framework. In the creation of these frameworks, a very rich but often ambiguous terminology has come into existence. Through the terminology, the researchers convey their perceived concepts, issues, the HOW and WHY (in accordance with the three categories above) of the phenomena they are trying to classify.

3.2.2 The terminology used by the analysis frameworks of languages in contact

SWITCHING and *CODE-SWITCHING* are terms that have been and are used to describe some of the phenomena of languages in contact. Haugen (1953 and 1956) introduced '*switching*' to describe the alternate use of two languages. '*Code-switching*' was introduced by Gumperz (1964, 1970) when describing a switch from one language to the other. Other pioneering studies of languages in contact using that terminology include Hasselmo (1961, 1970, 1974), Clyne (1967 and 1972), Blom and Gumperz (1972), Timm (1975), Baker (1976).

According to Clyne (2003), there is now among some scholars in the micro-interactional field of study a general tendency to regard '*code-switching*' as the generic category of language contact. However, he considers '*code-switching*' to have become 'polysemous' and come to mean different things to different researchers. He reports that there are three main ways in which the term has been used in the literature. They are:

- (1) in contrast to 'borrowing'
- (2) subsuming 'borrowing'
- (3) with indexical (or other discourse) function only, for instance indicating group membership or 'otherness' (in conversational analysis, in contrast to language switching).

Although it appears that in recent years conversation analysts (Alvarez-Caccámo 1998) have endeavoured to make the distinction between *code-switching* (where the code and the switch have symbolic meaning and clear discourse functions) and *alternation* where the 'codes' and the 'switch' may not

be communicatively meaningful. Meeuwis and Blommaert (1998) suggest that the 'codes' do not need to be different languages. They may be two lects, one of which is mixed and one is not. (Given this, perhaps, this terminology may not be any longer highly relevant for studies of bilingualism.)

Other scholars (McClure, 1977; Kachru, 1978, Auer, 1990 and 1998) prefer to distinguish between 'code-mixing' (change of code/language/variety is intrasentential) and 'code-switching' (change of code/language/variety is intersentential). Auer also used (1995:116) "code-alternation" as a cover term, (i.e. hyperonym for code-switching and transfer). Auer argues that code-switching can and should be analysed as part of the context in which it happens (sequential environment) on the same level as other context based cues (e.g. prosodic or gesticulation) are analysed. Auer's framework of analysis will be discussed further in the next section.

Clyne (1991:160) has defined code-switching as "the alternate use of two languages, either within a sentence or between two sentences. The speaker stops using language A and employs language B". Some consider the number of words (one or more) involved in the *code-switching* a criterion to decide if it can be called a "code-switch", a "transference" or borrowing. Others do not.

Myers-Scotton (1993a) discussing her framework for code-switching, the "Matrix Language Frame" model, claims that two interrelated hierarchies direct the structuring of sentences containing code-switching. These are:

- (a) The Matrix Language vs Embedded language hierarchy.
- (b) The system vs content morpheme hierarchy.

She argues that in code-switching situations the Matrix Language always provides the system morpheme. System morpheme builds constituent frames

and “only one source of system morpheme can control constituent frame formation at one point in time”. The Embedded Language may only supply content morphemes in mixed constituents. In other words, borrowings are part of the lexicon of the matrix language and code-switches belong to the embedded language lexicon. Myers-Scotton’s model is more complicated than it appears from the brief outline above and she is constantly refining it (more discussion about Myers-Scotton models in 3.2.3).

Although Clyne has used ‘code-switching’ in his work, he has always favoured the term *transference* as the umbrella term for the phenomena occurring in language contact situation (see Clyne 1967, 1972, 1982, 1991). He adopted *transference* in preference to Weinreich's (1953) *interference* when explaining the process of bringing over any items, features or rules from one language to another, and for the results of this process. *Transference*, used as a cover term, appears to be well accepted by the Australian researchers. For instance, Bettoni (1981) analysed and explained the bi\tri\lingual use of the Italian Community in North Queensland using Clyne’s (1972) original terminology of *transference*. Clyne explains that in his framework a *transfer* is an instance of *transference*, where the form, feature or construction has been taken over by the speaker from another language, whatever the motives or explanation for this. *Transference* is thus the process and a *transfer* the product. The terms can be used to explain most, if not all, of the linguistic phenomena of languages in contact as for example: “lexical, semantic, phonetic/phonological, prosodic, tonemic, graphemic, morphological, and syntactic transference, and any combination of any of these (e.g. lexicosyntactic)” (Clyne, 2003). Clyne draws on rich corpora of data taken from many languages (German, Dutch, Arabic, Croatian, Italian, Greek, Spanish...etc) to corroborate and explain his terminology. All of the above transfers can be partly or fully phonetically, morphologically and

semantically integrated in the receiving language (Clyne, 1991; Bettoni, 1981 and 1985a).

Clyne (1991: 165) states that there are two principal reasons for lexical transfers: *contextual factors and speech economy*. Migrants, when adapting to their new surroundings, encounter concepts that are outside the realm of their country of origin. If they have to speak about these new concepts, they find it easier to use the lexis, particularly nouns, picked up in the new environment. Nouns, as has been proved by research both in America and Australia (e.g. Haugen, 1953; Bettoni, 1981 and 1985a; Clyne 1991) are the most common word class transferred. However, all parts of speech are subject to lexical transference. The lexis is not only transferred but often also integrated semantically, phonetically and grammatically into the receiving language. For example, as far as the Italian language is concerned, nouns, when integrated phonetically and morphologically, acquire gender [e.g. feminine gender: *la fenza* (the fence), *la yarda* (the yard) or masculine: *il boss* (the boss) *il builda* (the builder)]. Verbs [e.g. *shiftare* (to shift) *paintare* (to paint) *deliverare* (to deliver)] acquire the inflections of the Italian verbs conjugations (person and number) as well as tense and mood (Bettoni, 1981:67). *Semantic transference* occurs when nouns are transferred and integrated (phonetically and grammatically) from the source language to a homophone or partial synonym in the recipient language. For example, factory becomes *fattoria*, keeping the original English meaning, in the Italian speech in contact with English (e.g. in Australia and in the United States, where I have witnessed the use of this word among my participants many times). However, *fattoria*, in Italian, means 'farm'. Would this word, as well as many other semantic integrations, be used in an Italian monolingual context (e.g. in Italy or with Italian visitors), it would be source of misunderstandings (cf. Bettoni, 1985 and Clyne, 1991). *Pragmatic transference* is a transference of

rules for speech acts from one language to the other. For example, most languages other than English require speakers to choose between formal and informal forms of address which mark pronouns and verbs as well. Italian is one of these. Second generation Italian speakers model their use of the personal forms of address on the English “you” and translate it with “tu”. They tend to use the “tu” form and mark accordingly verbs, etc., regardless of the formality or informality of the situation (formal address would require the “lei” form with differently marked agreements) (cf. Bettoni, 1981, 1985a and Clyne, 1991).

Related to ‘*transference*’ is ‘*convergence*’. This, like *code-switching*, means different things to different researchers. For example Myers-Scotton and Jake (2000) refer to ‘*convergence*’ as meaning morphemes taken from one language and lexical structures from another. In his terminological framework, Clyne uses it to indicate a drawing closer of the two (or more) systems but not transference. Besides ‘*transference*’ and ‘*convergence*’, Clyne (2003) has added a new term to his terminological framework ‘*transversion*’ which is intended to be used in place of *code-switching* (which in his opinion has become “polysemous and unclear”) to fulfil the needs of the analysis of languages in contact. *Transversion*, writes Clyne, “enables us to express ‘crossing over’ to the other language rather than alternating *between* the languages (italics in the original)”. *Transversion* includes both intra- and inter-clausal switching.

3.2.3 Sociolinguistic and other variables affecting code-switching

While the terminology of the frameworks describes the phenomena of language contact, the reasons behind them, *why and how they occur*, are at the core of the micro-interactional field of research. Some of the reasons for these phenomena have been discussed above when introducing the terminology, others will be discussed in this section.

On the basis of a study in a bi-dialectal community in Hemmersberget, Norway, Blom and Gumperz (1972) identified two types of code-switching practices: *situational* and *metaphorical*. *Situational code-switching* refers to the code-switch which occurs when changes in the situation happen (change of participants, settings or activity types). This code-switching is directly related to the social situation. However, not all language switches can be ascribed to change in situation. There are times when the speakers want to achieve special communicative effects, even when the situation remains the same. Gumperz called this 'metaphorical code-switching' because, in bilingual communities, choices of language use are often seen as a 'metaphor' for the ratification of society's relationships at different levels. Language changes in society are used to clearly differentiate the 'we code' from the 'they code', which in this case is not the same as the high/low variety of Ferguson's diglossia theory (see 3.1.1.1). The 'we/they codes symbolises the interpersonal relationships of the users rather than the status accorded to the languages. In this case code-switching has a clear social symbolism. Gumperz, having examined the conversational points where speakers are likely to switch, identified a number of discourse functions which are fulfilled by the language changes. The typical functions are: *quotations, addressee specification, interjections, reiteration, message qualification, personalisation versus objectivation* (Gumperz, 1982: 75- 84). Clyne (1991), rather than identifying linguistic functions performed by the code-switch, lists the variables that promote code-switching at the sociolinguistic (situational) level. To *participants, settings or activity types* mentioned by Gumperz, he adds *role relationship, topic, channel of communication, phatic function* (1991: 191-193).

When analysing the social factors in code-switching, Fishman (1971) proposed to search for a correlation between what he defines as 'speech events' and

'language choice'. According to Fishman, the investigation should centre on whether one variety or language tends to be used (or used more often) in certain kinds of speech acts, whereas the other tends to be used (or used more often) in others, e.g. in his study, one language for official business (English), one language for informal chats (Spanish).

Auer (1995) finds all of the above approaches useful to explain some aspects of code-switching (or in his terminology "code-alternation"), but, after empirical examination of his and other researchers' data (e.g. di Luzio, 1984) collected in modern bilingual communities, he defines them not sufficient to formulate a consistent theory of language choice. Also, in Auer's view, all the lists of functions proposed for code-switching could never be complete. For each context of research there is the probability of researchers identifying new functions and meaning for code-switching. For example, Myers-Scotton (1983) with her 'markedness theory' introduces the 'negotiation principle'. Myers-Scotton argues that bilingual speakers have an innate theory of socially relevant markedness and indexicality. They use language choice to negotiate interpersonal relationships within a normative framework which does not restrict choices but limits interpretations. The core of the markedness theory is a "negotiation principle" which leads speakers to

Choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it symbolises the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between speakers and addressee for the current exchange (Myers-Scotton, 1983: 116).

Myers-Scotton (1992) suggests that there are four reasons for code-switching under the 'Markedness Model' of language choice:

- ◇ To make a series of unmarked choices in cases where the situational factors change during the course of the conversation and then a new code becomes unmarked.
- ◇ As an unmarked choice, to identify oneself socially with two or more codes in the same conversation.
- ◇ As a marked choice, to dissociate oneself (to build social distance) from other participants to the conversation.
- ◇ As an exploratory choice, when unsure about which norm (or code) applies to the given interaction.

Myers-Scotton proposes that her theory is capable of linking the social symbolism and the conversational strategies of individual speakers. However, Li Wei(1994) argues that the above claims have not been empirically proven, that Myers-Scotton has not explained how languages become marked or unmarked or how speakers acquire the set of rights and obligations in the given social interaction.

In a recent paper, Myers-Scotton (2002) addresses the issues of contention in her model. In this paper, she claims that there is quantitative evidence supporting the claim that in bilingual conversation the unmarked choice can be identified via a frequency-based criterion. Accordingly, frequency also identifies marked choice. Also, the same corpus of data shows that not all participants in the same conversation necessarily have the same unmarked choice. What is a 'marked' choice for one participant, can be an 'unmarked' choice for the other. Myers-Scotton concludes her paper as follows:

speakers make choices that they think will give them the best return, given the circumstances. Thus, the argument of the Markedness Model

and this paper is that marked choices⁵ should be interpreted as rationally-based; the speaker expects value from departing from his/her usual way of speaking. The good fit between these premises – that quantification can identify (un)marked choice and the deductive premise that marked choices are made because extraordinary value is expected – make an attractive basis for interpreting variation in code choice.

Building on the above theories of code-switching and other paradigms such as Bourdieu's linguistic marketplace (1982), in a study of the bilingual community in Quebec, Canada, Heller (1995) added a further strong motive to code-switching/language choice: the enhancement of political power/resistance. By choosing to speak the language they want to speak, the individuals in the community were resisting official sanctions of language choice.

Besides the possibly infinite list of factors for code-switching which caused Auer's dissatisfaction, another reason for his discontent with the list is that the categories of the language functions are ill-defined and that there is confusion between conversational structure, linguistic form and function of code-switching (for more details see Auer 1991: 326 -333 and 1995: 120 -123). Auer proposes that code-switching be analysed as a contextualisation cue.

The concept of contextualisation had been first proposed by Gumperz (1982, 1992). Auer explains it in general terms as follows:

Contextualisation comprises all those activities by participants which make relevant /maintain/revise /cancel some aspects of context which in

⁵ In reference to code-switching

turn is responsible for the interpretation of an utterance in its particular locus of occurrence (Auer, 1995: 123).

Li Wei (1994:18) explains that for both Gumperz and Auer “context is not something given *a priori* and influencing and determining linguistic detail, rather it is shaped, maintained and changed by participants continually in the course of interaction”. Contextual cues can be used by participants at the verbal level (prosodic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, rhetorical) (see for example Local, 1986) and the non-verbal level (gestures, kinesic and proxemic) (see Kendon, 1977). Gumperz (1982) called them ‘contextualisation conventions’ (or contextualisation cues).

3.2.3.1 Code-switching as contextual cue

Auer argues that code-switching or in his terminology code-alternation is a contextual cue and should be analysed as part of the context in which it occurs (sequential environment), on the same level as other context based cues. However, as a contextual cue, code-switching has characteristics of its own and therefore there is the need to specify its contextual value – in other words – it needs to be explained with “a theory of code-alternation”. Auer (1991 and 1995) identifies a number of sequential patterns of language choice. Four main patterns of code-alternation emerge:

Auer (1991 and 1995) identifies a number of sequential patterns of language choice. Four main patterns of code-alternation emerge:

1. Discourse related code-switching. Auer (1995:124-125) explains this pattern as follows: “A language of interaction ‘A’ has been established; at a certain point, speaker 1 switches to language ‘B’; this new language choice is accepted by speaker 2 as the new language of interaction so

that beyond the switching point only 'B' is used. " This code of alternation is usually interpreted as "contextualising some feature of the conversation" for example because of a shift in topic or activity type and etc... therefore, writes Auer, "I use the term discourse related code-switching" to describe this pattern of code alternation.

2. (Participants') preference related code-switching (the speakers are 'negotiating' what language they prefer to use and may (or may not) after a few conversational turns, end up using the same language. "The reasons for such a preference are an altogether different issue. By preference related, a speaker may simply want to avoid the language in which he or she feels insecure and speak the one in which he or she has greater competence" (Auer1995:125).

3. In this pattern, "bilingual speakers keep language choice open by switching between languages within a turn in a way that makes it impossible to decide if language 'A' or 'B' is the base language." (ibid, 126). Speaker 2 may continue to keep the language choice open or may choose the language s/he think appropriate or preferred. The choice of language can be due to conversational function, such "as in the case of reiterations for emphasis, or topic/comment switching" Therefore the code-switching occurring in the third pattern singled out by Auer can be discourse and (often) participants related.

4. In the fourth pattern the bilingual speaker may use a word from the other language and then go back to using the original code, not influencing the choice of the other participant/s to the conversation. This is designated by Auer as a *transfer*. Like the pattern above (3), it can be discourse and participants related.

"The cross-cutting dichotomies of discourse-vs participant-related code-alternation on the one hand, and code-switching vs transfer on the other

provide a theory for the ways in which code-alternation may become meaningful as a contextualisation cue" (ibid:126). The theory has been empirically used in a number of studies by Auer himself (1984, 1991) and partly refined and used by others (e.g. Alfonzetti, 1992; and Li Wei, 1994). Although Auer's theory is self-governing (no need of explanations from micro and macro theories of language choices) and *language choice* in code-alternation can be explained according to consistent categories, the social meaning of code-alternation needs to be extracted by *inferences* made in the 'here and now' of the situation and the given bilingual community. This meaning can be different according to the status given to the codes in the repertoire of the diverse bilingual communities. *Inferences* "become visible" according to Auer, through the analysis of the sequential embeddedness of code-alternation in conversation.

3.2.3.2 Code-switching and freedom of choice

Auer's theory accommodates bilingual speakers of different competencies, certainly more than previous 'conversational theories of code-switching' where there seemed to be a tendency to over-emphasise the degree of freedom that speakers have in controlling their choices of language. Romaine (1984) comments on the fact that language users are not "free agents". Actually, "people are constrained by the expressive resources available in the language(s) to which they have access and by the conventions which apply to their use (Romaine 1984: 37).

To illustrate this, the informants of my study, due to their competence (or lack of) in the languages available to them and social conventions of their use, could be "free agents" of language choice in only very few situations. Like so many in

Italian communities in language contact situations, they tend to code-switch often during the course of their communicative exchanges. In fact, studies of Italian communities in contact situations abound and their language use has been described with all shades of positiveness and negativeness. It has been reported that the languages are constantly switched –intertwined– in one kind of linguistic phenomenon which, for example when in contact with English in Australia has been the topic of heated discussion and variously defined as “Italo-Australian” or “Australitaliano” or “Italiase’ (Andreoni, 1967 and 1978; Leoni, 1981; Bettoni, 1985a, 1985b).

3.2.3.3 Italian language in Australia

Several scholars in the 1980s proposed that Australitaliano (Andreoni and Leoni’s terminology) ought to be considered a language in its own right. The exponents of this way of thinking wanted this variety to be the “Italian” language taught in schools, as, in their view, it was the only one reflecting the true cultural background of its speakers in Australia (Andreoni, 1988; Leoni, 1988.) In an attempt to further this point of view and standardise the ‘new’ language, Leoni (1981) had published a “Vocabolario Australitaliano”, a dictionary (in effect, rather a list) of lexis transferred from English and integrated in the Italian language which, according to him, were currently and regularly used in the Italian communities. Their arguments hinged on the concept that the new experiences encountered by the migrants in the new land, in a new environment, can only be adequately expressed using the lexis of the host language integrated in the native language. According to Andreoni (1988: 203) the Italian standard was totally inadequate to express the migrant experience. To the criticism that Australitaliano varies from (migrant) person to person to match their past and present life experience and therefore it is not

possible to standardise their local variety of language, Andreoni responded that its changeability was the best proof that Australitaliano was vital and important because it was born spontaneously from the need to describe a new experience in a new land. He was convinced that with the passing of time it would become common patrimony for all the ones who had gone through the migrant experience. He referred to the publication of Leoni's dictionary as the first step towards the not too far, in his opinion, standardisation of Australitaliano.

However, strong objections were put forward against the above way of thinking. McCormick (1982) argued that Australitaliano was a convenient means of communication only among Italian-Australians and Carsaniga (1984) stated categorically that only the Standard Italian could offer some prestige to its speakers and to the language itself. Bettoni (1981, 1985, 1987) offered an overview of the factors (based on qualitative and quantitative research data) that would make the proposition of the standardisation of Australitaliano untenable. As for the teaching of it in school, in 1981 Bettoni had stated her point unequivocally:

... in Australia, no subvariety of Australian Italian should be despised. All language varieties are legitimate, none is a corruption of another. All bilingual children should be encouraged to use as much as possible the languages they use at home. Nevertheless, schools can do better. There are no linguistic competences which annul each other. On the contrary, to be competent in one language is a good start to learn another.[...] teachers should lead students to compare and contrast Australian Italian with the target language, which for their own good must be the accepted one in present-day Italy. (Bettoni: 1981: 32).

Furthermore, findings from studies (eg. Bettoni and Gibbons 1988, Finocchiaro, 1995a) conducted to gauge the attitudes of Italian speakers in Australia towards this variety, showed that the speakers themselves did not consider it a legitimate form of language. Actually, although they used it effectively for everyday informal communication, they were very apologetic when they realised they did so, especially in front of people they thought could speak standard Italian and/or English 'properly'. They unambiguously declared that they would never consent to their children learning that variety of the Italian language formally.

Further investigations have been conducted in Australia and other nations (see also section 2.2.3) regarding the three languages (Italian, English- or other national language- and Dialect) available to the Italian speakers. Auer investigated Italian/German and Italian/Canadian-English bilinguals (1984, 1991); Panese, British-English /Italian (1992); Rubino, Australian-English/Italian (1987); Kinder, New-Zealand-English/Italian (1987b) and Tosi British-English/Italian (1979).

To sum up, it could be observed that when Italian speakers code-switch sometimes it could be their choice to do so. At other times, the code-switching and/or transfers from the national language to the native language may be an indication of expressive resources lacking in one of the languages in use and being drawn from the other. Codeswitching helps them to communicate.

Auer's theory to analyse code-switching as a contextual clue may help to understand which of the above factors is affecting the code-switch at a given time. His combination of conversation analysis strategies and indexical/sociolinguistic theories of code-switching deserves to be used for

further research to confirm its value as a reliable model of language maintenance, shift and choice.

However, Li and Tse (2002) state that all previous research on code-switching tends to rely on some interpretative, theoretical framework to analyse and interpret the data from a pre-conceived framework point of view and fit the results into it. They wanted to try to find out their answers to code-switching from the point of view of the competent bilingual speaker. In a study they conducted with twelve Hong-Kong Chinese university students, they hoped to tap into the metalinguistic knowledge of the participants and describe from within what were the factors that induced code-alternation. In the study the twelve students were asked not to use English for one day, and to record those expressions they wanted to use (in English) but could not. The conclusion of the study brought to Li and Tse the realisation that

It would be unwise for any theoretical model of code-alternation which claims to have universal validity and explanatory adequacy to leave out the bilingual's concern for, and "calculation" of, referential meaning in the communication process. The notion of "translation equivalence" is illusory. A theory of code-alternation which takes no account of the meaning making potential of the linguistic signs themselves fails to do justice to code-alternation as a semiotic system (Li and Tse, 2002: 184).

The referential meaning in the communication process discussed by Li and Tse is similar to the communicative function Andreoni attributes to the Australitaliano. Clyne (1991) and Bettoni (1985) also acknowledged that direct translation in the native tongue of words related to life-experiences acquired in a different place and language do not appear to be adequate. However, Li and

Tse contend, that although acknowledged in the past, this factor has not been given enough prominence and that their study's findings "furnish strong evidence that referential meaning deserves a place –alongside social and discourse meanings- in code-alternation research" (Li and Tse, 2002: 184).

The sociolinguistic quest for the optimum way of describing the way bilinguals utilize their language potential continues unabated. Researchers keep on revising and refining their findings with every study, finding a different way of improving and clarifying their thinking. Therefore, an open and cautious approach is in order. As far as this project is concerned, the emphasis is on LM/LS. Any analysis of speech to demonstrate what is being maintained is subordinate to that. However, in the investigation of Italian language use by three generations of informants in this study, the above literature overview provides factual background to help identify sociolinguistic factors at play in the informants' language use.

3.2.4 Psycholinguistics and code –switching

The *psycholinguistics of bilingualism*, which is of interest for this overview, attempts to describe and explain the operations that take place during the processing of language but concentrates on people who know two or more languages. In the early literature the most discussed issue in relation to individual bilingualism is the distinction between different types of bilingualism. Weinreich (1968) discussed three types depending on how the concepts of a language were encoded in the individual's mind. The three types were: coordinate bilingualism (the individual learns the languages in separate environments and the words of the two languages are kept separate with each word having its own specific meaning); compound bilingualism (the

individual learns the two languages in the same context where they are used concurrently so that there is a merged representation of the languages in the brain); sub-ordinate bilingualism (the individual interprets words of their weaker language through the words of the stronger language – the dominant language is a filter for the other). He believed that the differences resulted from the way the individual learned the two languages.

Studies conducted based on the hypothesis of separate contexts of language acquisition were never able to prove definitely that individual bilinguals functioned in the way suggested above. Briefly, Diller (1970) came to the conclusion that the distinction between compound and coordinate bilingualism is a conceptual artefact and does not receive support in the experimental literature. Perecman (1984:61) suggested that the terms compound and coordinate be used to refer to alternative strategies for using more than one language and not to discuss structural differences of how multiple languages are constructed into the brain (for a historical overview of research in bilingualism within cognitive psychology see Keatley, 1992).

In the bilingual psycholinguistic literature, according to Grosjean (1995) the emphasis has been on three issues: the first, as described above, was based on the independence of the two languages; the second investigated if bilinguals possessed one or two internal lexicons; the third endeavoured to prove if bilinguals have the ability to keep their two languages separate (e.g. it has been postulated the existence of a language switch which allows bilinguals to 'switch off' the language not in use). Results from experimental studies were inconclusive. Paradis (1980) proposed that bilinguals are probably using activation and deactivation procedures to keep their languages separate in the monolingual mode and to make them interact in the bilingual mode (discussion

about 'language modes' will follow in this section). At present, states Grosjean (1995:259 -260):

It is generally accepted that the bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person, but a unique speaker-hearer using one language, the other language, or both together depending on the interlocutor, situation, topic, etc.

Furthermore, bilinguals:

Have developed competencies in their languages to the extent required by their needs and those of the environment. ...

Level of fluency in a language will depend on the need for that language and will be domain-specific, hence the 'fossilised' competencies of many bilinguals in their different languages.

This would confirm that the mind's processing of language is due to the interaction of micro and macro linguistic and sociolinguistic factors. The combination of these factors influences the 'language mode' of the bilingual individual and the level, if any, of interference between his/her languages (discussion of which has been undertaken in previous sections).

Lately, *language mode* is one of the elements in bilingual research that has been accorded considerable attention. Grosjean (1995 and 2001) considers it of vital importance "to account for how mixed language processing takes place so rapidly and so efficiently, despite, as we know, the need for many intricate underlying operations (1995: 273)." *Language mode* is a situational continuum

along which the bilingual individual situates him/herself when wants or must use either one of the languages s/he knows, two languages, or a more or less greater mixture of the two. Therefore, at one end of the continuum the bilinguals are in a totally monolingual mode (the situation is such where they must use only one of their languages), while at the other end of the continuum the bilinguals are in a condition where they can use both of their languages and where they can code-switch or borrow etc. When speaking of “language modes” (monolingual or bilingual), Grosjean usually refers to the two end points of the continuum but, he continues,

we should keep in mind that intermediary levels exist between the two. We should note also that bilinguals differ among themselves as to the extent they travel along the continuum; some rarely find themselves at the bilingual end (purists, language teachers, etc.) whereas others rarely leave this end (bilinguals who live in tight-knit bilingual communities where a form of mixed language is one of the language norms). (ibid:262).

Language mode in Grosjean’s terminology must not be confused with *base language*, although some researchers have used it with this meaning. “Base language” in Grosjean’s work is seen as *the main language of interaction* chosen by the bilingual individual for the linguistic task s/he is performing (or asked to perform). However, when s/he is in the bilingual language mode, the individual has the ‘choice’ to ‘switch’ (Grosjean’s terminology) the ‘base language’ to fulfil a change of situation/interlocutor/ topic/function. This is when code-switching/ borrowing happens, perhaps promoted or facilitated, for example, by ‘trigger-words’ - which are “words at the intersection of two language systems which, consequently, may cause speakers to lose their bearings and continue the

sentence in the other language” (Clyne, 1991:193; see also Clyne, 2003, Chapter Five –where the *facilitation model* is introduced in substitution. To illustrate, Clyne maintains that lexical items alone (trigger-words) may not be solely responsible for the switch -or transversion- from one language to the other, but they can *facilitate* the switch. This re-thinking of his previous theory had led to the introduction of *facilitation as a concept* for code-switching and the ensuing *facilitation model*).

Grosjean asserts that the usefulness of the ‘language mode’ variable in languages in contact has been demonstrated from studies with many diverse bilingual populations in many different situations. For example, there has been research that pertains to language production (e.g. Treffers-Daller, 1998). This has led Treffers-Daller to the conclusion that the language-mode continuum-concept may offer a new approach to study variable code-switching patterns within and between communities because it can help predict the frequency and type of switching that takes place. There has been research pertaining to language perception (Caramazza et al, 1973; Elman, Diehl & Buchwald, 1977; Grainger & Beauvillain, 1987) where the results changed according to the position taken by the individual along the bilingual language continuum. The concept of the language-mode continuum has also been useful in studies related to language acquisition (e.g. Lanza (1992) and Nicoladis & Genesee (1998) and language pathology (e.g. Marty & Grosjean, (1998). Studies of how the ‘language mode’ concept functions in ‘highly dominant language bilinguals’ [Genesee, Nicoladis & Paradis (1995) and Nicoladis & Genesee (1998)] have also proved to be important. The studies have shown that those bilinguals cannot fully control their language mode, possibly due to limitations in competence in one of their languages. From the results of these studies, Grosjean concludes:

There is increasing evidence, direct and indirect that language mode plays an important role in language processing as well as in language acquisition and language pathology (1999: 14).

3.3 The social network perspective

Another variable which researchers of languages in contact consider as an important factor to predict language maintenance/shift and choice is the 'social network' of the bilingual individuals. Li Wei (1994) believes that 'the social network perspective' has the potential to generate a reliable model of language maintenance/shift/choice by combining the variables of the macro-interactional perspective with that of the micro-interactional perspective. The social network analysis used nowadays to conduct research in the sociolinguistic field was developed in the 1960s and 1970s by a group of mainly English social anthropologists. In some ways, the social network concept overlaps with the *domains* of language behaviour theory (see 3.1.1.3), but whilst domains identify specific places where specific people use a given language for specific topics (and usually the people in question are seen as speaking the languages they know "equally well" (Fishman, 1968:22), this is not necessarily the case with the social network where the boundaries of place, interlocutors, topics and, above all, proficiency of the speakers in any of the languages in questions are rather flexible. What the social network emphasises is the social identity of the speaker (Milroy, 1987) which determines the language to use.

Li Wei (1994: 29) suggests that the social network has been introduced into sociolinguistics as an alternative to social class in identifying speaker groups. Social Class can lead to the fragmentation of the society into many different groups and as Milroy points out: "... Membership of a group labelled 'lower-

middle-class' does not necessarily form an important part of a person's definition of his social identity". (Milroy, 1987:14). Milroy suggests that smaller-scale categories, which reflect the fact that there are social units to which people feel a sense of belonging, eg.the *social network*, can be a more useful concept for analysis purposes of the social and linguistic behaviour of a community. The *social network* can be defined as *a collective of people with whom one interacts on a regular basis*.

One of the fundamental claims of the network analysis is that individuals create personal communities which provide them with a meaningful framework for solving the problems of day-to-day existence (Mitchell, 1986), but also, "...by pressure and inducements, participants impose linguistic norms on each other" (Gal 1979:14 – see also Bott, 1957). In the community, ties between its participants are forged. Strong ties and weak ties and the variation in "the structure of different individuals personal social networks will, for a number of reasons, systematically affect the way they use the two languages in the community repertoire" (Milroy and Li Wei, 1995: 138).

The participants in my study belong to the group of migrants originating from poor European countries who migrated after the Second World War. These include Italians, Greeks, Spaniards and Portuguese, as identified by Dabène and Moore (1995). As detailed in Chapter Four, the pattern of migration of my informants followed the one of the migrants of that era. Generally, the males in the family arrived first in the host country. The families followed. After that, other villagers, invited by the early settlers, migrated establishing a chain-migration pattern. The new arrivals settled in the same area as the early migrants thus accentuating voluntary clustering. The sharing of geographical origins, common language (or dialect) traditions and social norms brought

these migrants into forming a community, while at the same time distancing them from the host society.

At the beginning of their stay in the host country, the communities formed by the migrants had all the hallmarks of Fishman's compartmentalisation (see 3.1.1.2). The ties between individuals in the community were very strong and were directed to maintaining and enforcing cultural and linguistic norms. However, after settlement, when the new/young generation reached the socialisation stage, the life of the migrants entered another phase. This generation was born or had settled at an early stage in the host country and was educated in a language and a culture often at odds with the one they shared with their community group (Dabène and Moore, 1995). It was at this stage that the strategies undertaken by a given community or individuals in the community in regard to the preservation or otherwise of their social and linguistic norms acquired relevance. Milroy and Li Wei postulate that the analysis of the language/s used by individuals within and between their social networks can help differentiate between those migrant groups which have the probability of maintaining their community languages and those which do not.

When undertaking my research in the migration countries of my informants, I realised the possibility of the social network used as a strategy to ascertain if and to what an extent a minority group is using and maintaining its language. Also, if conducted along a historical timeline, I thought, it could help in illustrating the timing of the changes in patterns of language use by my informants. Therefore, using data collected through interviews, cross-checking, documents available and observation I reconstructed the social network of my informants from their arrival in the host countries (1950s) to the time of data

collection for this study (1996/97). This strategy was of great value in helping me establish both the present use of Italian by all informants (which is at the core of this study's scope) as well as giving me insights into the reasons for changes in patterns of language use that had occurred through time

3.4 Other perspectives on language maintenance and language shift

This section is dedicated to factors affecting the linguistic behaviour of minority groups. These factors may be cultural, social, individual or historical and may relate to conditions in the country of origin as well as in the host country. Some of these factors are defined as 'clearcut factors' (they promote language maintenance). Others are better described as 'ambivalent' in that they can lead to language maintenance (LM) or language shift (LS). Some are seen to be working in isolation, others acquire meaning when they are interrelated. Usually these factors are presented as taxonomic models and qualified in their value according to the significance given to them by the scientists analysing them.

3.4.1 Factors affecting language maintenance and language shift

Kloss (1966) identified a list of factors to explain LM/LS in a German community in America. He divided his factors in 'clearcut' and 'ambivalent'. When investigating the Australian multilingual situation, Clyne (1982, 1991) used as a framework Kloss' taxonomy of factors but adapted it to make it relevant to the needs of modern multilingual societies. Following Kloss, Clyne divided his list of factors into *Clearcut Factors* and *Ambivalent Factors*. However, in Clyne's list there are numerous factors that have not been included in Kloss's list and that I see as relevant to this study.

Kloss's clearcut factors relevant to migrant studies conducted in the twentieth century are:

- (i) early point of immigration,
- (ii) 'Sprachinseln' (linguistic enclave),
- (iii) membership of a denomination with parochial school,
- (iv) pre-emigration experience with LM.

To these, Clyne added:

- (v) status and usefulness of the ethnic language,
- (vi) grandparents,
- (vii) dialect or other non standard variety.

Kloss's ambivalent factors are:

- (i) Educational level of the migrant,
- (ii) numerical strength,
- (iii) linguistic and cultural similarity,
- (iv) attitude of the majority to the language or group,
- (v) sociocultural characteristics.

To these, Clyne added:

- (vi) ethnic denominations,
- (vii) political situation in the homeland,
- (viii) personal characteristics.

The factors from the clear-cut list which are relevant to the informants in this study are:

- ◇ Status and usefulness of the ethnic language
- ◇ Grandparents
- ◇ Dialect or other non standard variety

From the list of the 'ambivalent factors', those that emerge as relevant to the informants are:

- ◇ Attitude of the majority to the language or group
- ◇ Sociocultural characteristics
- ◇ Personal characteristics

These factors are reviewed in the next sections.

3.4.1.1 Status and usefulness of the ethnic language

The 'market-place' theory is an explanation of the process of LM/LS presented in socio-economic terms. It is related to the *status of a language* (*language status* will be further discussed when reviewing Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) "Ethnolinguistic Vitality" model). Clyne reports that other scholars (e.g. Jaspaert and Kroon, 1988) have discussed and developed the concept of the 'linguistic market place' introduced by Bourdieu (1982). Bourdieu explains that a language will survive as long as it is socioeconomically useful. Clyne says that this notion was developed independently by Haugen (1980:114) who wrote:

Language competence is a skill with a market value that determines who will acquire it. Even the first language we learn will be maintained only if it serves as a medium of communication with speakers with whom we wish to communicate.

The concept of serviceable use of language is stressed even more strongly in this new century given that "the commodification of languages is becoming

increasingly significant with the domination of market forces in all domains of society' (Clyne, 2003:68)".

A notion similar to the "serviceable use of language" is expressed in the *cross-over* theory postulated by Fishman (1991). The 'cross-over' strategy is used by individuals dissatisfied with their own group. They perceive their group as inferior in comparison to the dominant group and want to acquire membership in the group which is seen as superior. Fishman reports that the research (Patterson, 1975; Smith, 1975) appeared to support the view that in the past it was assumed that when a person tried to free himself/herself of the ties of his own ethnicity, the result was a rational, free person with no ethnic loyalties whatsoever. Newer inquiries recognise that some other form of ethnicity, for example re-ethnification and assimilation into a new ethnicity, is by far the usual outcome of the process. These inquiries, according to Fishman, have introduced new facets to the area of 'ethnicity cross-over'. They recognise that 'modern' man considers all of

his social, cultural and even physical attributes as 'options' to be put to use as judiciously as possible in pursuit of self-selected, achieved status goals. 'Modern' man is not only viewed (perhaps exaggeratedly) as a shrewd calculator of membership benefits, but as a sensitive recognizer of alternative value systems and of the built-in (de)limitations in any ethnicity system. It implies that there are alternative guides to behaviour and to identity than ethnicity, an implication that ethnicity systems themselves may not recognise. (Fishman, 1989: 37)

Cross-over, Fishman continues, is a very gradual process, something that more often than not is unconscious, as so very much of ethnicity is, and it is a 'two-

way street'. The cross-over strategy could be considered a precursor to Fishman's (1991) theory of *reversal of language shift* and the model he proposed to reverse LS: the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) reviewed in section 3.1.1.4.

3.4.1.2 Grandparents

Clyne highlights the importance for mother tongue maintenance of *Grandparents*. Clyne (1982: 30) expresses the opinion that 'in this respect, the extended family structure may be more conducive to language ecology than the nuclear family'. The home domain (see 3.1.1.3) and particularly relations with older relatives who don't speak well –if at all- the national language is one of the situations that elicit the use of the community language, especially within the extended family, as in the case when grandparents look after their preschool grandchildren, which is very common within the Italian community. However, entry into primary school "could have a dramatic effect, with the institution and the peer group and their English replacing the grandparents and their language" (Clyne, 2003: 34) therefore leading to LS.

3.4.1.3 Dialect or other non standard variety

Clyne observes that dialects or non standard varieties of the language spoken by an ethnic group may have less resistance to LS than the standard varieties. This position seems to be in opposition with Ferguson (1959) and Bettoni (1989) who claims that in diglossic speech communities, it is usually the most prestigious and formal language that disappears first, the reason being that its functions are taken over by the dominant language, while the dialect is maintained because it is used in the family domain. The divergence of opinions

confirms the factor as ambivalent rather than a clearcut one. It is also one that has some relevance for the Italian communities. Bettoni (1981) and Bettoni and Gibbons (1988), although recognising the usefulness of dialects for their users, explain that the use of the many Italian dialects fragments linguistically the Italian community, giving misleading results in regards to the actual maintenance of Italian when censuses are taken (all varieties/dialects of Italian in the census are defined as 'Italian').

3.4.1.4 Attitude of the majority to the language or group

Clyne argues that the factor of *attitudes of the majority to the minority language*, can influence strongly the LM/LS of the group. Many people do not maintain a suppressed language (for example, Clyne reports, the immediate LS following the antagonism shown to everything that was German during World War One). However intolerance of minority language use sometimes pushes people to resist the shift, while a more tolerant attitude sometime can lead to apathy and LS.

While residing in their host countries, the participants in this study have been through both periods of intolerance towards the use of minority languages and periods of tolerance. The effect this has had on the use of their community language varies from country to country and individual to individual. Clearly, this is an ambivalent factor which can lead to either LM or LS.

3.4.1.5 Sociocultural characteristics

Sociocultural characteristics are factors that behave differently from other ambivalent factors. They could be compared to Smolicz's theory of 'language-

as-a-core-value' (see 3.1.1.3). As discussed in that section, these factors do not usually affect LM/LS in isolation but appear to be more effective in combination of factors important to specific minority groups (i.e. the value the Italians give to the family unit transcends that of their language. However to be able to communicate with the family and to keep it united, migrant Italians of first, second and third generations need to use their CL. This combination of factors leads to LM). It could then be said that sociocultural characteristics as LM factors are dependent on the importance minority groups attribute to them, therefore ambivalent.

3.4.1.6 Personal characteristics

The last factor chosen from Clyne's taxonomy for discussion is *personal characteristics*. Characteristics such as gender and age play a large part in LM/LS. In first generation minority groups the females maintain the home language better than males (Johnston, 1976; Smolicz and Harris, 1976, also Clyne 1991). In the South American group the gender variation of LM/LS tends to be smaller than in more established groups such as German speakers, Hungarians and Dutch (Clyne, 2003). This gender factor related to the more established groups appears to apply also to the Italian groups. Clyne attributes this to the higher degree of exogamy in the newer groups in comparison to the more established ones, since exogamy is a factor of LS in the home. In fact *exogamy* is a very important factor in predicting LS in the second generation. Clyne and Kipp (1997: 463) demonstrate that for all minority groups there is a considerably higher shift for those descended from exogamous marriages than those from endogamous ones. The *age* factor of the speakers is also very important. Clyne (2003) explains that language functions as a marker of age group identity. In the German enclaves of the 19th century, according to Clyne's

data, people were identified as having proficiency in German largely on the basis of their age. For at least a generation, communication with older people was an important factor in language maintenance. It appears that same has occurred in successive immigrant groups from all over the world. Often this is because the grandparent generation has little or no proficiency in the language of the host country. In this case, where first generation is concerned, the older the speaker the more LM.

The data relating to gender and age, differ slightly when applied to the second generation. In the second generation, it would appear that LS in females is only slightly lower than in males. When applied to second generation, the age factor reverses its pattern: the older the speaker, the more LS. Age for the second generation is also linked to the order of birth in the family, for example the first born will always be more exposed to the community language than his/her siblings (Bettoni, 1986). In fact, in a further study investigating the language behaviour of Italians in Australia, Bettoni and Rubino (1996: 74 see also 3.1.1.3) report that parents of both first and second generation appear to discriminate between the way they interact with their first born (with whom they use more Italian and/or Dialect) and the following progeny (with whom they use mostly English).

Personal characteristics, particularly gender, can also be linked to socio-cultural core values. For traditional and cultural reasons in many ethnic groups, females are expected to be more submissive to parental control (Johnston, 1976). As future mothers, they are also expected to be the guardians and transmitters of core values to future generations (Pauwels, 1985).

According to the reports of the literature above and the data of this study, it would appear that the combination of *personal characteristics* factors can predict rather reliably the intergenerational patterns of LM/LS in minority groups.

3.4.2 Other models of language maintenance and language shift

The perspectives on LM/LS discussed from section 3.4.1 to 3.4.1.6 are based on Kloss' and Clyne's taxonomies of factors relevant to LM/LS. The review above has demonstrated that these taxonomies have been widely used as bases for research and analysis when assessing LM/LS in migrant settings since the 1960s. This section examines other models of LM/LS such as Conklin and Lourie 's taxonomy (1983) (which is similar to Kloss' taxonomy but modified to include factors relevant to the contemporary immigrant American urban situation), Fishman's predictive model (1985) and Giles, Bourhis and Taylor's ethnolinguistic vitality model (1977).

3.4.2.1 Conklin and Lourie 's taxonomy

The factors affecting LM/LS included in Conklin and Lourie's taxonomy (1983) are generally considered clear-cut and divided according to political, social, demographic, cultural and linguistic factors (many of the factors duplicate the ones outlined in preceding sections and therefore I will not discuss them any further here). As Kloss's, this taxonomy presents the factors affecting LM/LS as working in isolation which, as argued above, hardly seems to be the case in reality. Research and analysis of data (se e.g. Clyne 1982, 1991, 2003 and Clyne and Kipp 1997) have repeatedly shown that usually LM or LS is better explained by a combination of factors.

3.4.2.2 Fishman's predictive model

A model that cautiously predicts the LM/LS of minority groups is Fishman's quantitative model (1985, 158-166). Fishman based his model on a combination of demographic and cultural/ethnic factors to predict and explain the relative rates of survival of community languages in the United States. The predictive measures are:

- (1) The adjusted claimants. The number of mother-tongue claimants and their median age at the time of the last census (1979)
- (2) The institutional criterion. The sum of institution/claimants ratios across institutional fields: local religious units, media (periodicals, radio and TV stations) and schools
- (3) The compromise criterion. This is a compromise between (1) and (2).

According to the three criteria the top four languages in each category are:

- (1) Spanish, Italian, French and German;
- (2) Hebrew, Korean, Albanian and Thai/Lao;
- (3) Spanish, Hebrew, German and Polish.

From the analysis of the results obtained using each criterion, Fishman (1985:166) claims that the criterion 3 is the most reliable (by this criterion Italian group takes 8th place for its efforts in LM).

Clyne (2003) considers Fishman's model highly applicable and easy to work with, however, he finds that there are difficulties when the criteria are applied

to other data. The most noticeable being the assumed linear relationship between the number of institutions and LM. While it is hoped that LM institutions promote LM, it is not known which ones are actually succeeding in doing so.

3.4.2.3 Giles, Bourhis and Taylor's ethnolinguistic vitality model

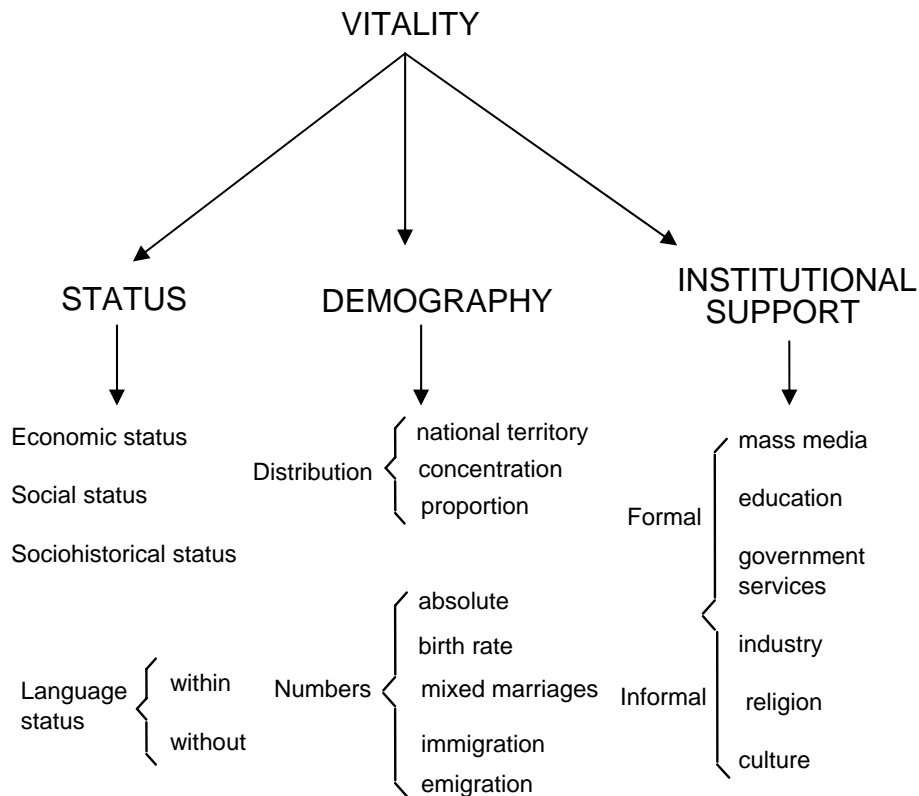
Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) have also tried to systematise the many factors operating in a given intergroup situation hypothesising a theory of language in ethnic group relations which explains why the intergroup relations take one course rather than another.

Giles *et al's* theory comprises three parts. (a)*structural analysis*; (b) *sociopsychological analysis*; (c) *theoretical analysis*.

(a) Structural Analysis

Giles' structural analysis is illustrated in figure 3.1.

FIGURE 3.1 A taxonomy of the structural variables affecting ethnolinguistic vitality



The vitality of an ethnolinguistic group, Giles *et al* explain, is that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations (1977: 308). The more vitality a group has, the more likely it is to resist

assimilation and maintain its distinctive features, of which language is the primary one; the less vital the group is, the more will be its assimilation to the dominant group. A group's vitality, following the parameters set by Giles *et al*, can be objectively measured and assessed to ascertain if its vitality as a minority group is high, medium or low. However, they caution that the objective assessment does not always correspond with the group's subjective assessment of its own vitality and

Indeed it could be argued that a group's subjective assessment of its vitality may be as important as the objective reality. Hence it is possible for dominant groups to manipulate the information reaching subordinate groups through the mass media (if not the factors directly themselves) in such a manner as to attenuate their perception of vitality. (Giles *et al*, 1977: 318).

(b) *Sociopsychological Analysis*

Giles *et al*'s theoretical framework for studying the role of language in ethnic group relations is derived from two independent conceptual systems:

(i) Tajfel's *theory of intergroup relations and social change*, and

(ii) Giles' *theory of interpersonal accommodation through speech*. Giles claims both theories, have proved to be useful in understanding intergroup relations and interpersonal speech modifications.

(i) *Tajfel's Theory of Intergroup Relations*

Tajfel's (1974) theory of social intergroup relations is a general one and not limited to ethnic groups contexts. The theory describes how people from the moment they are born are active in defining both themselves and the world. Comparing self to others self is one way in which people categorize themselves socially. People's knowledge of their social category and the value (either positive or negative) they attach to it defines their social identity. However, this 'identity' is not fixed "but is potentially changeable, depending on the social setting in which one finds oneself" (McNamara, 1987:35). When there is socio-cultural change – as in the case of immigration – changes in social identity are expected as a result of the changed intergroup context. Individuals may decide to maintain their own group identity and if unhappy with it re-categorize the

group's attributes to make being part of it desirable. Alternatively, they can move to the group perceived as more prestigious and redefine their social identity. As individuals redefine their social identity, their language attitudes and behaviour will also change. The future of a group's existence and its linguistic vitality in an intergroup context is therefore based on the ability of its members to accept and define in positive terms their group's social identity.

(ii) *Giles' Theory of Speech Accommodation*

Giles' speech accommodation theory is concerned with the reasons and social consequences underlining the changes in people's speech styles. It has been previously discussed that speech style and language choice depend on the setting, topic and role-relationship. Giles *et al* (1977: 322) propose that

the extent to which individuals shift their speech style towards, or away from the speech style of their interlocutors is a mechanism by which social approval or disapproval is communicated. A shifting speech style toward that of another is termed convergence, whereas a shift away from the other's style of speech represents divergence.

Giles *et al* (1977: 322) writes that when two people meet there is a tendency for them to become more alike in their languages, accents, speech rates, pauses and utterance lengths and so forth; in short, to converge. Convergence is acceptance of the other's speech and ways. Non converging speech is disapproval or refusal to accept the other's ways. Non-converging speech is an important medium often used by ethnic groups as a symbolic tactic for maintaining their identity and cultural distinctiveness.

(c) *Language and Ethnic Group Relations: a Theoretical Analysis*

In this third part of the theory of language in ethnic group relations, Giles *et al*, using Tajfel's key concepts (social categorisation, social identity, social comparison, psychological distinctiveness and cognitive alternatives) integrate the structural variables with the sociopsychological factors. The result is a theory that indicates once again interrelatedness of factors, as emphasised in preceding sections.

Giles *et al*'s theory suggests that the sociopsychological factors acting upon group members influence their language behaviour and therefore decide whether LM/LS occurs. They also state that the sociopsychological factors are strongly influenced by the structural variables. The structural variables, "the backdrop for particular ethnic group contexts" (1977: 343), are instrumental to the vitality of the minority groups. Giles *et al* also claim that it has been ascertained that the more vitality a group has the more the possibility of LM and the less vitality the more LS.

Giles *et al*'s model for vitality and intergroup relations is very attractive and appears to be very straightforward in its application. However, the overview of the factors affecting LM/LS outlined in preceding sections demonstrates how difficult it is to establish the effect of the structural factors on LM/LS, especially when taken in isolation. In example, Clyne (2003) discusses the effect of *language status* on minority groups vitality drawing from the analysis results of very recent data. His data do not show any evidence that international status of language has positive effects on the maintenance of that language when it is in an immigrant context. In Australia, languages of wider communication as German and French have undergone a high shift and the intergenerational transmission of Italian has declined substantially. These languages are taught in schools and universities and enjoy high status in the wider community. On the

contrary, Macedonian, Turkish and Greek, which are not as widely taught in Australia, record low shift rates. However, *language status* seems to correlate positively with LM when a minority language is in contact with a majority language which is perceived by the members of the minority group as less influential than their own. For example Dutch has been maintained successfully in competition with various languages, including English, in parts of South Africa before the evolution into Afrikaans. Nor do structural variables correlate always with *sociopsychological factors* in the way outlined by the model (positive interrelationship between structural variables and sociopsychological factors determines LM, a negative one determines LS). Poor vitality group, due to weak structural support, may lead to changes in social and linguistic identity, however, as demonstrated by some of my data in this study, it does not necessarily lead to intergenerational LS. Other factors come into play which overrule the straightforward correlation of structural/ sociopsychological variables.

Clyne (2003:57) considers the ethnolinguistic vitality model particularly suited to binary systems with choice between two dominant languages or ones with a stable minority such as the communities discussed by Bourhis in a paper on "Reversing Language Shift in Quebec" (2001), rather than to multicultural societies such as the ones investigated in the present study (Australia, United States and France). In that same paper, Bourhis discusses the ethnolinguistic vitality framework and Fishman's GIDS (1991). He remarks that the two models would gain from working together in establishing the prospects of LM/LS of a minority group. He writes:

Just as the objective vitality framework can be improved by the RSL model, the converse is also true. The RSL model can also be enriched by

including in its analysis the full range of factors used to assess the relative vitality of language groups. It is clear from our Quebec example that the vitality framework can provide a more systematic tool of analysis for guiding RSL efforts than what remains implied in the RSL framework proposed by Fishman (1991). (Bourhis, 2001: 111)

Bourhis suggests that, in the case of Quebec, if an analysis had been conducted in the 1970s using only the quasi-implicational scale of GIDS, the need for legislation in favour of RLS would not have been recognised. It was the analysis conducted with the vitality framework which alerted the researchers to the weak position of French and other vitality factors such as institutional support and demography, hence the mobilisation of the French community and their efforts for RLS.

Thus it may be more useful to consider the vitality framework as a necessary *complementary* component of Fishman's (1991) graded intergenerational disruption scale rather than just the reverse analogue of the GIDS scale (Bourhis, 2001: 111).

Bourhis' suggestion regarding the complementarity of these two models (Vitality Framework and GIDS) will be explored and implemented in the following chapter when assessing the language situation of the Italian communities in the USA, Australia and France.

3.5 Summary and conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the theoretical and analytical background to this thesis. The theoretical perspectives of LM/LS cover a wide

spectrum. They have progressed from presentation of the context in which LM/LS occurs to linguistic analyses of minority groups living in language contact situations and explanations of the process of LM/LS as a social phenomenon.

The dimension of LM/LS as a social phenomenon is the one of major interest to this study. In regard to this dimension, the literature review in this chapter has shown that no single model, theory or taxonomy of factors can convincingly explain LM/LS. Integration of approaches would explain LM/LS in multilingual societies more credibly. Hence following Bourhis' suggestion, (2001:11) when investigating the Italian language situation in the United States, Australia and France (Chapter Four), I have adopted an integrated approach using as tools the Vitality Framework (Giles et al, 1977) and the GIDS (Fishman, 1991) as complementary component of the analysis.

In addition to the assessment of the Italian language situation in the three countries of interest to this study, the following chapter explores the informants' sociocultural and sociolinguistic background.

CHAPTER FOUR

The sociocultural and sociolinguistic context of the study

United States - Australia - France

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the sociocultural and sociolinguistic context of this study is examined through the review of the settlement of Italian migrants in the three countries of interest to this study: United States of America, Australia and France. The immigration, education and language policies of the three countries are outlined in general and with specific reference to the period of residence in the host countries by the participants to the study: the 1950s onwards. The data for the case studies were collected in the late 1990s (1996 and 1997). Therefore the period of time that needs to be reviewed has been divided in two parts: 1950–1980 and 1981 to the late 1990s. The first period is relevant to the settlement of the GPG in the host country and the birth and/or education of the PG. The second period is the span of time during which the CG was born and educated. This study focuses on the use of Italian by the CG. In the censuses of the three nations there are no specific data related to minority groups once they have reached the third generation. Therefore, using Giles *at al* (1977) model of ethnolinguistic vitality in conjunction with Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), an attempt is made to establish the type of Italian environment in which the CG informants grew up and were (are) educated and socialised by their parents, as well as the local and general community/society.

In the process of evaluating the present situation of each of the three Italian communities, the role that the Italian government plays for the maintenance of the Italian language abroad is also examined to ascertain what support is given by the home-land to the three communities abroad in the quest for maintenance of the Italian language and culture. To conclude, there is a discussion of the impact that the above mentioned immigration, education and language policies have had on the three Italian communities in respect to their culture and language maintenance over the five decades of their residence in the three countries.

4.1 Italians in the United States of America

At the end of the 19th century the United States of America was rapidly transforming from a mostly agricultural country to an industrial one. The manpower readily available in the land was insufficient. Immigration (old immigration) of Northern European countries had been well established for decades. Now, authorities turned to a new kind of immigration to fulfil their immediate needs, that is, the labour needed to run the machinery. They opened their country to immigration from Southern Europe. It was at this point that the Italians and other Southern European groups began to arrive in great number in the USA.

Altogether, between 1890 and 1950 over 4,700,000 Italians emigrated to the United States. The census of 1940 showed that the 4,594,780 Italian-Americans constituted 13% of the 'foreign stock' of the USA (individuals born in countries other than the USA or with a parent born outside the USA). At that time, this made the Italians the second largest national grouping in the United States, exceeded only slightly by the German-Americans (Grossman, 1975). In the

1950s, when the GPG of informants in this study migrated to the USA, they were *not* part of a great wave of mass immigration. They were part of the very small residual flow of Italians that were still allowed into the country.

4.1.1 Italians in the United States of America: the period 1950 -1980

When the Italian immigrants of the 1950s arrived in the USA, they were part of an ethnic group in which the majority had already reached the 3rd and 4th generations. As a minority group, the Italo-Americans were well established and generally well accepted in the mainstream society.

To understand the sociocultural and sociolinguistic milieu in which the Italian immigrants of the 1950s found themselves, it is necessary to step back to the period of the Italian mass migration to the USA, examine their settlement patterns and the ways in which the mainstream society reacted to these immigrants and vice versa.

At the beginning of the 20th century, when the Italians, especially the Southern Italians, arrived in the USA in great number, they were neither welcomed nor appreciated. From the 'old' Americans point of view, the Italians worked, lived, and generally behaved in too 'foreign' and unacceptable manner. Although from a primarily agricultural society, the vast majority of Italian immigrants decided to live and work in big urban centres. Regardless of how difficult and crowded the life in the big urban centres of America was, they chose to stay there, forming 'little colonies' in inner cities apartment blocks, filled (but not exclusively) with relations and friends from their native village/town/region. They were not concerned about the living conditions as most of these migrants thought of that life as 'temporary'. They were convinced that soon, by working

hard and saving their earnings, they would have enough money to go back and create for themselves a 'better life at home' in their own country.

The little colonies they established in the big American cities came to be known as 'Little Italies'. 'Little Italies' were seen by the mainstream society as ghettos where living conditions were defined by Di Donato (1937) as 'sordid'.

Regardless of how bad the living conditions in the 'little Italies' were, they had some positive functions for their inhabitants. They shielded "the newcomers from the bewildering ways and demands of an alien and restless society" (Lopreato, 1970: 45). However, the continual existence of these colonies depended on the sustained inflow of new immigrants. The Italian immigration in the 1940s and 1950s was reduced to a trickle.

4.1.1.1 At 'home' in the USA

Once the dream of a triumphal return to their native land was dismissed, the Italian Americans turned their interest to the owning of a house in the new land, since "home ownership is the cornerstone of the Italians' conception of stability, respectability and independence" (Lopreato, 1970:48). Ideally, the new house, would be located in the suburbs of the city, away from the 'little Italies' but not too far from the urban centre. Second and later generations followed their parents' example and as soon as feasible they also bought a house in the suburbs. The minimal intake of Italian immigration and the demographic movements by Italian Americans brought about the demise of the 'little Italies'. In 1970 (p. 53), Lopreato declares that

Restrictive immigration policies, urban renewal projects, and the acculturation of the Italian immigrants and their descendants have taken

a heavy toll on Italian communities. Italian Americans today are more aptly described as having distinct *regional* concentrations. ... In 1960, New York City alone had 859,000 foreign-born Italians and their children. This figure represented 11 percent of the entire population of the city.

Next in concentration of Italian population was Philadelphia with 248,558 Italians.

Following the pattern, this study's informants firstly resided in Brooklyn -New York. After a few years, friends from their hometown who had migrated some years earlier and had reached a certain degree of economic success, encouraged them to move to Philadelphia. This they did. After renting rooms for some time in friends' houses, each of the two first generation families bought a house. They bought it in an inner city suburb, not predominantly Italian but with some other Italian families living not far from them. The brother and sister's houses were in the same street, facing each other on opposite sides of the street. It was here that their children were born and/or socialised in the mainstream society. The social environment in which these children grew up, were socialised and educated was also a continuation of the pattern that had been established in earlier times by 'old' Italo-American immigration.

4.1.1.2 The Italian family in the USA

This study is based on Italian families. The family is a well-recognised core-value of Italian culture (see 3.1.1.3). There is also the myth of the Italian "patriarchal" family. But as Lopreato (1970: 58) reports its importance is more fiction than fact. He continues:

At the turn of the century, as now, women in Italy were quick to acknowledge their husbands as the family head but almost invariably had a strong hand in the important decisions of the family. Italian women have always been almost exclusively responsible for raising their children; attending to their children's religious education; preparing their children for marriage; articulating social relations with friends, kin and townsmen.

The radical transformation the Italian family had to undergo when adapting to life in the United States caused the breakdown of the old culture. The changes were mostly felt in the parent-child's relation in the host country and it needs to be explained to understand the changes the Italian immigrant's family and culture experienced in the USA.

Paul Campisi (1948: 443-449 as reported by Lopreato, 1970: 59-62) presented the Italian family in America in terms of "a continuum which ranges from an acculturated Old World type to highly acculturated and urbanized American type of family". For the sake of convenience Campisi considers only three types of the many possible variations: the *peasant family* or *patriarchal family*, the *first generation family*, the *second generation family*.

The *first type* of family immigrated to the USA from the southern parts of Italy and is described as the *peasant family* or *patriarchal family*. This is the kind of family that as long the father is in good health and not too old, he is generally the task leader.

Campisi's *second type* of family is the *first generation family*. This family is formed of Italy-born parents and children born either in America or in Italy. The

parents tend towards the old ways and the children have the need to build their own society, relatively independent from the influence of their parents. Children looked down on their parents' traditions and often considered them object of ridicule. On the whole, these 'first generation' parents did not command the obedience from their children that the older generation received in most societies (Lopreato 1970: 64). The two generations belonged to two different worlds. As the children grew older the differences grew stronger. The life of school and the life of street completed the separation between the generations. The school especially was significant:

The school not only challenged paternal authority and undermined devotion to Italian culture ... it also encouraged him (*the child*) to reject everything that was not American, and Middle American at that. (Lopreato, 1970:65).

4.1.1.3 Immigrants and their home language vs the host language

The rejection of everything that was not American put into question the most basic of self-expression the immigrant child had: his home language.

The 1920s, the time when the number of Southern European immigrants in the USA was at its greatest, was also the time that, by the general agreement of most analysts of immigrants and their language (Heath, 1985; Marshall 1986) was considered the most xenophobic period in the USA. This was the time when the 'national origins' quota was introduced (it was in force from the 1929 to 1965). 'The melting pot' – the metaphor used to express the belief that immigrants should assimilate as quickly as possible – was the most widely accepted opinion in society (see ref. above and also Mangione, 1942; Lopreato,

1970, Grossman, 1975). *English*, without the need of any official legislation, was the only language that granted membership to the 'American' society and, of course, American education. The children of newly arrived migrants had to adapt. When they started school, they were expected to leave behind the home language and function in English. At home, they were expected to speak their native/first language, mostly because the parents, for a variety of reasons - ranging from illiteracy to simply not wanting to accommodate the host language in their homes - could not speak English. As Mangione recorded in 1942:

My mother's insistence that we speak only Italian at home drew a sharp line between our existence there and our life in the worlds outside. We gradually acquired the notion that we were Italian at home and American (whatever that was) elsewhere. Instinctively, we all sensed the necessity of adapting ourselves to the two different worlds (p. 52).

The situation often bred resentment. But this is not to say the children always went their own way and abandoned their parents (and heritage). "The Italian family was much too solid and it was much too sacred to the average individual to tolerate unbridgeable emotional differences between its members." (Lopreato 1970: 68)

The second generation members had various forms of adaptation to the cultural clashes. Irvin Child (1943) in the study "The second generation in conflict" discusses these forms of adaptation. Child explores three major types of reaction to the conflict in which the second generation individuals (still living within the first generation family) found themselves: the 'rebel', the 'apathetic' and the 'in-group' reaction. The 'rebel' is the individual that wants to forget

his/her background and seek complete acceptance by the American group as soon as possible. The 'apathetic' instead does not want to take sides and is slow in acculturating to the new world. Child describes this individual as one that quietly tries to gain a degree of acceptance in both cultures by refusing to maintain any consistent nationality label. The third type is the 'in-grouper'. This individual chooses to resolve the culturally incompatible conflict between the two groups by striving to gain acceptance by the Italian group

4.1.1.4 The second generation family

The *third type* of family considered by Campisi is the *second generation family*. This is the family where both parents are either born in America of Italian immigrants or were brought over from the home-country when they were still very young. They were the ones to make the big cultural break between the old society and the new. Campisi categorised these young families under three variations that resemble roughly Child's variations. The first form of this family is the one with individuals that want to be completely assimilated in the American society, to the point of changing their names and surnames to sound "American" and cut all ties with their Italian relatives (Firey, 1947).

The second form of the '*second generation family*', reflecting Child's description of the 'apathetic', was considered to be the most frequent.

The parental culture is rejected as inapplicable but not condemned. Consequently, though the family is likely to move away from the parental neighbourhood and thereby lessen the frequency of communication with the first generation, the emotional bond with the old folks and their ways is not broken. (Lopreato, 1970: 76)

The third form of the *second generation family*, reminiscent of the 'in-grouper' reaction, sees the young family continuing to live in the same Italian neighbourhood as his family and relatives.

Campisi did not mention the 'third generation' family, as in 1948 it hardly existed. Later, in 1970, at the time Lopreato was documenting the history of Italian American, he notes that the majority of Americans of Italian origin are not recorded by the census because they are members of the third and fourth generations. The grandchildren have their own families. Many no longer have Italian names. However, he comments:

One encounters these "hidden" Italian Americans everywhere and in all walks of life. Generally speaking they are members of the more prestigious occupations. They are college administrators, wealthy businessmen, and well-established professional men. Many of them are children of the second generation of "rebels" and they are sometimes offspring of ethnic intermarriages. Almost invariably they themselves are married to members of other ethnic groups. Nothing or very little about them is identifiable as Italian (Lopreato, 1970: 85).

From the above review of the Italian American group, it ensues that when in the 1950s the informants to this study arrived in the USA they entered an established culture of assimilation to the host country by their own group. In the late 1950s and 1960s, when their children entered the education system, not much had changed in the recognition assigned to the minority groups' home-culture and language in the school curricula: they report that there was none.

4.1.1.5 The Bilingual Education Act

Nonetheless, the 1960s saw the first piece of legislation of the 20th century that positively encouraged diversity of language use: the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Marshall (1986: 17) reports that "the federal courts interpretation of this law is that it is a specific mandate for bilingual education". This led to the Bilingual Education Act which formally guarantees children's right to an education in a language they can understand. However, it was clear that the intention of the act was not to assist the children to maintain their home language but rather that their education should be transitionally bilingual. In fact Fishman (198:405) argues that this act was not an act for bilingualism, but against bilingualism. In his view, at the time, 'bilingualism' had become a newspeak euphemism for 'non-English-mother-tongue'. In any case, these 'bilingual programs' were only directed to recently arrived, numerous and somewhat politically active minority groups: mostly the Hispanics. No linguistic benefits of any kind flowed for example to the second generation Italians of the 1960s and 1970s because of the Bilingual Act. None of the PG in this study had any Italian language tuition in their school years (whether transitional or not) –neither in their primary school years nor in their secondary years – and neither they nor their parents expected it, asked for it or wanted it. It would appear that they believed that assimilation was the best way to success in the new land. The PG in this study would fit in with the Campisi (1948) description of *apathetic second generation* given above. These children were neither 'rebels' nor 'in-groupers'. Although not particularly pleased with their 'different' status in the host society, they accepted it and tried to reconcile as best they could the home-culture with the school/street/ society culture. In time they formed their own families which also resembled very closely the *second generation* (apathetic) family described by Campisi.

4.1.1.6 Language loyalty in the USA

While in the 1960s – 1970s, the assimilation of this second generation of Italians was happening in a very similar fashion to that of the second generation of the 1930s -1940s, a very interesting phenomenon was sweeping the American society at large: a ‘revival of ethnicity’ characterised, as the subsequent analysis of data demonstrated, by an unprecedented mother- tongue claiming in the Censuses by most of the third generation minority groups in the nation. The phenomenon appeared to be so pervasive that sociolinguists (i.e. Stevens 1982; Waggoner 1981; Fishman *et al*, 1985) decided to investigate it. The following brief review of the analysis of the censuses results (1960 -1970 -1979) in regard to mother-tongue claiming and mother-tongue use is chiefly based on the analysis of relevant census data undertaken by Fishman *et al* (1985).

In 1970, the census’ data showed that 33 million individuals (out of a total population of 203 million) had claimed a mother tongue other than English (MT). Considering that more than 9.3 million individuals for whom the mother-tongue remained unreported, Fishman estimates that a more realistic figure of the individuals claiming a mother tongue other than English stood at about 34.8 million. A number that was much larger than any seen before in the USA, even in 1940 or 1960. The analysis of the data showed that the MT claiming was not determined by one group only, i.e. the Hispanics, but was a phenomenon equally spread among all ethnic groups, with the ‘big six’ languages (Spanish, German, Italian, French, Polish and Yiddish). Fishman recognised that MT claiming is *not* MT use. He described the MT claiming as a useful indicator of what was happening in society, be it “an attitudinal variable, reflecting changing nuances, emphases and priorities in repertoires of ethnic identities” (1985: 110).

The third generation of non-English stock in that period (1970) deserves some attention and explanation. Fishman reminds the readers that the definition of “third generation’ is that given by social scientists. It reveals an unconscious view that ‘beyond third generation there is nothing’ (p.136). It is the end of the line and after that a new journey into the unmarked American mainstream is fully underway. This was the big surprise of the 1970 census data. The third generation MT claiming had grown immensely. Fishman (p. 138) compares the census data from 1940 to 1970 and demonstrates that while the third generation in its overall growth was slowing down the MT claiming was accelerating. It had increased by 195% from 1940 to 1970 and by 328% from 1960 to 1970.

Fishman hypothesised that higher MT claiming correlated with higher number of ethnic community mother tongue institutions whether the population was concentrated in one particular region or not. More importantly, most of those who claim non-English MT no longer currently use these languages. Some indication of the extent of the attrition was gained by Fishman examining the ‘big six’ languages. The attrition was strong even among the foreign born, but it was stronger among the ‘native’ (second/third generation immigrants). It ranged from a low of 36% for the Hispanic groups to a high of 98% for Yiddish (Italian scored 94.8%).

However, the evaluation of the above attrition depends on the definition of *current use of the language*. If using the language as a second, functionally delimited language were included, Fishman thinks that the attrition level would have been lower and possibly this low attrition level would have been even lower if attitudinal positiveness was also included.

This latter type of use, I have maintained, is related to the support of various institutional expressions at a societal level. Others have shown that attitudinal positiveness is also related to language learning rates and to language mastery levels among students (Lambert 1963.) Thus mother-tongue claiming can have productive consequences both at societal and at individual levels of behaviour and should not be fluffed off and disparaged. (Fishman 1985: 145)

In 1979, the data on language claiming and language use was less detailed than the previous ones (1960 and 1970). Data are given for only 15 languages and no separate generational tables are given. But even with these restricted data the difference between the data of the 1970 and that of the 1979 is high. The MT claiming, although continuing to grow, had slowed down its growth quite sensibly. From the data at its disposal, Fishman concludes that the new reverse phenomenon was not only due to the natural ageing of the population, but, he argues, there is enough evidence to 'make us realise that significant social and psychological factors were at play in 1979 rather than merely the physical processes of ageing *per se* (p. 149). Fishman then cautiously outlined a model to predict the survival rate of minority languages in the USA. Fishman's quantitative model (1985, 158-166, this study 3.4.1.8) is based on a combination of demographic and cultural/ethnic factors. In this model the Italian group takes 8th place for its efforts in LM.

4.1.2 Italians in the United States of America: the period 1981 to late 1990s

The provision for bilingual education sanctioned by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the increased consciousness towards one's own cultural and linguistic background demonstrated by the ethnic minorities in the 1970s through increased MT claiming could have been a natural precursor to a period of heightened language awareness for the American society at large. In the best of outcomes, this could have led to the birth of a national language policy that would have sanctioned, protected and developed the multilingual patrimony of the nation. In fact in the 1980s language issues were to the fore of American politics, but not in the way sociolinguists had hoped. In spite of historical and continued English supremacy in the whole country, bilingual education and ethnic groups' awareness of own language and culture succeeded into making the mainstream society feel insecure about *its* right to language supremacy and take provision to stop any perceived erosion of that supremacy. In 1986 with a margin in favour of three-to-one, the state of California adopted the English Language Amendment proposition for "English official/English only" (Fishman 1989). This attempt to alter the Constitution, as others introduced since 1982, failed, but the great support they received was an indication of the public's orientation.

Neither the 1980s nor the 1990s have seen an explicit official language policy being introduced into the American society. Legislators, administrators, educators consistently had the need to frame the language policy necessary for any given situation they had to address. It has also left these '*ad hoc*' policies vulnerable and dependant on the good-will of the people in charge at the time. For example, in the 1980s in California, Marshall reports (1986:54) that the local initiatives in favour of bilingual education had produced a "legally sanctioned

multilingualism". However, still in California, in the 1990s there was a backlash. Different policy makers saw multilingualism as unnecessary, even damaging and a proposition - proposition 227 "English as Required Language of Instruction" - was introduced and passed in 1998. The aim of the proposition was to introduce LEP (Limited English Proficiency) classes for students with limited proficiency of English in which they would be taught only through English thus eliminating the need of bilingual classes.

Language issues, especially language in education issues, continue to be part of the educational and political agenda of the USA, but, without general public consensus, an "American National Language Policy" encapsulating the multilingual and multicultural nature of the nation is not likely to happen in the near future.

Perhaps, due to the above lack of national consensus in the USA, Fishman (1991) published "Reversing of Language Shift", which "at the time was an unformulated and an unnamed field" (Fishman, 2001: XII) in sociolinguistics "notwithstanding its centrality for minority languages advocates". In this volume, Fishman introduced the GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale – reviewed in 3.1.1.4) a graded typology to be used as a measuring device of the state of disruption of 'threatened' languages – whatever the reason for the threat. The notion that Fishman strongly puts forward through the above graded typology is that institutional support, positive attitudes, governmental aids for language maintenance and/or reversal of language shift are all welcome. However, if the native community of a threatened language does not take certain steps to ensure intergenerational language continuity in the family and the immediate community, there is very little that any other external expedient could do to reverse the shift of the threatened language.

To partly answer the research questions of my study, the language situation of the Italian-American group in the 1990s needs to be examined and assessed to ascertain if any steps have been undertaken or otherwise towards the use of the Italian language. In Chapter Three, two models that can help assess the language situation of minority groups have been reviewed. One model is the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Fishman, 1991 – reviewed in 3.1.1.4), also discussed previously in this section. The other is the Ethnolinguistic Vitality model (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor, 1977 –3.4.1.9). Bourhis (2001) suggests that if the two models are used in a complementary way rather than one being considered the “reverse analogue” of the other, a more realistic picture of the language situation of a minority group can be gained. In the next section I will attempt such an analysis for the Italian community in the USA.

4.1.3 Assessing the language situation of the Italian-American community

According to Giles *et al's* (1977) *structural analysis*, Status, Demographic and Institutional Support combine to make up the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups. “A group’s strengths and weaknesses in each of these domains could be assessed so as to provide a rough classification of ethnolinguistic groups as having *low, medium or high vitality*” (Yağmur 1997: 25). Low vitality groups are most likely to shift from their language towards the host language. High vitality groups are likely to maintain their language and culturally distinctive trait when in multilingual settings.

In Giles *et al's* framework (3.4.2.3), *Status variables* involve the *economic, social, sociohistorical and language status within or outside the group*. *Demographic variables* are those related to the number and distributional patterns of the group’s

members throughout a particular region or national territory. Demographic variables also include the birth-rate, the group's rate of mixed marriages and the rate of immigration and emigration patterns. *Institutional support variable* has to do with the degree to which a minority group receives formal and informal support from the host society's institutions, for example, mass-media, education, government, services, industry, religion, culture and politics.

The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Fishman:1991)(3.1.1.4) evaluates the language maintenance (LM) and shift (LS) of group. It was devised by Fishman to assist and encourage Reversal of Language Shift (RLS) initiatives. Fishman describes it as quasi-implicational, meaning, for example, that if a disruption stage of six or seven has been reached then disruption has occurred in all, or nearly all, of the stages beneath it. Fishman recommends that any community wishing to reverse any LS that may have occurred in their group to determine carefully at what stage they are in their community and to undertake to repair lower, foundational stages before moving on to more advanced ones. As Kipp (2002: 22) writes:

In this sense GIDS represents an ordered sequence of language maintenance efforts ...this aspect of 'sequencing' is more consistently pertinent across the scale than the aspect of implicationality, which works best for the top 3 (possibly 4/5) stages.

When assessing the situation of the Italian group in the United States, the two models will be used in the following way: the *status* and *demography* will be assessed through the categories outlined by Giles et al (1977) in 'the structural analysis' of the model.

In regard to the *institutional support* Giles (1977:316) maintains:

It is suggested that a linguistic minority is vital to the extent that its language and group members are well represented formally and informally in a variety of institutional settings. These domains of usage include the mass-media, parliament, governmental departments and services, the armed forces and the State supported arts. Of crucial importance for the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups is the use of the minority language in the State education system at primary, secondary and higher levels.

In my opinion, (cf. also Kipp, above) the GIDS offers the possibility to investigate the influence of the above mentioned institutions on the use of the minority language under consideration in a sequential manner, as well as maintaining the “quasi-implicational” nature of the stages. For these reasons, the GIDS is employed to assess the third variable of Giles *et al's* framework, the *institutional support* the Italo-American group receives from the host society and/or the Italian government through its own Ethnic associations in the US.

4.1.3.1 The Italian-American intergroup situation: *status*

In reference to *economic status* as a group, Giles et al (1977:310) state that

In determining the vitality of a linguistic minority, it is important to gauge the group's degree of control over its economic destiny (Hocevar, 1975). For example, Jewish community in Diaspora have succeeded, and do succeed, in maintaining themselves as distinct collective entities by, among other things, sound economic control of their immediate

environment. In contrast, however, we have seen that French Canadians, Mexican Americans, Albanian Greeks and migrant workers have little economic control over their respective situations.

From the above it appears that to have *economic status* a minority group must be economically independent from the dominant group. As all migrant worker groups of the early 1900s in America, the Italian-American group was not an independent economic group. Nor, by all accounts, was it a distinct collective entity with control of its own *economic status* at the end of the 1900s and beginning of the 2000s. It could then be concluded that the Italo-American community does not have any *economic status*. If, conversely, *economic status* refers to the economic well-being achieved by a minority group due to a combination of factors such as “age (number of pensioners and children), unemployment rate and type of employment (professional, business, skilled trades, manual work”)... which ... “are roughly concomitant with period of residence, English (or host country’s language) proficiency and educational level” (Clyne, 2003: 55-56), then, according to authoritative historical sources (cf. Sowell, 1981; Di Franco 1988; Nelli, 1983; Mangione & Morreale 1992 and the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF), 2003) the Italian community in America rates very well in regard to its *economic status*. These scholars report of the tremendous hardship undergone by the Italians at the beginning of their journey in the American society, as individuals and as a community. They also report how the Italians were able to climb the ladder of economic success Sowell, (1981:126). Di Franco (1988:216) writes of ‘spirit of entrepreneurship’ gripping the American society of the 1980s and how “we are now seeing a giant wave of emerging Italian American corporate leaders”. In 2003 the NIAF (National Italian American Foundation) under the caption of: “Italian Americans have developed some of America’s largest industries and

corporations” gives an extensive list of Italian Americans leading in most field of business.

Therefore, as stated above, *if economic status* refers to being “economically independent from the dominant group”, Italians in America do not have it. If *economic status* refers to the economic well-being achieved by a minority group, as interpreted by Clyne (2003) and Yağmur (1997) then the Italian group in America could be said to have at least a ‘medium’ to ‘high’ *economic status*, on Giles’ three level scale of ‘low’, ‘medium’ and ‘high’.

Social status is often closely linked to *economic status*. To have *social status* “refers to the degree of esteem a linguistic group affords itself; often this amount of group self-esteem closely resembles that attributed it by the outgroup” (Giles, 1977:310). In 1983, Nelli reports that studies conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) leave little doubt that Italians “have moved rapidly into the upper-middle class of American society during the last two decades” (p. 186).

According to Nelli, the third generation of that time who “have never known anything but middle class life ... now concentrate on campaigns to eliminate real or imagined social prejudice and ethnic slurs against them as well as opening up areas of economic, political, or cultural activity hitherto closed to them.” (p.184).

Italian-Americans are not only economically well-off, they are also prominent in such glamour fields as advertising, sports and entertainment as well as in politics. Nelli (1983: 192) concludes that: “All members of the group have not,

of course, enjoyed economic success, but as a group Italian-American have entered the mainstream of American life.”

To be integrated in the mainstream host society is part of the migrant dream. When a minority group achieves it, the result is a feeling of positive *self-perceived social status*. This, as Giles *et al* (1977) explain, could be a reflection of the status attributed to it by the “outgroup”. The outcome of this is, of course, a general notion in the minority group of a positive *social status* in the host society and on Giles’s three level scale it could be translated as a ‘*medium*’ to ‘*high*’ level of *social status* for the Italian-American group.

Sociohistorical status, according to Giles, refers to a group having common mobilising symbols as, for example, past struggles for unity which in the present can inspire individuals to bind together as group members. According to historians (i.e. Sowell, 1981; Nelli, 1983; Mangione & Morreale, 1992; Di Franco, 1988) the Italian-American group was not bound in such a way. Sowell (1981:128) summarises the *sociohistorical* feelings of the Italian immigrants as follows:

As much as Italian immigrants and their descendants cling to many cultural traits from their homeland, there was no correspondingly strong sense of Italian-American group-wide identity, and still less nationalistic feeling for Italy.

Therefore the *socio-historical status* of the Italian American would have to be classified as “*low*”.

The *language status within* the Italian-American group does not appear to be very different from the status accorded to the language by the Italian communities in other countries. There are the linguistic issues produced by the multiplicity of dialects used by the migrants originating from different Italian regions. There is the widespread use of popular Italian among those migrants who originate from different regions and find themselves working together in one place; there is the hybrid variety - in this case Italo-American- that gradually builds up in the communicative interactions of the Italian migrants due to the process of attrition of the three language in contact: the regional dialect, popular (or Standard Italian) and the national language, (see 2.2.3). However, as in other Italian communities abroad, there is also the agreement, that the *standard variety* of Italian is the one which deserves *status*. The other varieties are very useful tools of everyday communication, but in reality no *status* can be accorded in the eyes of the average Italian to these varieties from an academic, literary or formal communication point of view.

The issue with *language status within* the Italian-American community is compounded by the fact that, although MT claiming of Italian (which include also all regional dialects [Fishman, 1985]) was and is among the highest of all the ethnic minorities, it does not imply that the MT is being used. The conclusion is that the Standard variety of Italian has *high status* within the Italian-American group, but it is hardly used at all by most individuals in the community.

Outside the group, in the American society, the 'standard' is the only variety that is understood to be 'Italian'. The problem is that it is not given wide currency in the mainstream society. Tursi (1983) argued that according to the AATI (American Association of Teachers of Italian) and the Modern Languages

Association, Italian is not given enough prominence. Even in place where the Italian population is a clear majority, they are not given the opportunity to study Italian. For example (1983: 397), he reports that in each of the 95 districts of Long Island, Spanish and French are offered to all students, but the study of Italian is in the curriculum of only 20 districts even if in many districts the population of Italian origins is more than 50%.

The lack of possibilities for learning Italian is one that is well known to my PG and CG informants. Born and educated mostly in Philadelphia, the city that has the second largest Italian population in America (after New York), they say that Italian was not offered in any of the schools they attended. Some of them studied French in secondary school, some studied Spanish.

For the purpose of this review, the conclusion is that although the Italian language has a recognised (albeit limited) place in the mainstream American education, it is not one of those that enjoys vast popularity and its prestige (*status*) in the American society could only be defined as “*medium*”.

4.1.3.2 The Italian-American intergroup situation: *demography*

The demographic factors discussed in Giles et al’s model as contributing to the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups are divided into two group headings: Group Distribution – which includes national territory, group concentration and group proportion. The other group’s heading is: Group Numbers – which include absolute numbers, birth rate, mixed marriages, immigration and emigration.

The *demographic* information related to the Italian-American group in the 1990s relate mostly to their concentration and absolute number and it will be reported

next. It has not been possible to find detailed information as required by each category of Giles' model. Perhaps, this is one of the outcomes of becoming an integral part of the mainstream society. When it happens, studies and research are no longer conducted about the group and its make-up. With this in mind, here follows an overview of the *demographic* information of the contemporary situation (1990s) of the Italian American group as reported by the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) in 2003, "Il Ministero degli Esteri" (Italy) and National Opinion Research Center (NORC) 2003.

According to the Census Bureau Italian-Americans are the fifth largest ethnic group in the US. The Population Division reports that in the 1990 US Census 15 million people have identified themselves as Italian-American. However, the Census bureau estimates that 1 out of 10 Americans is partly of Italian ancestry, bringing the total number of American of Italian descent to 26 million. In several states, the Italian-Americans either make up 15 percent of the population or number more than one million. It is a good concentration of population and group concentration should lead to group vitality because "minority group speakers who are concentrated in the same geographic area may stand a better chance of surviving as a dynamic linguistic community by virtue of the fact that they are in frequent verbal interaction and can maintain feelings of solidarity" (Driedger and Church, 1974 as reported by Giles *et al* (1977) – see also concept of social network section 3.3).

However, except for the 'language loyalties' study conducted by Fishman in 1985, in which the Italian group was amongst the highest claimants of their MT, it is not known if these Italian Americans use their community language. Nor is their *group proportion* high enough to be seen as a threat in the relationship with the other groups in the American context. Therefore, the *demography* of the

Italian-American group does not seem to contribute significantly to the linguistic vitality of the Italian-American group and, in Giles' EV scale would be classified as "low".

The third element of analysis to assess the vitality of a group in the *Structural Variables* model is the *Institutional Support factors* which refers to the formal and informal support a language receives in the various institutions of a nation, region or community. Rather than using the "headings" for this category given by Giles, as explained above, the overview of the *Institutional support* the Italian-American group receives (both by its own ethnic institutions and those of the host society) will be done through the GIDS (see 3.1.1.4). The GIDS model offers the possibility to investigate the influence of the '*Institutional Support*' on the linguistic vitality of a minority group in a sequential manner and 'quasi-implicational' (Fishman, 1991). Another advantage is that the GIDS goes beyond searching for "representation of the linguistic group [...] in the mass-media, parliament, governmental departments and services, the armed forces and the State supported arts [...] and the use of the minority language in the State education system at primary, secondary and higher levels" as stated by Giles *et al* (1977:316). The GIDS tries to assess the use the linguistic community makes of its language/s at all levels – from family/ neighbourhood/ community (which, according to Fishman, is the most important link -it could be argued 'institution' - for intergenerational language transmission) to the "higher educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts." It is hoped that a comprehensive picture of the economic, social and intergenerational linguistic dynamics of the Italian-American group will emerge from this outline constructed with the combined use of the two above-mentioned models. The 'grading' of the positive or negative conditions for language maintenance or 'linguistic vitality' on the GIDS model also differs from the grading on the

ethnolinguistic vitality model. “Higher (more disrupted) scores imply all or nearly all of the lesser degrees of disruption as well” (Fishman, 1991: 87).

4.1.3.3 Assessment of the institutional support of the Italian-American group

Stage 8: Most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults

Fishman (1991:255) writing about immigrant languages notes that this stage is not relevant to any of the European or immigrant languages. This observation, of course, is valid also for most European or immigrant languages in America, including the Italian language.

Stage 7: most of the users of Xish are socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age

The Italians in America that were part of the mass-immigration at the beginning of the 1900s are no more. Their descendants have reached fourth, fifth, sixth generation. Except for the resurgence of the MT claiming of the 1960s and 1970s (Fishman, 1985), no data are collected in later censuses about their linguistic habits. At this point it may be helpful to report how the third generation (and certainly further generations) of a minority group is viewed by ‘social scientists’ (Fishman, 1985). Fishman comments on the fact that the designation itself (third generation) reveals the unconscious view that beyond third generation there is nothing.

By then the end of the line has been reached and a new journey into the unmarked American mainstream is fully underway. It is an American

myth, which, like all myths, is compounded out of truth, wishful thinking, and careful ignorance in varying proportions. (1985:136)

The above applies to the majority of the Italian-American group. However some of the later Italian migrants are in their third generation now and they are the ones of interest to this study. The kind of ethnolinguistically active population beyond child-bearing age of *Stage 7* can be found among these migrants.

Fishman (1991:90) states that the major difference between *Stage 7* and *Stage 8* of the RLS (Reversal of Language Shift) remediation efforts is the fact that the elderly community language speakers are still societally integrated, living in homes, in neighbourhoods and communities among their own community language speaking families and neighbours. The scope of this stage is to use these old folks as linguistic resources. They ought to be utilised as a linguistic bridge between themselves and the younger generation, since at the 'outset of RLS they are often the major linguistically functional resource available to language activists' (p.90).

Little information is available about this minority of the Italian American group, but during my stay in the USA for the collection of data among this group of migrants of the 1950s. I observed that the GPG was using Italian in their homes/ families/ community. However, there was no effort on the part of the elderly to change the behavioural language use pattern of the young who usually spoke English. The use of Italian had the simple but most useful function of facilitating everyday communication between the young and the elderly. In Fishman's judgement, this would not be enough to be considered LM or RLS. From my point of view, the view of the observer, regardless of how

limited the function played by Italian at this stage, it was one that was considered necessary for good family relationships by the people involved.

Stage 6: the attainment of intergenerational informal oralcy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement

According to Fishman, at this stage it is imperative to implement what is in effect compartmentalisation (see 3.1.1.2) if LM *and* RLS have to be achieved (Fishman distinguishes between LM and RLS –see 4.1.4). Fishman argues that this is the stage when the minority language must be the normal language of informal, spoken interaction between and within all three generations of the family with the host language reserved only for formal and technical matters outside the family life. At this stage, Fishman (1991) suggests, young community language speakers should form new “families of procreation” (p.92-93) to bring the language outside their “families of orientation”. They should concentrate demographically according to their minority language so that the minority language, rather than being the language of isolated families no matter how large, becomes the language of interfamily interaction, of interaction with playmates, neighbours, friends and acquaintances.

This kind of linguistic demographic concentration of population was involuntarily implemented at the beginning of the mass migration to the US through the ‘little Italies’. The minority language was the normal language of every family interaction. However, as soon as they could, they moved out of the initial living communities and dispersed themselves in the mainstream society. In this regard, the migrants of the 1950s are no different from those of the 1900s. Culturally and linguistically homogeneous communities served their purpose at the beginning of their settlement. Nowadays they do not exist any more. Among the Italian-Americans involved in this study and their community,

Italian is still used in the family and their close community. Among the younger generations its use is limited. Rather than Italian, they often use an 'ethnolect' (Clyne, 2003: 152-157), in which single Italian words are embedded in English sentences. According to Fishman, this use is not enough to result in RLS, therefore any other attempt in the following stages of the GIDS would not succeed in changing the trend towards LM and/or RLS.

Stage 5: Literacy via agencies or institutions that are entirely under Xish control and that do NOT need to meet or satisfy Yish standards re compulsory education

According to the information collected (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the Italian government through its ethnic agencies based in the US provides the financial help and the personnel needed to promote Italian language and culture abroad. Some of these agencies are independent from the host society's control, others work in cooperation with the host society. These include:

- ◇ Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'estero (CONSITES)- once called COM. IT. ES, which is the official Italian government representative *in loco*;
- ◇ *Istituti Italiani di Cultura* (Italian cultural Institute);
- ◇ *Comitato Assistenza Italiani (Co.As.It)* (Committee for Assistance to Italians abroad);
- ◇ *La società Dante Alighieri* (Dante Alighieri Society)

The Italian government has agreements of "Cultural Promotion and Cooperation" with all migrant receiving countries which have a sizable Italian community. The above mentioned organizations have the responsibility to implement the cultural/linguistic agreement, without the need to meet the standard of compulsory US education. The organizations offer Italian language courses as well as innumerable cultural activities. However, they are directed prevalently to the citizens of the host country, although it is felt that the

language and culture courses can also be an interesting proposition for those belonging to the Italian community (Italian Department for Foreign Affairs, 2003). Hardly any of these activities are directed to children of school age.

There are *Scuole Italiane all'Estero* (Italian schools abroad). The USA has some of these schools, either as private schools or as part of international schools. However, it is interesting to note that the Italian private school (N-12) in New York "La scuola Guglielmo Marconi", which

was initially founded by the Italian Ministry of foreign affairs to meet the academic needs of Italians living in New York City area, thanks to an ever increasing interest on the part of American families, La Scuola has grown into a unique bilingual educational institution, reflecting the best features of the Italian and American system.

(www.parentguidenews.com/ed_ny/LaScuola.html [2004]).

Therefore even this school does not seem to meet the prerequisites of the GIDS' Stage 5. The "Dante Alighieri" Society, which is totally under the *Xish control* and does not need to satisfy *Yish standards* could in theory meet the prerequisite of Stage 5. This society started its activity in Italy in 1889. It expanded overseas establishing courses of Italian language for emigrants. Nowadays, there is a branch of "la Dante" in virtually every Italian migrant receiving country. The various branches overseas are autonomous in the way they organise and run their branch, although they account for their activities to "la Dante" in the homeland and receive financial help from it. "La Dante" encourages Italian language literacy and orality at various levels. However, its role in developing Italian literacy and orality and therefore promote RLS does not appear to be significant as in the Italian-American community it is known primarily for its

cultural activities and linguistic activities directed to adults (see also Petriella, 1983).

Stage 4a: Xish in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws

The Italian government accords with the migration country's government should help with this form of education. But, again no Italian language education of this kind was provided in schools.

Stage 4b: Xish programs in Yish schools

Several secondary schools offer Italian language as a subject of choice in their curriculum. But as reported in 4.1.3.1, academics lament the lack of prominence given to Italian language teaching. Italian language does not appear to have a significant presence in American schools, and therefore the role of the school programs towards Italian RLS would not be significant.

Stage 3: use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside the Xish neighbourhood/ community) involving interaction between Xians and Yians

From the arrival of my informants in the USA to the present, the situation of Italians in the workplace has not been one that is conducive to the use of their CL. Nowadays Italians in America are very well represented demographically and socially in most professions, spheres of the industry, arts and sports, but the use of Italian language is definitely not common.

Stage 2: Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in higher spheres of either

At this stage, Fishman (1991: 270) asserts,

Local mass media and governmental services can make positive contributions to RLS only to the extent that they are directly related to and connected to fundamental family-neighbourhood-community functioning.

The Italian media available to my informants in Philadelphia was a local newspaper and the Italian cable TV RAI International. The paper had most articles in English - reporting Italian news. Advertisements were in English and in Italian. The RAI International, a television station transmitting in Italian, does not appear to be popular. Among my informants one of GPG individual followed it, while the others very not interested (one of them commented that: "The incessant talk in Italian gives me a headache. I'm not used to it any more!"). As for governmental services, I visited local councils and asked what services were provided in Italian language. The perception was that Italian-Americans did not need to be catered for in their CL. Local members of the community told me that was very much the same situation in most places in America.

It could be concluded that both Italian mass-media and governmental services cannot have a great role in Italian RLS.

Stage 1: some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence)

Fishman differentiates between local and national media. A recent search in the internet for Italian mass-media in the USA at national level produced a response of hundreds of titles. They were mostly magazine, periodicals, newspapers, advertised in English, which had parts that could be translated into Italian and were available in the internet. Furthermore, in NIP (News

ITALIA Press) under the heading 'breaking italicity news' (sic) there was an extensive list of Italian magazines, newsletters and other publications which could be found all over the world. It is interesting to note that Italian publications that could be found for example in Canada, Iran, Brazil or Germany, had the advertising in Italian –which one presumes would mean that the related publication would be in Italian. The advertisements related to USA's publications were in English.

This also leads to the conclusion that not much help for RLS could be had locally or nationally from the Italian American media. At the occupational level it seems that, according to historical accounts to which I have referred above and lists from the NIAF, Italians are extremely well represented in the higher spheres of governmental services and policy making in all states of America. At higher levels of education, Italian is also offered as a subject of study at several American universities (i.e The State University of New York). In a survey conducted in 1983 by American Association of Teachers of Italian (Tursi, 1983), it was reported that, at the time, there were about 40,000 students of Italian language at American Universities and the number was growing. These students were mostly (80 to 90%) second or third generation Italian-Americans. However, all of this bears little resemblance to the language use that Fishman considers necessary for LM and RLS to eventuate.

4.1.4 The Italian-American language situation: discussion and conclusion

The analysis of the language situation of the Italian-American group was conducted using a combination of the Ethnolinguistic vitality model (Giles *et al*, 1977) and Fishman's (1991) GIDS. The *Status* and the *Demography* were described through the first two headings of the 'Structural Analysis' of the

Vitality model. The third heading of the ethnolinguistic vitality, the group's *Institutional Support* was illustrated through the GIDS' *Stages*. In the light of these data, the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Italian-American group in the 1990s could be represented as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Summary of the Italian-American group's ethnolinguistic vitality

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
STATUS		Medium to	High
DEMOGRAPHY		Medium	
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT	Low		

The table, based on the literature information gathered and discussed above, according to the Ethnolinguistic vitality model, would point towards a medium linguistic vitality among the Italian-American. However, the information that led to the compilation of the table does not give any clear indication to the use of Italian by the Italian-American group.

The analysis of the *group's Institutional Support* through the GIDS has however, helped to define the position of Italian in the group highlighting a multitude of factors that, in Fishman's opinion, need consideration for LM and RLS to occur.

First of all, according to Fishman,

intergenerational mother tongue transmission and language maintenance are not one and the same, related though they are in the total RLS enterprise. Without intergenerational mother tongue transmission ... no language maintenance is possible. That which is not

transmitted cannot be maintained. On the other hand without language maintenance (which is a post transmission process) the pool from which successive intergenerational transmission efforts can draw must become continually smaller” (Fishman, 1991: 113).

Therefore the group has to work to ensure both if linguistic continuity is sought.

LM and RLS can be achieved according to Fishman *only if stage 6* is attained. At this stage there must be a reappearance of the intergenerational family. The younger generation must (a) leave behind their established sociolinguistic *modus vivendi* and (b) create another that is ethnolinguistically demographically concentrated and intergenerationally continuous.

The family is at the core of this stage and the minority language must be used for all communication across the generations. Ethnolinguistic families should form neighbourhoods and communities with all relevant institutions (economic, religious, cultural and recreational) functioning in Xish. Support from other following stages validating Xish use in Yish society is welcome, but only the family/ neighbourhood/ community using Xish daily at all levels of linguistic interactions (within and between families, with playmates, neighbours, friends and acquaintances) can make RLS possible (Fishman, 1991: 92 -94). As a general rule, this is not happening in the Italian-American group.

The data analysed through the two models above demonstrate that the Italian-Americans, seen as a demographically substantial minority group, are living the mythology of “the third generation and beyond” (Fishman 1985:136). This Italian-American group, whose members are well beyond the third generation,

cannot be rated on the GIDS in the matter of Italian use. It simply appears not to be present and if it *is*, there are no data to prove it. What instead appears to be strongly felt by this group is a sense of pride in their ethnicity (possibly an outcome of the ethnic revival of the 1960s and 1970s). A desire to show and prove to the mainstream society how well they have integrated and how much the Italian-American group has contributed to the making of the great country that is America. This is corroborated by social scientists reporting on the Italian-Americans post 1970s.

Many Italian American associations include among their goals an exhortation to study Standard Italian. It would appear that Italian – far from being seen as the language of the family/ the neighbourhood/ the community – as directed by Fishman if LM and RLS is to be achieved - is considered by the average Italian-American as a language to be learned at school, a specialist learning for those interest in the field. The average Italian –American is “happy to identify with the more popular part of Italian-American culture” (Nelli, 1983: 181 -182) and the use of the Italian language does not figure prominently in it. Yet, if Italian-Americans *would* want to undertake the study of the Italian language, they were not (and are not) given the possibility to do so, as only a very small percentage (in relation to the size of the Italian American group) of schools offer the language as a schools subject. It could be concluded that Italian RLS in the United States will never happen.

However, there is another group of Italian-Americans. The group of migrants among which are my US informants. The three generations are still strongly linked. The elderly GPG are still societally integrated, living in homes, in neighbourhoods and communities speaking their own language. They *could* be used as linguistic resources. All considered, in regard to their Italian language

use, this particular group of Italian-American can be placed at *Stage 7* of the GIDS and there could be a possibility of RLS. The scope of this study is to discover if the CG of this group can reverse the US' negative trend towards LM and move towards RLS. The answer to this is attempted through the data collected and analysed in Chapter Six, dedicated to the US informants.

4.2 Italians in Australia

The presence of Italians in Australia can be traced from the very early times of European history in this country to modern times. Cecilia (1987) recorded the contribution of early Italian immigrants from the arrival of the first fleet to the 1900s. Bosi (1970) in his "Blood Sweat and Guts: The saga of the Italians in Australia" presents an array of Italians who arrived in Australia between the 1800s and the 1900s. They became famous for their contributions to all fields of creative arts, visual arts and music as well as for being instrumental in enhancing or establishing projects related to science, political and economic ventures. Most of these immigrants often chose to go back to Italy, since, as Bosi reports, their motives for emigration were not economic but due to a desire for adventures and new experiences. One notable example among them is Raffaele Carboni, one of the leaders of the Eureka stockade (1854) in the gold fields of Ballarat (Victoria) who spent his life between Italy and Australia, fighting "generously for goals which proved largely chimeric" (O'Grady 1985).

The immigrants who arrived in Australia after the Second World War were a different type of immigrants and their presence in Australia was due to largely different reasons from those that had motivated the Italian immigrants of the past and these reasons are discussed in the next section.

4.2.1 Italians in Australia: the period 1950 – 1980

At the end of the Second World War, Australia's population stood at only 7.5 million people. During the war, an attack by Japanese forces in the north of the country (Darwin) highlighted the need for better security and a larger population to defend it. The neglect caused by the Depression and war years meant that normal services were disrupted. There was a huge backlog in the provision of schools, houses and hospitals. There were very few skilled workers to attend to these tasks. The birthrate was very low. The government needed to take drastic measures to remedy the situation. It did so by establishing a "Department of Immigration" with A.A. Calwell as the first Minister for Immigration. He had to ensure the smooth running of a *planned immigration program*. The plan was to increase the population by an average of 2% per year: 1% by natural increase and 1% by immigration. British immigrants were preferred (Cigler, 1985). Among the non-British the preference went to the Northern-European and, after that, Southern Europeans. Among these there was a great contingent of Italians and Greeks. Italians soon became part of the largest group of immigrants of non-British background. As a result of that programme, between 1947 and 1980 Australia's population was increased by the net addition of 2,917,055 foreign born persons. The 37% born in the United Kingdom or Eire constituted the largest group. The second largest was the Italian-born who represented 9% of the total gain of foreign born population (Ware, 1981: 15). At the date of the 1976 Census, there were a total of 280,154 Italian-born individuals in Australia, representing 2% of the total population. The addition of all Australian-born persons with Italian-born fathers would raise the percentage to 3.7% of the Australian population being of Italian descent.

Generally speaking, the Italian immigrants of the 1950s, like most of the Southern European immigrants, were chosen by the Australian government from the lower ranks of society. As was the case with the American immigration, the government seemed to favour poorly educated people pushed to emigrate by *miseria e disperazione* (poverty and hopelessness of their present condition) (Lopreato, 1967; Loh 1980). This is corroborated by sociologists reporting on the Australian history of immigration. Foster and Stockley (1984:12) debate 'whether successive Australian governments have deliberately fostered an immigration program designed to provide a reserve army of cheap migrant labour to help control the indigenous working class'.

Although the mass-immigration of Italians to Australia took place later than the mass-immigration of Italians to America, the Italian pattern of settlement in Australia closely resembled that of the Italians in America. As the migrants before the First World War, the migrants who left Italy after the Second World War were primarily from an agricultural background. Those who chose to migrate to Australia decided to settle in its main cities. As happened with the pre-First World War migrants to America they founded their own "little Italies" which were kept inhabited by the chain immigration from their own villages/town/regions. They tolerated enormous hardship in the new land, but accepted it in the belief that it would be 'temporary', that soon they would be back in their home village with wealth to share. As for the Italian-Americans, when this hope showed to be just a 'chimera', the Italo-Australians also chose to make their dream more attainable by turning to the ownership of their own houses (see: Cresciani, 1985; Cecilia, 1987; Pascoe, 1987).

In the 1950s, in Australia, the thinking of the mainstream society was very much that of an English Colony, in other words very "English" in all its

outward social and political expressions and of course, although not by official legislation, the recognised mainstream language was English. The great wave of non-English speaking European immigrants took the Australian population by surprise. Extremes of racism, as described for the United States, were unknown in Australia. But, as Bettoni (1985a:45) reports, it did not mean that the pressures towards cultural assimilation were less heavy.

The Italian-Australian family had to undergo similar transformation to the Italian-American family of the 1930s. Members of the second generation of Italian-Australian found themselves in the same conflict of cultures as their earlier American counterparts and their reactions to the conflict could easily fit with Childs (1943) main three types of reactions (see 4.1.1.3).

The comparison between the Italian-American settlement and the Italian-Australian ways of adapting and responding to Australian society is corroborated by widely documented research at historical, sociological and sociolinguistic level by Italian Ethnic Associations and scholars who had Italian as well as general research interest in the field. The general outcomes of the data analysed in regard to Italian families are in line with the thinking and conclusions reached by the earlier American researchers mentioned above.

Socio-political pressures to assimilate were most evident in educational institutions, presented as educational school policies. As the second generation of Italians in the USA, from the very beginning of their schooling, children from non-English speaking background were pressured into the speaking of English only. Cox, the headmaster of a primary school in a migrant holding centre wrote:

The child must learn to think in English from the start. English is the basis of all instruction. It is the avenue to mutual understanding. It is the key to the success to the whole immigration project. English must be spoken to the pupils and by them, all day and every day, in every activity, in school and out of it. (Cox, 1951: 32 - as cited in Martin 1981:89)

Cox continues, children 'must fit-in' and 'learn the significance of all that we honour and respect.' (Cox, 1951: 32- as cited in Martin 1981:89)

However, in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was an “explosion of interest in education in general and a shift in orientation among educators from a system-centred to a child-centred philosophy. (Martin, 1981: 99)”. These changes gave a drastic shift of perspective to the education of the migrant child. The assimilationist philosophy was supplanted by an integrationist one and, it could be said that, at this point, the similarities between the second generation of Italian-American migrants and Italian-Australian migrants came to a close. This period saw the emergence of definitions applied to Australian society such as 'multicultural', 'pluralistic', 'polyethnic'. Child migrant education became the focus of politicians. The opposition parties used it as an effective tool by criticising existing educational policies (Martin, 1981: 100).

This was a reflection of what was happening in Australian society. Ethnic groups were learning to be militant and to make their voices heard. Their power at the electoral polls was taken very seriously. Whether the motivation was ideological or opportunistic, elected politicians brought the demands of the minority groups to parliament. In the 1970s, the most visible signs of the changes in the socio-political arena happened in schools, particularly in primary schools, where Languages Other Than English (LOTE) became a

subject of the school curriculum (although at first as optional extras, often taught by parents or community members). Previously, Australian students could choose to study a LOTE in secondary schools and, if offered, continue studying it at university level. In Victoria, Italian was one of the languages that enjoyed wide popularity. At first, it was only taught by the ethnic school association on Saturdays. By the early 1970s Italian was offered at State and Catholic primary and secondary schools as well as at university level. With the new changes of the school curriculum, by the late 1970s, students (or their parents for them) could choose to study Italian in a school from preparatory to university level.

So it was that the Australian-born children of the migrants of the 1950s went through a total 'seachange' in the period of their school career. They had started school being told that the only language to use was English and that it was necessary to conform to Anglo-Celtic culture (as all of my PG informants attested). But on reaching university and their subsequent working life, they found themselves living in a mainstream society ready to accept minority groups, their cultures and their languages without pressing for assimilation. In fact, it offered support in establishing infrastructures (see next section) that would help them maintain their cultures and their languages.

Ironically, it is at this same time (the late 1970s) that Italian immigration to Australia stopped. Living conditions in Italy had improved dramatically and Italian emigration ceased (Cresciani, 1985). The few individuals who decided to migrate at this time had reasons that were not necessarily of the financial kind. They were more qualified and skilled than the migrants of the 1950s and also more informed of what to expect when migrating.

4.2.2 Italians in Australia: the period 1981 to late 1990s

In the 1980s, school programs of LOTE continued to multiply. However, it was soon evident that the *ad hoc* nature of the Australian linguistic situation needed to be formally and nationally planned and administered if the potential advantages of Australian multilingualism were to be reaped by the whole population. Ethnic organizations, teacher associations and academics were pressing for changes in educational and linguistic policies. Thus, in 1982, as a result of this public and constant pressure, the government ordered an inquiry into and report upon: *The Development and Implementation of a Coordinated Language Policy for Australia* (Commonwealth of Australia, 1984) to be conducted by the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Arts.

The Senate Committee assembled a vast amount of data and considered a wide range of issues. On completion, its first recommendation was:

Language policies should be developed and co-ordinated at the national level on the basis of four guiding principles, namely:

- ◇ Competence in English
- ◇ Maintenance and development of languages other than English
- ◇ Provision of services in languages other than English
- ◇ Opportunities for learning second languages

The National Policy on Languages was produced as a result of the inquiry (Lo Bianco, 1987a) which was accepted and officially endorsed by the Parliament.

In the National Policy on Languages Lo Bianco outlined a rationale, statement of principles and a list of problems that needed to be addressed:

Rationale:

It is necessary that broad statements with clear principles be enunciated so that the language problems which face the country as a whole can be tackled at the various relevant levels by the appropriate authorities (p.189)

Principles:

These principles are that the nature of language as dynamic and arbitrary needs to be acknowledged, as does the need to enhance level of competence and standardization to achieve better communication. The different languages spoken in Australia are recognised. Other principles related to the need for a balanced, comprehensive and just approach to language issues. (p.189)

Problems to be addressed are:

- i. the overcoming of injustices, disadvantages and discrimination related to language,
- ii. the enrichment of cultural and intellectual life in Australia,
- iii. the integration of language teaching/learning with Australia's external
- iv. (economic and political) needs and priorities,
- v. the provision of clear expectations to the community about language in general and about language in education in particular,
- vi. support for the component groups of Australian society (ethnic communities, the deaf and Aboriginal groups), for whom language issues are very important with recognition and encouragement, and

guidance in attempts to link technology and language use and learning.
(p.189)

The National Policy on Languages went beyond considering language/s in its traditional educational contexts. It offered a rationale for multilingualism based on social, cultural and economic principles. It dealt with the status of languages, the teaching and learning of languages, provision of language services for the general society as well as offering implementation strategies.

Its application has not always been smooth and there have been misinterpretations of the policy. However, in only thirty-six years, from 1951 to 1987, thanks to the work of people interested in having the language heritage of all Australians recognised, there was a shift from a totally English monolingual education to multilingual education supported by the new official National Policy on Languages. In effect, for its efforts, Australia was seen as a respected international leader in the field of multicultural and multilingual education (Clyne, 1991a: 20). Fishman, when discussing the US “English only” policy, in no uncertain terms lauds the efforts of the Australian language policy whilst hoping that the American ways of dealing with their national languages would improve.

The difference between the Australian language policy and other English speaking countries (i.e. Britain, USA) was that the context for its existence came from an enormous popular demand in which linguistic professional associations had a leading role. This determined action taken at federal level. In other words, *The National Policy on Languages* was the result of a ‘bottom-up’ policy rather than a ‘top-bottom’ one.

However, in the 1990s teaching of languages acquired new dimensions which, at times, contradicted the stated original scope of the policy to the point that in 1998 Scarino writes:

I note a major ideological retreat from a commitment to pluralism to an increasingly strong economic rationalist base to policy construction and a lack of willingness to engage with otherness or difference at a time when the potential for international movement and exchanges is greater and easier than ever before (Scarino, 1998:3)

Especially in regard to the teaching of LOTE, it seemed to Scarino that there was the real unpleasant possibility of a return to the “one language, one culture, one system of values, one nation!” (ibid:3) policies of the 1950s.

The teaching of LOTE was on the educational agenda in the 1990s, and applied linguists, e.g. Scarino, and sociolinguists, e.g. Clyne, would make sure that it remained there. Often, though, the manner of its implementation has been the object of controversy. Reviews of policies related to the teaching of LOTES continue. In 2002 a new document (Languages for Victoria’s Future) has been released by the Victorian Department of education and Training in which an analysis of languages in government schools is undertaken. The analysis found that there is need for “greater coordination and planning of languages delivery” (p. iii) and offers several key recommendation for the betterment of LOTE programs in Victorian schools.

In the 1980s and 1990s, as the education world was undergoing drastic transformations, the Italian community in Australia was also changing. It was still the largest non-English speaking minority group, but the membership of

the group, its demography, was rather different. Most of the migrants of the 1950s had become the patriarchs/matriarchs of extended families. Most of the Australian-born second generation had become parents themselves. There were exogamous and endogamous marriages; marriages where one of the partners had/has only one of his/her parents who were/are Italian born. Their children, the third generation, range in age from infancy to tertiary schooling age.

4.2.3 Assessing the language situation of the Italian-Australian community

As for the Italian-American group, the situation of the Italian group in Australia, will be assessed through the Ethnolinguistic Vitality model and the GIDS.

4.2.3.1 The Italian-Australian intergroup situation: *status*

The Italian community in Australia, although much 'younger' than the Italian American community, also rates well in regard to its *economic status*. For example, the participation of Italians in the industry sector is very high. The 1991 census shows that the Italian-born persons are well represented in the Wholesale and Retail trade (21.6%) and Manufacturing industries (19% which is higher than the 13.1% for the local Australian population). Other sectors, which have a higher than average participation of Italian-born, are Electricity, Gas and Water, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting. In Community Services there is strong presence of Italian females, while Italian males are a powerful presence in the construction industry.

In 1996, the participation of the Italian born to the workforce was 42,03% and the unemployment of 7,1% (comparable data for the total Australian population was 61,09% and 9,2%) (*Italiani in Australia negli anni novanta.*)

The second generation of Italian descent has shown to be more upwardly mobile than the first. For many of them work is still in factories or in trade (often family businesses). However, 41.1% Italian males and 32.9% Italian females of second generation in 1991 had attained educational or vocational qualifications. These included qualifications such as skilled vocational (20.5% males – 4.5% females), Bachelors Degree (7.0% male – 5.8% females). Other qualifications attained by second generation Italians were in Basic Vocational, Under-graduate and Post-graduate diplomas as well as Higher Degrees. Data are not readily available for third generation Italians, but generally speaking, it can be said that they are following the example of the second generation, with more Italian individuals entering the sought after prestigious professions (eg. Law, Medicine, Science).

On the whole, economically the Italian-Australian community is comfortably prosperous. “The proportion of Italo-Australians owning their own home is the highest of all the ethnic groups in Australia. This is a clear indication of how well they have integrated economically into the Australian society. (Cavallaro, 1997:77). Therefore the economic status of the Italian-Australian could be defined as “*high*”.

In regard to *social status*, Italians in Australia, in Cresciani’s view (1985), have

with their work and sacrifices earned the right to recreate for themselves an identity, a dignity, a way of living within a foreign society which

persistently demanded their 'assimilation' but was not, until recently, far sighted and challenging enough to afford them unconditional life membership. (p. 105).

However, Italians

preferred to keep their ancestral traditions, although they were manifestly receptive to the best that Australian culture could offer. (p. 104).

A group that has resisted successfully the push for cultural assimilation and, to some extent, linguistic assimilation, must be a group with a certain degree of social status as defined by Giles. As Giles *et al* explain, the positive, *self-perceived social status* could be a reflection of the status attributed to it by the 'outgroup'. The positive social status of the Italian group (as well as that of other groups such as Dutch, Germans and Poles) has increased (as shown by comparisons of public opinion polls eliciting attitudes on minority groups (Morgan 1951; OMA 1989 – cited in Clyne 2003:56). These opinions mark a major shift in attitudes (as discussed in 4.2.1) in the second and further generations of Italians from those held by their parents/grandparents in earlier times. Therefore, it could be concluded that the *social status* of the Italian-Australian group, as well as the *self-perceived social status* could be put on the three level scale as "high".

On the contrary, the *sociohistorical status* of Italians in Australia does not appear to be strong. Linguistic and territorial divisions from the home country have been transferred to the new land (Bettoni, 1985). The regional ties are more strongly felt than the national ties. As for the Italian-Americans, very few things

regarding Italy stir Italian-Australians deeply. Therefore it could be argued that, as the Italian-American group, the Italian-Australian community lacks those common mobilising symbols as, for example, past struggles for unity, which in the present can inspire individuals to bind together as group members. It follows that the *socio-historical status* of the Italian-Australians could be defined as "low".

The issue of *language status within* the Italian-Australian community has been discussed at some length in Chapter Two and Three and in the American section of this chapter. Here it suffices to say that within the Italian-Australian community, *Standard Italian* is the prestigious language, the desideratum of cultured exchanges. Within the group all the other varieties used are accorded less status than the 'Standard'.

Outside the group, in the Australian society, the 'Standard' is the only variety which is understood to be 'Italian' and according to Lo Bianco (1989: 168) it has a rather high status in the general community. The Italian language is also one of the most popular languages in mainstream Australian education (further discussion later in 4.2.3.3). The *language status* of (Standard) Italian can, therefore, be defined as "high" both *within* and *outside* the boundaries of the Italian linguistic community network.

4.2.3.2 The Italian-Australian intergroup situation: *demography*

The demographic factors discussed in Giles *et al's* model as contributing to the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups are divided into two categories:

- (a) Group Distribution - including national territory, group concentration and group proportion.

(b) Group numbers - including absolute numbers, birth rate, mixed marriages, immigration and emigration.

Due to the comparatively recent arrival of Italians in great number in Australia, there is a richer variety of data than the Italian-American group that can be used for the overview of the demography of the Italian-Australian group. Of the categories outlined under the two group headings of Giles *et al's* demographic model (Group Distribution and Group Numbers) only those relevant to the Italo-Australian group will be reviewed.

Group distribution factors of the Italian-Australian group

Group concentration contributes to group vitality. As the Italo-American migrants earlier in the century, so the majority of Italian migrants to Australia of the 1950s, due to a pattern of chain-migration, tended to settle in the same geographical area as those who had preceded them. They also tended to choose major urban centres. As a result, the biggest concentration of Italian-born in Australia is to be found in Melbourne (Victoria) (according to the 1996 census 41.6%) and Sydney (New South Wales) (27.8%). It is a level of concentration good enough to facilitate congregation in clubs and ethnic associations, which become instrumental in linguistic and cultural maintenance and therefore group vitality. However the *group proportion* of Italians is not high enough to be considered a threat in the intergroup/s relationship in the Australian context and therefore contributes only moderately to the linguistic vitality of the Italo-Australian group.

Group numbers factors of the Italian-Australian group

Absolute numbers: In the 1996 census the Italian-born individuals living in Australia were 238,263. The State of Victoria has the highest number with 99,149 or 46.6%, followed by New South Wales with 66,164 or 27.8%. In the same census, the second generation (born in Australia with one or both parents born in Italy) numbered 334,000. The two groups together (572,263) make up the biggest non-English speaking group in Australia. Giles argues that “the more numerous the speakers of a group are, the more vitality they will exhibit and the better will be the chances for that group to survive as a collective entity” (Giles *et al*; 1977:313). Therefore it could be said that the *absolute numbers* of the Italian group in Australia should be one of the strengths of their linguistic vitality and graded as ‘high’. However, Giles’ claim is often challenged (e.g. Yağmur, 1997). The statistics of the Italian-Australian group also challenge his claim. In the decade from 1986 to 1996 (first year of collection of data for the study), there has been a substantial language shift in the Italo-Australian group (especially in the second generation Italians) from Italian towards English (cf. Clyne 2003:24-32).

Mixed marriages: Higher numbers of ethnolinguistically mixed marriages can affect a group’s vitality. This appears to be accurate for the Italian group. Statistics from the 1996 census related to the second generation of Italians show that when they are in exogamous marriages there is a higher shift towards English (79.1%), whilst in the aggregate endogamous ones the shift is of 42.6% (Clyne and Kipp, 1997). However, in the Italian communities abroad, linguistic problems arise even when two Italians marry whose origins are not from the same Italian geographical region. This type of marriage could almost be considered as exogamous. The couple may understand a few words of each

other's dialect, but if they are not fluent in the 'standard' (or at very least 'popular') variety of Italian, the difference of dialects, as the difference of languages for the exogamous couples, will lead to language shift towards the national language.

To sum up, the *demography* of the Italian-Australian group could be said to have a "*medium*" influence on its ethnolinguistic vitality.

The third element in the assessment of the vitality of a group in the '*Structural Variables*' model is the *Institutional Support factors*. This will be assessed through the GIDS.

4.2.3.3 Assessment of the institutional support of the Italian-Australian group

Stage 8: Most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults

As Fishman (1991:255) notes this stage is not relevant to any of the European or immigrant languages in Australia. This observation is also valid for the Italian language.

Stage 7: most of the users of Xish are socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age

At this stage, the use of community language is confined to the elderly and does not reach the younger generations. This trend has reached the Italian group where almost half of the Italian-born (and Italian-speaking) population (49.5%

according to the 1996 census) is 65 years of age or older. It is not clear if this is the major reason that has led to the high level of intergenerational LS shown in the same census. Clyne (2001: 366) does not agree, arguing that the elderly language users still do not constitute a significant part of the population of the minority communities. In any case, the Italian elderly are socially integrated and active. They communicate in Italian, but efforts to change substantially the pattern of language use in their families/ community are not noticeable. As in the USA, Italian, with its multifaceted varieties used in the migration country, has the function of facilitating intergenerational communication.

Stage 6: the attainment of intergenerational informal oracy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement

This is the stage of family and community commitment to linguistic compartmentalisation, a concept that is unacceptable to the immigrant communities in Australia. The Italian group is a typical Australian immigrant group which is involved in mainstream life. However, examples reported by Clyne (2001) illustrating efforts of RLS of older language communities in Australia (i.e. the German) are fully applicable to the Italian group. The efforts towards RLS by these groups are the following (from Clyne, 2001: 367):

Increasingly, grandparents are taking the role of intergenerational language transmission. The reasons for this are:

- (1) a desire on the part of the parents to make their children bilingual, even if they themselves speak English at home;
- (2) the high degree of exogamy;
- (3) upward mobility and socio-economic conditions making it likely that both parents are in paid employment which often means that the

grandparents or grandmother is/are the main caregiver(s) during the week, at least up to the time the children enter primary school.

Not all second generation Australians rely on their parents for the bilingualism of their children. An increasing number of these, usually middle class second generation couples, are raising their children with the one parent, one language principle. This happens when one parent will speak/communicate with the child using always one language –i.e. his/hers community language- and the other parent will use always the mainstream language. There are some very well publicised Australian cases (i.e. Saunders, 1988; Döpke, 1993) exemplifying that strategy and other not so well known but whose experience has been written as a case study (Filipi, 1993). Parents have also discussed with me many times that they have attempted this strategy (including one of the informant couples), but desist when children begin school because, as parents used to tell me: “children begin to resent having to use the home language and be ‘different’.”

Some parents, especially those who are not knowledgeable of educational registers, also quote the continuous struggle of having to find ways of explaining in the community language concepts the children are acquiring daily. They lament that their range of topics (and related lexis) in Italian cannot meet the challenge ... and they fall back on the easier options: use of mainstream language and engaging the help of the grandparents when possible.

The reasons given by the parents why they wish their children to be bilingual are:

- (a) integrative - the need to communicate with the older generation in the core and extended family as well as with Italian relatives, either when visiting them in Italy or when they visit Australia;
- (b) identity – Italian language and culture is our heritage – our children must learn about it;
- (c) instrumental – parents think that to know another language could one day help children in their chosen career, with the added benefits of the cultural and cognitive advantages of bilingualism.

The discussion above and the literature reviewed demonstrate that in Australia measures are in place to promote the use of Italian language. However, these fall short of creating the intergenerational, functionally compartmentalised language community considered necessary by Fishman at Stage 6 of the GIDS for RLS to eventuate.

Stage 5: Literacy via agencies or institutions that are entirely under Xish control and that do NOT need to meet or satisfy Yish standards re compulsory education

Fishman (1991:262) points out that “Immigrant languages in Australia are served by impressively large numbers of community-supported ethnic group schools.” The Italian group is also well served. However the language classes sponsored by the Italian ethnic agencies are no longer taught outside school hours. It could be said that Italian language teaching has become “mainstreamed” and the vast majority of its classes are conducted during normal hours of schooling. Hence, they belong to the *stage 4b* and will be discussed more fully in that stage of the GIDS. However, here mention must be made of the work of the “Dante Alighieri” Society which is totally under the *Xish control* and does not need to satisfy *Yish standards*. In educational circles in Australia, “La Dante” is appreciated for the stimulus it offers students of Italian,

from whatever ethnic background, with its linguistic competitions - a way of using the language they are learning in a purposeful manner. However, its role in the Italian group's RLS does not appear to be very prominent.

Stage 4a: Xish in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws

Stage 4a is concerned with non-government primary and secondary schools which are affiliated mostly to religious denominations attended by about a third of Australian school pupils (Clyne, 2001: 372)). The curricula of these schools are usually bilingual with the emphasis on the learning of the specific minority language and/or religion (e.g. in a Greek private school it would be the Greek language and the Greek Orthodox faith).

No such Italian private schools in Australia are nominated on the Italian government web-site (in which all Italian private schools abroad are supposed to be listed). Certainly there are no Italian private schools in Victoria, the Australian state in which the informants reside. However, in Victoria, Italian is taught at almost all Catholic schools, primary and secondary, thus being no longer identified with a local community. Italian is also taught widely in government primary and secondary schools in all States and Territories of Australia. The functioning of these language classes will be discussed in Stage 4b.

Stage 4b: Xish programs in Yish schools

Fishman declares the pursuit of RLS through the teaching of Xish language in Yish controlled schools as one that is of dubious effectiveness. Yet, in Australia, and especially for the Italian group, this form of RLS is the most ubiquitous. Italian is taught from Preparatory level to the end of Secondary school.

Universities, TAFE (Colleges of Technical and Further Education) and CAE (Council of Adult Education) also offer numerous varieties of Italian language courses at different levels; Italian language courses are also provided by the Italian Cultural Institute (entirely funded by the Italian government). The language courses and cultural activities of this institution are directed prevalently to members of the mainstream society, but often attract also individuals of Italian descent.

Up to January 2004, the Italian language classes at primary level funded by the Italian government through the ethnic agency Co.As.It. in cooperation with the local government and the Catholic Education Office were conducted during normal class-time. Co.As.It employed teachers and provided teaching materials to support the curriculum activities. However, as from February 2004, Co.As.It will cease employing Italian language teachers. The agency will continue its involvement with the teaching of Italian in different ways (i.e. employing Italian network leaders and professional development for all Italian language teachers) which, at this point in time, are still being finalised (personal communication with Martinengo –director of Co.As.It- 2004). At secondary level Italian is offered as any other subject on the curriculum and, as any other subject, funded by the relevant public education authorities. Similar funding patterns are followed in tertiary and further education institutions.

The Italian community, especially parents and grandparents of school aged children, has great confidence in the power of the education system to deliver RLS. However, statistics show that the intergenerational LS among Italians is on a steep ascent. This may be because it is a lot to expect from the teaching of a language as a school subject with entails between one to a maximum of five (at university level) hours of linguistic and cultural (the latter conducted in the

host language) instructions a week. For the Italian group, rather than RLS these programs appear to be the province of ICAL (Intergenerational Continuity of Additional Languages). ICAL (Fishman, 1991) is the learning 'anew' for third and following generations of what once was the community language of the group, now their 'heritage' (term employed to denote past rather than present use) language. The ICAL becomes a *rite-de-passage* for the young, but "long-term prospects for intergenerational continuity under such circumstances are not good" (Fishman, 1991: 363).

Stage 3: use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside the Xish neighbourhood/ community) involving interaction between Xians and Yians

In the first decade of the 21st century as in the last of the 20th century, the status of Italians in the workplace is not one that is conducive to RLS. Demographically and socially the Italian group is very well represented in most professions and spheres of the industry, but the use of Italian language is definitely not common.

Stage 2: Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in higher spheres of either

At this stage, Fishman (1991: 270) asserts:

Local mass media and governmental services can make positive contributions to RLS only to the extent that they are directly related to and connected to fundamental family-neighbourhood-community functioning.

As a member of the Italian community, teacher of Italian language and culture and lecturer involved in preparation of Italian language teachers, I have had an

extensive familiarity with second and third generation young Italian-English bilinguals, including the informants in this study. I have yet to see any of them choosing to read any of the ethnic media often available in their own homes or their close relatives and friends' homes. As a teacher, I have included media materials in my curriculum, I have invited my students to use them in theirs, but the local ethnic media (in this Fishman (1991), Clyne and Kipp (1999) for instance, concur) does not attract the younger readers of a minority group. The same could be said of the radio and television programs. However, even if the local Italian media fails to attract young people, Clyne (2001) points out that the ethnic media, radio and especially TV can be viewed as indirect contributions to the cause of RLS.

The presence of community languages in the public domain gives legitimacy to intergenerational transmission and parent-child interaction in a community language in the presence of non-speakers of the language. Such consistent community language use without apology or criticism, representing one of the major changes in Australia in the past two decades, is essential for the success of RLS. It is one of the issues that many families raising children bilingually are concerned about. Moreover, the electronic media do provide a resource towards reactivating the community language and activating passive skills, though, of course, they cannot instigate or even provide a context for such RLS. (Clyne, 2001: 377)

The Italian media, radio and TV broadcastings are well established in Australia. Newspapers are published daily in Melbourne and Sydney. Compared to other ethnic groups, Italian has the highest number of hours on air on SBS radio (Special Broadcasting Services – a government funded network –broadcasting

in 68 languages every week). The total number of hours SBS television in 1996/97 (13.03% of LOTE programs time) was second only to French (16.76%). Pay-TV station offers broadcasting directly from Italy (RAI-TV) 24 hours a day. As a matter of course, most of 2nd and 3rd generation Italians when entering in any one of the homes in their family/ neighbourhood /community inevitably see/ hear/ watch at least one of these media (especially in the 1st generations' homes). Even if they do not spontaneously decide to use any of the ethnic media, the exposure to its language becomes 'normal' for them. It would be futile to assume that this is intergenerational transmission. But the 'normality' of the exposure to their community language may keep the minds of the younger generations free of prejudices and more open to acceptance of any actions undertaken by interested members of the community towards RLS.

Governmental services are available bilingually in many languages, not only in Italian, in big urban centres (i.e. Melbourne and Sydney). They are also available in many municipal offices, as well as in banks, real estate agencies, pharmacies and shops. Those most advantaged by these services are the elderly generation and 1st generation immigrants in general. Of course, this practice offers professional employment to the bilingual second (usually) generation individuals who have been chosen because of their linguistic skills. Again, it is not directly related to intergenerational continuity of the language, but sets a definite good example for a valuable use of the minority languages.

Stage 1: some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence)

Fishman differentiates local and national media. In Australia most community press has a nation wide circulation (e.g. 'Il Globo', now a daily Italian newspaper, is published in Melbourne but is available in all major cities in

Australia, as is 'La Fiamma', published in Sydney). Radio Broadcasting is at local and national level. Community language television is broadcast mostly at national level or through pay-TV, and in *stage 2* I have given information related to the Italian language broadcasting. The governmental services offered at local, municipal and business level, are also offered in all major cities, depending on the specific needs of the local communities. Since most of the business of government and administration takes place in English (although, in Australia, English is not a *de jure* official language), government departments employ bilingual people and offer telephone interpreter services in 190 languages. As observed in *Stage 2*, although it cannot be considered intergenerational transmission, these services provide incentives to maintain and develop bilingual skills.

At occupational level, the presence of Italian individuals, especially second generation Italians, is and has been significant in higher spheres of governmental services, policy making and also at the highest level of government. For example, the immediate past Governor of Victoria is an Italian born, Italian-Australian. Italians are also numerous in the judiciary system. There are multiple studies and projects regarding Italian in Australia funded by the Australian Government and/or Italian ethnic agencies. At higher education level, Italian is offered in most Australian universities. One Professorship of Italian has been established at a Melbourne university by wealthy Italian patrons.

Nevertheless, in Fishman's opinion, if steps are not taken to relate all the activities carried out at the different *stages* of the GIDS to the one that is considered by him to be the '*conditio sine qua non*' of language transmission

(stage 6), very little will be achieved as far as intergenerational RLS of the Italian group is concerned.

4.2.4 The Italian-Australian language situation: discussion and conclusion

The analysis of the language situation of the Italian-Australian group could be represented as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Summary of the Italian-Australian group’s ethnolinguistic vitality

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
STATUS		medium to	high
DEMOGRAPHY			high
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT			high

If no other data were considered, the table above would lead the reader to conclude that ethnolinguistic vitality of the Italo-Australian group is ‘high’ and therefore its language maintenance assured. However, as for the Italian-American group, the analysis of the group’s *institutional support* through the GIDS, whilst highlighting the Italian-Australian group’s high institutional support, has also brought to the fore a multitude of other factors that need consideration for LM and RLS to occur.

LM and RLS can be achieved, according to Fishman, *only* if *stage 6* is attained. Fishman, Clyne and other researchers of the Australian ethnolinguistic landscape agree that no immigrant group in Australia (and the Italian group is no exception) intends to create ethnolinguistic self-regulating, separate communities as this is “in open conflict with the interactionist ideology of

multiculturalism in Australia to which both the 'dominant' and most immigrant groups subscribe" (Clyne, 2001: 368).

If the above were correct, the Italian community place on the GIDS would be at *Stage 7*. At this stage elderly people are seen as a resource for RLS.

However, if the social interaction between the elderly, the social gatherings, concerts, lectures, prizes, performances, periodic publications and manifold other activist efforts that are the hallmark of stage 7 *are so focused as to bring about and foster intergenerational continuity then, and only then, have they re-established a link, the missing link, to the future, to the world of young folks, rather than merely being what they otherwise are, no more than means of social interaction and social expression for the gratification of 'old folks' per se.* (Italics as per original) (Fishman, 1991:92)

Many of the activities in which the 'elderly' of the Italian community in Australia participate could be defined as being 'self-gratifying'. However, many more activities are organised that maintain the link with the younger generations. Picnics, barbeques, parties, celebrations and gatherings are organised to which the whole extended family is invited and all members feel obliged to participate. At these gatherings Italian is used by all participants to a greater or lesser extent. In addition, the elderly's role in intergenerational language transmission becomes explicit when, as explained above in *Stage 6*, the parents entrust their children to the CL-speaking grandparents actively engaging their help to help make the children bilingual.

This is not the family/neighbourhood/community envisaged by Fishman in *stage 6*. Nevertheless, these efforts contribute to the 'family' working towards LM and RLS. In addition, in favour of the Italian linguistic situation, there are all the other endeavours for LM and RLS conducted at the other stages of the GIDS, either by the Italian community or/and with the support of the mainstream society and/or the Italian government.

These activities in favour of the Standard Italian language and the institutional support received by the Italian community, in addition to the Italian community's 'presence' in the nation, ensure that the group receives a high rating in the ethnolinguistic vitality model. Therefore, the Italian group is placed in a very favourable position for LM and RLS. However, in Fishman's model, the same activities are perceived as just 'biding time' before total LS eventuates.

The differing results do not necessarily cast doubts on the models as systematic and unbiased tools in the comparison of minority groups' ethnolinguistic vitality. However, each situation presents different challenges. Theoretical models may need to be adapted to suit the specific situations. With this in mind, viewing the analysis of the data related to the Italian situation in Australia from "the interactionist ideology of multiculturalism in Australia to which both the 'dominant' and most immigrant groups subscribe (Clyne, 2001: 368)", a third interpretation could be offered of the ethnolinguistic situation of the Italian group.

In *Stage 6* several attempts were outlined of LM and RLS undertaken by families belonging to minority groups. From personal experience, data collected for this study as well as previous ones (Finocchiaro, 1994), the reasons

why families of non English speaking background in Australia are so keen to have their children maintain and develop their heritage language are largely pinned on what Clyne (2001) described as “indirect contributions to the cause of RLS” that is: the continued presence of the minority languages in the public domain which makes the use of any language legitimate.

This ‘presence’ in mainstream society is precisely what is spurring on families belonging to minority groups to maintain their language and, if the home language is a dialect of the standard, to learn the standard variety.

It could be perceived as the reversal of Fishman’s theory. Rather than establishing bilingualism in an insular family/ neighbourhood/ community, in an ambience of near-conflict with the mainstream society, a social mentality appears to be developing in Australia that views bilingualism not only as ‘normal’ but as an asset. Consequently, interested families belonging to minority groups are willing to maximise their ethnolinguistic benefits by employing strategies that help their children maintain and develop their community language, whilst, at the same time, being educated and socialised by the mainstream society.

Is this the way to RLS? It may pay not to be overly optimistic and bear in mind Fishman’s words (1991:91): “the road to societal language death is paved with good intentions called *positive attitudes*”. As it stands, statistics are proving Fishman right by showing that the ethnolinguistic efforts by interested members of the Italian community, the Italian ethnic associations, the support of the Italian government and the mainstream society have not even slowed down LS in second generation Italians.

The question that begs an answer is if the present favourable situation of minority languages in Australia, which is generating positive intergenerational efforts for LM and RLS at family level, can be transformed into quantifiable RLS at the community level of a specific group. The analysis of the data related to the Italian-Australian informants (Chapter Seven) should help in offering insights towards formulating an answer.

4.3 Italians in France

According to Corti (2003), the presence of Italians in France is an historical phenomenon dating back to the 13th century. Through the centuries there were rich merchants, highly gifted Italian craftsmen, scientists and artists making their way to France. Also, more humble workers such as field workers and labourers would travel back and forth from Italy to France, especially in the areas close to the borders.

Notwithstanding their continuous and ever changing presence, the Italians were not visible as a group in France till the mid-1800s when the French census put the Italians at 63,000 out of 380,000 foreigners. In 1911 the Italians in France made up 36% of immigrants – there were about half a million Italians (then the biggest foreign group in France), who constituted 1% of the total French population. The First World War slowed the migration flow, but after the war a new wave of migrant workers started, due to the beginning of Italo-French bilateral accords imposing new rules in the migration of labourers between the two countries (Tosi 2002). This immigration was necessary for France and the reconstruction of their country. In the conflict France had had enormous human loss, whilst Italy, notwithstanding their human losses, came out of the conflict with an increased demography due to the natural growth of the population

(Corti, 2003). In 1931, the Italians in France were still the biggest group of foreigners (27.9%).

After the Second World War, the human flow to France from Italy continued. However, the overall Italian presence in France was diminishing. The flow of migrants became a trickle till it stopped altogether. In 1982, the Italians in France were 9% of the foreign population (Blanc-Chaléard and Bechelloni, 2002).

4.3.1 Italians in France: the period 1950 – 1980

The GPG informants arrived in France in 1956. Since the late 1940s France needed and wanted people. Not just transient workers, but also people who would remain in France to boost the population and the workforce. But as America earlier in the twentieth century and Australia at about the same period as France, the people in charge of immigration laws had a clear ethnic selection in mind. They wanted immigrants, but not just any immigrants. They had to be immigrants who were easily 'absorbable' into the mainstream. France wanted an immigration of 'quality' not 'quantity' (Chevalier, 1946/47, as reported by Bechelloni, 1993). The immigration of quality was to arrive from Denmark, Holland, Norway and England, the immigration of quantity included Polish and Italians. However, the authorities soon came to the realization that the foreigners they wanted to attract were the least interested in emigrating.

Italians who were already in France had shown themselves to be good, loyal French citizens (especially during the war, joining the underground fight against the Germans), and easy to assimilate (Serra, 1993). Thus in 1946 the first bilateral Italian-French accord for the introduction of Italian workers in France

was signed. Subsequently, the Italian immigration was described by Chevalier (1947, as reported by Bechelloni, 1993) as *“l’immigrazione assimilabile per eccellenza ...l’unica immigrazione auspicabile e al tempo stesso possibile ... le autorità francesi hanno tardato a capire l’interesse di un’immigrazione italiana”* (the assimilable immigration par excellence ... the only desirable and at the same time possible immigration ... the French authorities were slow in understanding the advantages of an Italian immigration) (Bechelloni: 56 -57).

However, Italian immigration did not start to flow easily. Bechelloni (1993) states that from 1946 to 1956 the level of immigration was one quarter of that envisaged by the bilateral accord. It was in 1956, the year that the study’s informants arrived, that the immigration level became higher and remained so for a few years before diminishing again and then stopping. This last wave of immigration did not arrive from the regions designated in the bilateral accord. This immigration included great numbers of individuals leaving the South of Italy, which previously had not been considered one of the most desirable Italian regions from which to draw immigrants. This wave of immigration was the last strong contingent of Italians to arrive in France and among them there were the informants of this study.

According to Françoise Avenas (2003), the Italian immigrants’ patterns of settlement in France was similar to that of the Italian-American and the Italian-Australian, although the biggest intake of Italians in each of the three countries happened in different periods of the twentieth century. Avenas reports that the mass-emigration of Italians to France happened between 1920 and 1940. Once in France they established themselves in ‘little Italies’ based on the regional dialects spoken by the migrants. Avenas claims that, since most migrants could barely use their regional dialects, their interactions were restricted to people

who spoke their own dialects. Therefore they found themselves cut off from their own compatriots (who spoke a different dialect) and also mainstream society. In addition, the lack of new immigration of (dialect) monolinguals from the homeland and the diminishing first generation by natural attrition in time further weakened the already poor use of the original dialect and “French became the main vernacular language” (p.2). Avenas’ assertions about Italian dialect speakers appear to contradict what other researchers have reported about Italian migrants (see Bettoni, 1985). Bettoni describes how most Italian migrants who might have not been speakers of the standard variety of Italian when they left Italy, on coming in contact with speakers of dialects different from their own in countries such Argentina, the USA, Australia, were able to master enough Italian –‘popular Italian’ (see 2.2.1)- to communicate with one another sufficiently well. However, according to Avenas and more to the core of first language use/ maintenance “the (migrant) community had to speak the host language inside the institutions it was exposed to and involved with. This linguistic behaviour represented the first step toward integration and assimilation into the host society”. (Avenas, 2003). Avenas presents this state of affairs as unavoidable from which the natural outcome is the shift to the host language and loss of competence in what was the migrant’s first language.

In the 1950s, when the Italians started to migrate to France again in significant numbers, most came under the label of “guest-workers” and therefore non permanent residents. Since the original intention of these workers was to return ‘home’ they tried to maintain their native language. However, as the time of their residence became longer and their families joined them, migration changed to “social migration”, the guest-workers became ‘migrant workers’ and decided to settle in their migration country (Extra, 1999).

The language situation of these migrants resembled that described above in reference to earlier migrants to France. As with the earlier migrants, what appears to have tipped the balance of the linguistic situation in favour of the national language was the birth and school education in the host country of the second and further generations. Their education in French schools meant learning to express themselves in French since ‘the school system encourages the children of immigrants to speak the language of the host country’ (Avenas, 2003: 2).

This is not dissimilar from what had happened to Italian migrants in the USA or in Australia. However, as similar as the ‘migrant experience’ of each individual or group to any country in the world may be in respect to settlement, adaptation, overcoming of problems, integration or assimilation, it would appear, as shown previously in the review of the US and Australia, that the evolution of each migrant experience in a given country is a reflection of the social political and economic policies of that country. Accordingly, each group of Italian emigrants in different migration countries has shaped its way of life in the new ‘homeland’ in harmony with the values of its mainstream society. Therefore, whilst the outcomes of socialisation of second generation migrants in the migration country and the shift from the parental language to the national language are similar in the three countries of interest to this study, the initial philosophy informing the outcomes not only could have been different, it may have not been overtly stated or consciously approved.

4.3.1.1 France and language

In France, according to the literature reviewed for this study, (for instance Ager and Extra), the use of the national language is, was and will always be among

the strongest, most discussed and legislated issue.

Contrary to the USA and Australia, French national language policy is old and central to the French identity. Ager (1999) dates it back to the 1500s, when, after a millennium of multiple dialects being used in the various territories and states of the old 'Gaul' land, one of the dialects, the Langue d'Oïl, Francien, came to the fore and was used increasingly as the common language. In 1539 the first piece of legislation requiring French to be used in legal language in the courts instead of Latin was drawn and signed by King François the First. Paradoxically, the French Revolution continued the practice of centralisation and social control of language introduced by the royal legislation. The Revolutionaries realised that the creation of France required a common means of communication understood by all citizens of the new state so that all promulgating of new laws could be readily understood. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, the revolution's credo, had to be applied to all citizens and that meant that no particularisms would be acceptable. Religious differences would not be tolerated and neither "could the habits, traditions, customs or languages of one group of citizens mark them as different from the others" (Ager, 1999: 24). Language became a powerful symbol of loyalty to the Revolution to the point that French Regional languages were deemed to be used by opponents of the regime to mislead the population. The proposal was made to banish such regional languages and make French the only lawful language of the regime. The Revolution's power to instigate new societal values went beyond language and these values

still form the foundation of French society. Belief in the Rights of Man in their universal applicability, in secular emancipation, and in the fundamental role of education in the creation of liberty and equality are

not merely tenets of the Socialist Party but are also generally accepted across French society. (Ager, 1994: 47)

In the modern era, “the Revolution legacy and the legal framework of contemporary France, imply a contractual relationship between individuals and the Nation-State, not a multicultural grouping of minorities dominated by a culturally-separated- majority” (Ibid: 49).

Of course, there are minority groups on French soil, but they go unrecognised. The existence of these groups and the French notion of citizenship create a conflict that the authorities do not want to address. This explains the policy towards immigrants, the rigid language policy and why approaches similar to the ones used in countries with multiracial policies seem to be highly inappropriate to most policy commentators in France (Ager, 1994:59). Instead the France of the 1960s and 1970s reflected

the 1966 Gaullist policy of exclusion of the Americans from French soil following his rejection of membership of NATO Strategic Command; the earlier refusal to accept the British request to join the European Communities under the Treaty of Rome mainly because they were not really ‘Europeans’; the necessity to ensure that French reflected the glory of France; and de Gaulle’s perception of the universal importance of France; all these factors meant that the language should be recognised as the important edifice it was and hence be itself better managed. (Ager, 1999: 129).

The result was that, apart from insistence that French be used in all European institutions, the organization ‘*Haut Comité de la Langue Française*’ was

established with the main purpose of promoting French as central to French identity. The law made French use compulsory in all public domains and the Ministry for Consumer Protection was responsible for its implementation.

In the late 1950s and in the 1960s, when the PG informants were undergoing their socialisation in the mainstream society through their school education, their experience was one of “assimilate or perish”. However, by all accounts (their own as well as those of their parents), they accepted and eventually thrived in an environment that did not make any allowance for their cultural and linguistic background and expected them to ‘catch up and move on’ like everybody else.

Socially, the friends of the GPG were Italians, and their children would naturally mix and play together. But there were no public social interactions such as celebrating Italian traditional cultural or religious festivities. There was no “Italian Club” and as the mother said “even if there was she would have not gone”. She considered those manifestations to be too ‘paesani’ and she had left them behind in the ‘paese’ and did not want to be part of that any more. Although they claim to be very proud of their Italian background, once in France, they preferred to be considered French. Of course, it helped the cause of the Italian migrants that since the beginning of their acculturation to France, they were defined *facilement assimilable* (easily assimilable) by the French government and society.

4.3.2 Italians in France: the period 1981 to late 1990s

Although among the many unofficial minority groups in France there is also an Italian group, for the reasons outlined above, information from the literature

related to the group as a community is meagre. However, from the 1980s to the 2000s, the period when the CG informants of the study were born and educated, the French language policy appeared to have undergone a change in direction, or, according to academic observers, i.e. Ager (1999), Extra (1999), Oakes (2002), Wright (2000), adopted a different approach to the application of the same principle behind the language policy: the supremacy of the French in France, in Europe and, as far as French legislators were concerned, in the world. The review of the French language policy in this period has a direct relevance to this study. The CG informants' education was based on the principles of the policy and this would have affected the attitudes they formed towards their heritage as well as those towards the mainstream society's language.

4.3.2.1 French in France in the 1990s

As a result of the European Community becoming the European Union, in France, in 1992, a law was passed to amend the French Constitution where language was concerned, by adding a new clause. The clause read: "The language of the Republic is French". This made French the official language of the country. The original formulation was: "French is the language of the Republic" and many feared that it could have been interpreted as if the French language was just a symbol of Frenchness, similar to the flag or the national anthem and not as central to French identity. Indeed, one of the first items in the law reads: "French expresses national identity: not that of an ethnic group, nor that of a political tradition, but that of the territory and of the culture." (Ager, 1999:131).

This concept was further emphasised in the Toubon Act of 1994 in which Article 1 is the following:

Article 1. French is an essential element of France, the language of teaching, work, commerce and public service, and is the special link for the Francophone community. (Ager, 1999: 132).

The Toubon legislation was intended to raise the status of French, not only specifying that it is the official language of the Republic, but also by imposing its use in specified domains in a strong and continuous effort to stop the spread of the English language in their land. Ager sums up the century old French language policy commenting on the progressive growing imposition of the use of French language in public domains:

- ◇ in 1539, the impositions were limited to written contracts and to the administration of justice;
- ◇ in 1794, 1833 and 1881-86, education was the main target
- ◇ in 1975 French became compulsory in the work-place and commerce;
- ◇ in 1994, five domains were formally identified for the use of French alone: employment, education, publicity and commerce, media, scientific meetings and publications.

However, the constitutional Council refused to allow the law to impose the use of official terminology on private citizens, marking in such a way the limits of interference by the political community on the speech patterns of the speech community.

The law was not accepted without controversy. It has been labelled an “attack on liberty” and “the language police”, however the protectionism of the language is not motivated only by fear of economic ruin or infiltration of English. “Pride in France and in the distinctive nature of French identity as exemplified in language, song and science, is a strong force” (Ager, 1999; 132 - 144).

4.3.2.2 French policy on multilingualism

The stated aims of the French language policy, as summarised by Dousten-Blazy, Minister of culture in 1996, and reported by Ager (1999: 165), are as follows:

- ◇ ensure the presence, prestige and influence (*rayonnement*) of French as the language of the Republic
- ◇ retain for French its role as language for international communication
- ◇ preserve cultural and linguistic diversity throughout the world by promoting multilingualism.

Academics and European politicians were rather suspicious of what appeared to be a novel respect for multilingualism on the part of the French government. They reasoned that till then the entire French history suggested that the only interest the French politicians in power (regardless of political party) had was to maintain the hegemony of French in the homeland and whatever part of the world they could control. Many (i.e. Ager,1999; Oakes, 2002; Wright, 2000) hypothesised that the French authorities wanted to project a positive image abroad by professing mutual respect and positive support for the cultures and languages of others in Europe, as much as they wanted to ensure that English did not become the 'lingua franca' of Europe.

Ager (1999: 197) opines that the French politicians reasoned that in the European Union language could either be left to market forces (i.e. the need to sell in the language of the client) or language planning could be consciously organised. The French decided to choose the second option and in 1995, during the French chairmanship of the European Union, France developed a "Global

plan for languages” (part of the Touban Law). This French plan proposed that every European child should learn two foreign languages at school. As English was already the most popular foreign language taught in schools in most countries of Europe – including France - the two foreign language policy was perceived as a clever stratagem to avoid total predominance of the English language in Europe. To make it more convincing, the plan emphasises the French own language policy which guaranteed that each child in France would study two languages besides French and the learning would start early, preferably at primary school level.

But children’s education was not the only policy the “Global plan” tried to develop in the European Union. To be acceptable by everyone involved, the “Global plan” would have to develop workable policies related to all the other field of European enterprises that would allow multilingual communication. This was seen as potential for chaos at the EU meetings in Brussels. Thus France proposed that only five languages be sanctioned as official languages and that French should be the main official language and working language for all.

According to Oakes (2002), this demonstrated that, despite the initial pluralistic appearance, the “Global plan” was another way of trying to further the hegemony of French and France. It was rejected. However, Oakes comments that France’s commitment to multilingual education at home continued. The command of French language and two other languages were made part of the fundamental goals of French education.

4.3.2.3 Teaching languages other than French in France

Foreign language teaching has been a subject of the school curricula at secondary and tertiary level in France for a long time. However, there was no

teaching of foreign languages at primary school level until the teaching of Language and Culture of Origin (LCO) was introduced in 1973. These programs, usually conducted and paid for by the migrants' countries of origin, were an attempt to initiate a "language maintenance policy" intended to encourage better integration into schools and at the same time provide for the education of children of those temporary workers who intended to return "home". The system allowed for teachers from the original foreign countries to teach language and culture in France. Eight countries supported the system: Algeria, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The children were given three hours of language teaching per week, but in order to attend these classes they were withdrawn from their classroom, therefore missing out much of the "normal" subject teaching. Teachers were chosen and paid by the sending countries and designed their own curriculum. Their programmes were not integrated into the French examination system nor were they assessed (Ager, 1994). These conditions create a multitude of problems for everyone involved: class teachers, language teachers, who felt marginalised, parents and, most importantly, students. The languages were not accorded any status and consequently

the selection of foreign languages made by school children and/or their parents bears heavily towards the 'languages of social promotion' rather than towards those of 'immigrant languages'. (Ager, 1994:43)

It is not surprising therefore that most of the programmes had a small intake. Ager (1994: 42) reports that only 15% of children from the Maghreb countries chose to study their language, only 28% Spanish, 31.7% Portuguese, 34.6% Turkish, 23.2% 'Yugoslav' children. The only exception was the Italian language programme in which many children of French nationalities participated

creating a total which is 46.4% higher than the total number of Italian students. In Ager's words (Ager, 1994:42): "The only exception was the Italian program whose percentage of participation was 146.4% (i.e. many children learn Italian but are now of French nationality)". More details about Italian language teaching in France are given in Section 4.3.3.3.

Another part of the "Language maintenance policy" was provision, on experimental basis, of bilingual programmes (where curriculum content- or part of it - is taught in two languages) offered in some schools. There were/are very few of these programmes and in many cases the French government is adverse to the acceptance of the expenses of running the programme once the experimental period is considered "over" by the original country (Ricatti, 1995). These were the overall provisions made in the 1980s by the government for "Language Maintenance" in France. According to Ager (1994), on the basis of the proportion of participants to the LCO programmes, they were not very successful, Italian perhaps being the exception (cf. Australia –*stage 4b* of the GIDS).

In the 1990s, the new national French multilingual policy formalised the study of foreign languages. Some of these were the same taught in the LCO, under a different name (*langue vivante*), others were chosen from the 'international' scene - i.e. English). Foreign language teaching was introduced in primary school and at the beginning of secondary school the study of at least one foreign language was made compulsory. All students would have to undertake the study of two foreign languages in the last two years of '*collège*'. Many secondary students in France were already doing so. Also, many students were studying the two foreign languages from the beginning of '*collège*'.

4.3.3 Assessing the language situation of the Italians in France

The language situation of the Italians in France, will be assessed through the Ethnolinguistic Vitality model and the GIDS. As with the other two Italian minority groups in this study, the aim is to assess the language situation of the Italians in France to provide an approximate classification of its ethnolinguistic vitality on Giles' scale of "low, medium and high".

4.3.3.1 The Italian-French intergroup situation: *status*

As for the other two case studies of this thesis, the *economic status* of Italian-French is considered from the point of view of economic well-being achieved by the group due to a combination of factors such as *age, unemployment rate, type of employment and period of residence* in the country.

Unfortunately there is not a similar abundance of information related to the group as there is for the other two countries. However, there is enough information provided by researchers interested in the study of the Italians in France (e.g. Sori, 2001; Corti, 2003; Avenas, 2003) to be able to attempt an assessment of the group. In addition, personal observations and data collected when I was living in France with the study's informants should help in reaching some conclusions in relation to the *status* of the Italians, or Italian descendants, living in France.

According to Sori (2001:284), all the phases of Italian migration to France had a proletarian dimension. Italians would mostly work in the building trade, public works, railway construction, caves, mines). As the Italian-Americans and the Italian-Australians at the beginning of their migrant history, Italians in France

initially worked in places and trades where low-cost manpower was needed. In time, again similarly to the other two case studies, they began to climb the socio-professional ladder, transforming their situation of low-paid workers in the above trades into manager positions or owners of their own industry (Milza, 1993, as reported by Corti 2003). The social mobility was also evident among the rural migrants. Whereas Italians previously were working someone else's land, in due time they became land-owners. Milza (ibid) also reports that changes of status were less visible and frequent in the industrial activities, although many of its workers were Italians. In the car industry, great numbers of Italians were present as skilled workers. Most of these skilled workers had completed their apprenticeship in the industrial Italian triangle (Turin, Milan, Genoa). The latest migrants (those of the 1960s, 1970s), mostly Italians from the South, were unskilled workers in the metallurgic industry. They also tried to change their socio-economic status and try autonomous types of work (i.e. drivers). They were however less successful than the workers described above. For these workers the change in social position happened with their children, the second generation of Italian-French.

Statistics of Italians in each industry and the magnitude of their shift along the socio-economic ladder are not given. The official internet site *Emigranti/dati statistici* (2001) describes the socio-economic situation of the Italians in France as one where the Italian migrants together with the receiving society have built a new society in which Italians, rather than simply "assimilating", have contributed "*valori e ricchezze culturali specifiche ed inalienabili* (specific and unalienable cultural values)".

All of the above conjures up a picture of a group of people who from harsh beginnings in an initially unwelcoming environment have managed to achieve

an economically comfortable level of life. Whilst I was in France my observations confirmed this impression. The GPG informants, as well as other individuals in their generation, had to accept low paid work and wait for the chance to practice their craftsmanship, which eventually they were able to do. The PG informants continued economic and professional social climbing by acquiring tertiary qualifications and practising their professions. Their children, the CG informants, are following (or are expected to follow) their parents' example and comfortably fit into the description of middle-class/ lower-middle-class society.

In conclusion, on Giles' scale of ethnolinguistic vitality, the Italian-French can be classified as having "*medium*" level of *economic status*.

Social status is closely linked to *Economic status* and as the economic status of the Italian-French changed for the better, so did the social status, moving from several episodes of xenophobia in the late 1800s and beginning of the 1900s to full acceptance by the host society in the later part of the 1900s (Corti, 2003).

This is also corroborated by the attitudes of all my informants who have a very positive view of their place in the French society (*self-perceived status* being, according to Giles *et al* (1977), a reflection of the status attributed to the group by the host society). Therefore, the classification for *Social status* for the Italians in France can be set to "*high*" on Giles' scale.

Sociohistorical status is certainly not different from that assigned to the Italian-American group and the Italian-Australian group. As explained previously, Italians of the 1900s and beyond lack those common mobilising symbols as, for example, past struggles for unity which can inspire individuals to bind together

as group members (see Cresciani, 1985). Their *Sociohistorical status* can generally be defined as “*low*”.

In regard to the issue of *Language status within* the Italian–French community and referring to the Standard variety of the Italian language, there is no doubt that it has “*high*” status. Some of the data that have been reported and discussed previously in this Chapter (see 4.3.2.3) would substantiate that the same status is accorded to it in the mainstream society.

4.3.3.2 The Italian-French intergroup situation: *demography*

There is not enough information in the official French censuses or other statistical sources about Italian-French to be able to give satisfactory responses to all of the categories outlined under the two group headings of *Demographic factors* outlined by Giles *et al.* Therefore, this section will present whatever information is available and relevant to the demography of the Italians in France.

The data related to the demography of Italians in France are only given in absolute numbers from the early phases of Italian immigration to France to modern days (e.g. Corti (2003) and ‘Emigranti/Dati statistici’ (2001). According to these sources, in 1931 the census revealed that there were 808,000 Italians living in France or 27.9% of all foreigners. This made the Italian group the largest group of immigrants in France. In 1973, the number of the Italian group had decreased to 9% of all foreigners (Corti, 2003: 4). In 1990, 250,000 Italians lived in France. It is also reported by the Italian statistics office (2001) that the naturalized Italians are more numerous than those who maintain their Italian nationality. The statistics office estimates the French citizens of Italian origin to

be more than three million. However, due to the politics of assimilation, once Italians are naturalized no data referring to their original background are ever collected. According to this source (Emigranti/Dati statistici, 2001) France has always required total assimilation from its immigrants. Then as French citizens, the immigrants would have at least at the formal level the same rights as any French citizen.

To sum up, in France, the group distribution (national territory, group concentration and group distribution) of Italian-French is not known and among the categories of group numbers (absolute numbers, birth rate, mixed marriages, immigration and emigration) only the absolute number is known and it is not very high. The only conclusion that can be reached in regard to the contribution of *demography* to the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Italians in France is that it is “low”.

4.3.3.3 Assessment of the institutional support of the Italians in France

Stage 8: Most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults

This stage is not relevant to Italians and Italian language in France.

Stage 7: most of the users of Xish are socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age

At this stage, the use of community language is confined to the elderly. The relevance of *stage 7* is that the elderly are still living in their homes (and this certainly applies to the study's informants), speaking their own language and

coming in contact with their extended family very often, and in certain cases, daily.

The scope of this stage is to use these old folks as linguistic resources. They ought to be utilised as a linguistic bridge between themselves and the younger generation, since at the “outset of RLS they are often the major linguistically functional resource available to language activists” (Fishman, 1991:90).

No data is available for the Italian-French group in regard to this stage. However, at the time of my data collection, I noticed that Italian was used when the whole family was together. The CG informants were exposed to its use and used it themselves when the grandparents had difficulties in understanding. Also, the same CG informants would turn to their parents (when they were available) and use them as the “bridge” in the communication process. In this case they did not use Italian themselves, but they would hear the parents translate their requests to the grandparents in it. The data give clear proof that they understood what the parents said in Italian to the grandparents, because in more than one case, if the parents did not translate accurately, the children would protest requesting that the parents translated what they had “actually” said. In more than one case, the parents would answer jokingly: “Well, then, you tell them”. This did not always guarantee a positive response on the part of the youngsters. Therefore, even if in a roundabout way, the GPG informants were still a language resource for the CG informants.

Stage 6: the attainment of intergenerational informal oralcy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement

This is the stage of family and community commitment to linguistic compartmentalisation necessary if LM and RLS have to be achieved. This idea

of ethnic compartmentalisation is a concept totally alien to the immigrant communities in France. The reasons for this have been amply discussed in previous sections. Therefore, according to Fishman, there should not be any possibility of LM or RLS for the Italians in France.

However, during my stay in France I noticed that, as in Australia, several couples I met, usually middle class second generation couples, are raising their children to be bilinguals according to the one parent, one language principle (cf. Australia, *stage 6* GIDS). Usually, these parents had relatives living in Italy and part of their plan for their child's bilingualism (as a general rule, I noticed that most of the couples adopting this strategy had only one child) was for the child to spend part or all of the summer holiday in Italy with the relatives. The reasons given by these parents for wanting their children to be bilingual are very similar to those given by Australian parents adopting the bilingual language acquisition approach for their children: integrative, identity and instrumental reasons.

Stage 5: Literacy via agencies or institutions that are entirely under Xish control and that do NOT need to meet or satisfy Yish standards re compulsory education

(The source of the information given below has been provided by the Italian Educational Inspector (*Ispettore Tecnico per i servizi educativi*) Eloisa Ricatti of the Italian Embassy in Paris. Through personal correspondence and papers, she provided me with the data related to the teaching of Italian in France.)

In France there are courses of *Lingua e Cultura d'Origine* (LCO) run totally by Italian government agencies (the same Italian ethnic agencies active in Australia and the USA- mostly providing the same services, but adapting them to the different circumstances of the migration countries). In 1996 they transformed

their original denomination to *corsi di lingua e cultura italiana*. They are offered from kindergarten to adult level. Italian students make up 7% of total enrolment, 32% are students from Italian background and 61% are French or other nationality students. The typology and the number of courses offered under this category are:

- ◇ *Sites Langue vivante* (modern language classes): 169
- ◇ *Insegnamento precoce "langue Vivante"*(early introduction) : 210
- ◇ *Integrati*: (integrated) 473
- ◇ *Inseriti* : (insertion)240
- ◇ *Altro* (others) 116

The content of these courses is the total responsibility of the Italian authorities. What is learnt in these classes is not recognised by the mainstream school. The courses are popular with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Italian is seen more as a "language of social promotion" (Ager, 1994:43) than an immigrant language. It could be concluded that Italian language, through these courses, has a positive image in the French society, but it is doubtful if the language courses can have a role in helping the cause of LM and RLS for the Italians in France.

Stage 4a: Xish in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws

The courses described in *Stage 5* could also be related to *stage 4a*. However, since they do not have to meet the requirements of compulsory education laws (even if probably the Italian language curriculum is based on the compulsory education syllabi), there may not be any Xish language in lower education that fits the category requested for *Stage 4a*

Stage 4b: Xish programs in Yish schools

Fishman declares the pursuit of RLS through the teaching of Xish language in Yish controlled schools as one that is of dubious effectiveness. However, without Italian teaching in French schools, there would be little Italian being used in any public domain. In France, Italian language is considered one of the major languages of the EU and as such, it has a place in French language policy in the teaching of foreign languages in French schools. As a foreign language in schools, Italian holds the fourth place, after English, German and Spanish. However the difference in percentage of students taught in the four languages is very significant.

In primary schools, there are two types of language courses being taught: one is "Enseignement Précoce de la Langue Vivante" (EPLV) and one is "Enseignement d'Initiation à la langue étrangère" (EILE). The EPLV is taught two hours per week, the EILE is taught fifteen minutes four times a week. 2.1% of students learn Italian, as against 77% learning English, 16% German and 3% Spanish. In Secondary schools, Italian does not appear as the first foreign language (87% English, 11.6% German and 0.9 Spanish). As second (or optional) foreign language 4.4% of students are learning Italian, again in fourth place after 15.8% learning English, 51.1% German and 27.9% Spanish.

In conclusion, in France there may be a good level of school support for Italian language teaching. Certainly, there is no opposition. But Italian is not taught for the purpose of RLS among Italians. Italian language is just an optional subject in the French school curriculum.

Stage 3: use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside the Xish neighbourhood/ community) involving interaction between Xians and Yians

This is definitely not a domain where it is possible to use Italian language. The multilingual situation that usually may be found in the lower work sphere requires the national language to be used as “lingua franca”. In any case, French language policy does not encourage the use of languages other than French in the work domain.

Stage 2: Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in higher spheres of either

What applies to *Stage 3* also applies to *Stage 2*

Stage 1: some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence)

In France, Italian is taught at University level. However, according to Ricatti (1996), although there are excellent courses of Italian language at this level, not many students can expect to undertake them. The reason for this is that there is an imbalance in the offering of Italian through the different levels of French schooling. Italian is offered at primary school level. It is not offered at middle school level and then it is offered sporadically at upper-secondary level. It is important, Ricatti insists that the French government address this problem. In the same paper, Ricatti and the other Italian government representatives put forward and pass a motion to lobby the French government to allow an informative system via television of Italian news to be viewed daily, especially in the ‘Ile de France’. To my knowledge this has not yet eventuated.

To summarise, *institutional support* for Italian language in French society is available in the two most fundamental of institutions: the *family* (through informal, general use of the language and through individual core-family efforts to raise their children bilingually) and *schools*, at most levels of the

French educational system. The institutional support given by the French education system to Italian language teaching could be classified as basic, but not any different from that given to other languages. Fortunately, the Italian language teaching can count on the strong support of the Italian government given through its ethnic agencies based in France. This assistance helps in making the Italian language popular in France society and fostering a positive attitude towards it.

To conclude, disregarding the strong support given by the Italian government for the teaching of its national language in France, the incidence of France’s *institutional support* for the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Italians could be described as “low”.

4.3.4 The language situation of the Italians in France: discussion and conclusion

In the light of information evaluated through the EV and the GIDS, the language situation of the Italians in France could be described as shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Summary of the Italian-French group’s ethnolinguistic vitality

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
STATUS		medium to	high
DEMOGRAPHY	low		
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT	low		

The assessment of the language situation of the Italians in France as shown in Table 4.3 would lead to the conclusion that their EV is at a “*low*” level. The lack of French public and widespread institutional support certainly contributes to this result. However, this assessment does not say anything about the use of Italian by Italians in France. Some insights in this regard were gained when reviewing the *institutional support* to the group through the GIDS. In this review, the family domain was identified as the main location for its use. However, there is no indication of either when and how it is used, nor when and how Italian is used in other domains. Similarly, there is nothing in the evaluation conducted with the two models, to indicate how Italians as either a group or individuals feel about LM or RLS. It seems a rather generalised outcome in which the Italians in France could not even be placed in *Stage 7* of the GIDS.

Given France’s policies, officially ethnic groups do not exist. Nevertheless, when I was there collecting data for this study, the individuals I was able to observe, interview and assess at the level of family/close community did not differ very much in their behaviour, Italian use and attitudes from the US or Australian informants. Akin to those informants, the French informants were proud of their Italian heritage and, although to different degrees and in different ways, they were interested in the use and maintenance of Italian for themselves and their children.

The data related to the French informants for this study (Chapter Eight) can offer some insights into what Italians in France think, do and feel about Italian maintenance and use.

4.4 Summary and conclusion

The socio-cultural and sociolinguistic context for the study has been reviewed and discussed through the review of the immigration, language and education policies in the three countries with particular attention to the period of time in which the informants have resided there. Having overcome the obvious many obstacles of the migrant experience, each of the Italian communities under examination has settled in its host country in harmony with the policies governing the chosen country. Table 4.4 summarises the similarities and differences in immigration, language and education policies across time in the three countries.

Table 4.4 Comparative language and culture issues: a timeline

	USA	AUSTRALIA	FRANCE
1950s	Monolingual, monocultural practices in education and society. <i>No official language policy.</i>	Monolingual, monocultural practices in education and society. <i>No official language policy.</i>	Monolingual, monocultural practices in education and society <i>based on official national language policy.</i>
1960s & 1970s	Strong MT claiming related to ethnic identity on the part of 3 rd and further generation members of minority groups. <i>No official language policy.</i>	Changes in education practices affect positively 2 nd generation minority groups. Beginning of multilingual, pluralistic practices in education and mainstream society. <i>No official language policy.</i>	Monolingual, monocultural practices in education and society <i>based on the official national language policy.</i>
1980s & 1990s	Individuals still claim MT and their ethnic background as part of their American identity. The language awareness shown by the ethnic groups made mainstream society feel insecure about <i>its</i> right to language supremacy. In some States English Official/English only laws are proposed and passed. They prove to be ineffective. Language issues have become very important and are part of the US political and educational agenda. However, <i>no official language policy has been formulated.</i>	Multilingual and pluralistic practices continue. Pressures on the part of National Professional Associations compel government to ask the Senate Committee for Ed. and Arts to hold an inquiry into the need for a national language policy. <i>The National Policy on Languages (1987)</i> is endorsed by parliament. Discussion on its efficaciousness, application and modifications to the original policy are on-going.	<i>The National language policy</i> still set the rules and practices of language use. Amendments to the <i>Lang. Policy</i> introduce multilingual education in French schools: children in France will have learnt 2 foreign languages by the end of their school career.

The ethnolinguistic vitality of the Italian group in the three countries has been assessed with the outcomes shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Ethnolinguistic vitality of Italian groups in the three countries

EV of Italian Groups	USA	AUSTRALIA	FRANCE
STATUS	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High
DEMOGRAPHY	Medium	High	Low
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT	Low	High	Low

The assessment of the language situation has also highlighted the readiness of each Italian group generally to endorse the language environment of their mainstream society, whether translated into official language policies or not.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight will move from the general Italian communities to the analysis of data related to the specific case studies in each country this thesis has set out to investigate. Chapter Five details the methodology used to do so.

CHAPTER FIVE

Methodology

5.0 Introduction

As explained in 1.3, this study is a comparative investigation into the use of Italian of an extended Italian family in language contact situation in three countries: the United States, Australia and France. Its aim is to ascertain the family's level of LM/LS. The model used as framework for the study is Fishman's theory of *intergroup social dependency*. The informants are three generations of Italians belonging to the same extended family living in three different migrant receiving countries: United States, France and Australia. The focus of the study is on the CG of the family. However, to be able to reach conclusion on the reasons why the CG participants display given linguistic behaviour and attitudes towards Italian, it is important to investigate the linguistic behaviour and attitudes towards the language of the whole family and the environment in which the third generation was born, grew up, socialized and was educated.

It became clear from the onset that the project was one that had to investigate and learn from the participants' personal experiences. To learn from people's personal experience, it is necessary to approach the investigation in a manner that allows people's feelings, attitudes and perceptions to surface and let people reflect overtly upon their experiences. An investigation that tries to probe into people's personal experiences becomes a study of human existence, a study to be tackled within the parameters of a humanistic investigation approach. "Case

study” methodology is one of the approaches used for humanistic inquiries and the one chosen for this project.

This chapter describes essential and general aspects of Case Study methodology and how they were applied to this study. The study’s design is outlined. In the context of the study design’s description, the participants to the study are introduced and details of data collection and data analysis are given.

5.1 The methodology

There are numerous research strategies to investigate human behaviour. Five of these are outlined by Yin (1994). They are: experiment; survey; archival analysis; history; case study. The choice of any one of these strategies is based on the formulation of specific research questions, the knowledge of conditions/ events of the project to be investigated and the potential control the investigator could have/has over those events. The “case study” research strategy should be chosen when: “ a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 1994: 9).

The formulation of the research questions must come through a careful and thorough review of the literature pertinent to the field to be investigated (Cooper, 1984). Once formulated, if the questions lead to the choice of the case study research methodology, it is important to have a clear understanding of how the case study strategy works and what are its essential elements before the beginning of data collection.

Yin (1994:10) warns against confusing case study strategy with specific methods of data collection such as ‘ethnography’ (Fetterman, 1984) or ‘participant-

observation' (Jorgensen, 1989) which usually require an extensive involvement with the people being investigated "to observe and experience the meanings and interactions of people from the role of an insider" (Jorgensen, 1989: 20). Case studies are a form of inquiry that does not depend solely on ethnographic or participant-observation data. Yin (1994:11) comments that "one could even do a valid and high-quality case study without leaving the library and the telephone, depending on the topic being studied." Platt (1992) accepts the dissociation of case study strategy from the limited perspective of doing participant-observation (or any other fieldwork) observing that the case study strategy begins with "a logic of design ... a strategy to be preferred when circumstances and research problems are appropriate rather than ideological commitments to be followed whatever the circumstances" (Platt, 1992: 46).

Platt does not elaborate on what the "logic of design" of the case study strategy is. An elaboration of this point is given by Yin (1994) using a two part technical definition. The first part of the definition begins with the scope of a case study:

1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that
 - ◇ Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when
 - ◇ The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (Yin, 1994: 13).

Because phenomenon and context are not always distinguishable in real life situations, the second part deals with other technical characteristics including data collection and data analysis strategies:

2. The case study inquiry

- ◇ Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
- ◇ Relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- ◇ Benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (ibid: 13)

The case study is an all-encompassing method – with the ‘logic of design’ incorporating specific approaches to data collection and data analysis. In other words, a predetermined plan of action is needed before the investigation begins. This plan could include as tools of data collection any strategy from different research methods dealing with human studies as it is recognised and accepted (Good and Scates, 1954; Jorgensen, 1989; Yin, 1994) that these approaches do not have clear and sharp boundaries. On the contrary, they often cut across boundaries and interweave with each other. This form of data collection would provide the multiple sources of evidence needed for triangulation of data and validation of results.

The case study inquiry, as I understood it through Yin’s definition, appeared to be the one that suited my investigation. If I could rigorously pre-determine its framework including the methods of data collection and analysis to be conducted in each of the three countries of interest in this study, my investigation would acquire definite scope and direction allowing me to compare reliably the results obtained. Therefore, I chose case study methodology to conduct my investigation and its design, which I outline in the

following section, was pre-determined according to the steps suggested by Yin (1994).

5.2 The study design

Yin (1994:20) states that five components are especially important for the research design of case studies. They are:

1. a study's questions,
2. its propositions, if any,
3. its unit(s) of analysis.
4. the logic linking of the data to the propositions, and
5. the criteria for interpreting the findings.

5.2.1 Research questions

A case study investigation is directed to answering "how" and "why" questions 'about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control' (Yin, 1994). In this study I intended to investigate the contemporary circumstances of language use by third generation informants living in language contact situations in three different countries. The research questions outlined below required answers that explained the "how", "why" and "what" of the events investigated, thus directing me towards the choice of case study methodology for the research. The research questions introduced in the first chapter are the following:

- (1) Do the informants of CG use and/or comprehend any of the varieties of Italian used by their forebears?

(2) If they use one or more varieties of Italian

- ◇ *Where, with whom, when and why* are they most likely to use it/them?
- ◇ *What* do they use?
- ◇ *How* do they use it/them?

(3) What are the attitudes of the CG towards their forebears' language and cultural heritage?

(4) How do the outcomes of the findings related to the above questions vary across the three countries in which the investigation was conducted (United States, Australia and France)?

5.2.2 Study propositions

Each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study (Yin, 1994:21).

The scope of this study was to investigate the informants' knowledge and use of and their attitudes towards Italian. Fishman (1964:33) suggests that there are three aspects of the linguistic behaviour of minority groups in language contact situations to which sociolinguistic researchers should direct their attention if they want to report knowledgeably on the use of and attitudes towards their language by minority groups. The three aspects of linguistic behaviour identified for investigation are:

- a) *Domains of language behaviour* (language behaviour of the informants in different social contexts).
- b) *Behaviour through language* – this refers to the use of their language by individuals of the minority group in both their group and the

host society. Fishman argues that when individuals of minority groups interact with the host society they succumb to socio-cultural processes/factors which influence their habitual language use. These socio-cultural processes/factors may not have anything to do with the language *per se*, but they have the power to influence and modify the language behaviour of the speakers of a language under conditions of intergroup contact.

- c) *Behaviour towards language in the intergroup contact setting.* This includes attitudes of the individuals toward the language and overt reinforcement and/or planning by them of the maintenance of or shift from the language, e.g. what role do the individuals think that the home or the school etc. play in the maintenance of their community language and what are they prepared to do to implement, or help implement, that role.

These three aspects of the language behaviour of individuals from minority groups under conditions of intergroup contact directed the formulation of the study questions as expressed in the previous section of this chapter. The study questions determined the issues needing investigation and guided the designing of data collection without the need of outlining further specific propositions.

5.2.3 The unit of analysis

This part of the research design is concerned with the definition of the “case” under investigation. Good and Scates (1954: 726) define a “case” in the following manner:

The case consists of the data relating to some phase of the life history of the unit or relating to the entire life process, whether the unit (of analysis) is an individual, a family, a social group, an institution or a community.

In more recent times, Yin (1994) concurs with this definition and proposes four types of case designs. They are: (a) single-case (holistic) designs, (b) single-case (embedded) designs, (c) multiple-case (holistic) designs and (d) multiple-case (embedded) designs (Yin, 1994: 38).

The single-case design is appropriate under several circumstances. Yin compares it to a single experimental study and claims that the same conditions that justify a single experiment also justify a single-case study. To illustrate, Yin gives several examples of rationale for single-case study designs. One is “when it represents the *critical* case in testing a well formulated theory” (ibid: 38) to confirm, challenge or extend that theory. A single-case study may also involve more than one unit of analysis (subunit or subunits). Such a design would be defined as an *embedded case study design*. In contrast, if the single-case study examined only the global nature of the case, it would be called a *holistic design*.

Yin (1994: 51) uses the same comparison for multiple-case studies. He explains that “each individual case may still be holistic or embedded. In other words, a multiple-case study may consist of multiple holistic cases or of multiple embedded cases” and adds that “when an embedded design is used, each individual case may in fact include the collection and analysis of highly quantitative data, including the use of surveys within each case”.

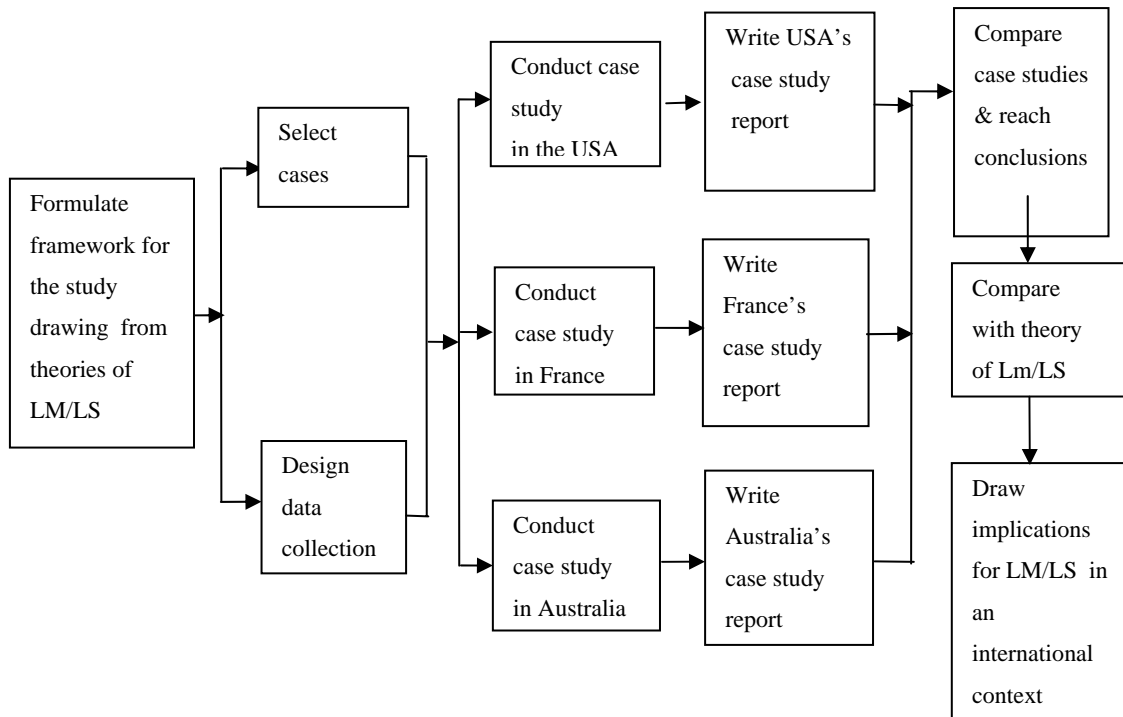
This study can be defined as an *embedded multiple-case study design*.

The multiple cases are three case studies each in a different country. In each country the case study is of the CG of a family of Italian emigrants. The embedded units of the case study are the various individuals belonging to the third generation. The topic investigated is their language behaviour in regard to their forebears' homeland language. Their forebears (the GPG and PG) constitute the 'context' of the study. The forebears' background, their experiences, their attitudes towards their own culture and language as well as those towards the host country's culture and language, their entire way of life forms the environment in which the formation of the CG took place. Therefore, information provided by them in regard to their children/grandchildren are integral part of the case study.

The results of this multiple investigation enable critical comparison of the factors perceived to have influenced the third generation's maintenance of their minority language or their shift from it with the existing theories of LM/LS derived from the literature and, in turn, answer the questions posed as the central concern of the study.

Figure 5.1, similar to one presented by Yin, 1994: 49, is modified to illustrate the plan I followed to undertake this *embedded multiple case-study project*.

FIGURE 5.1 Case study method



To complete the section on the “unit of analysis”, the next section introduces the participants to the study.

5.2.3.1 The participants

Thirty eight individuals, living in three different countries, have been involved in this project. The three countries are the United State of America, France and Australia. Eighteen informants live in the United States; nine in France; eleven in Australia. The thirty eight individuals are all members of one extended family related to the researcher. It was this occurrence that made this project across countries possible. The original emigrants are three brothers and one of their sisters who decided to leave their native Sicily in the 1950s and, either by

choice or by chance, were able to establish themselves in the countries mentioned above as follows: one of the brothers and the sister in the United States of America, one brother in France and the other brother in Australia. They, with their wives/husband, are the first generation individuals involved in this study. At the time of data collection, each original couple had an extended family that had reached the third -in-host- country generation.

5.2.3.1.1 Family relationships

The 'Family Relationships' – Figure 5.2 below illustrates how the families are formed and in which country they live. The following description of the table is also the *legend* for it:

- ◇ Names in bold and upper case (e.g.: **GIUSEPPE**⁶) indicate the original members of the Satra family who emigrated from Italy.
- ◇ Names in plain upper case indicate the husband/wife of the GPG members (e.g. ANTONIA), as well as husbands and wives of the PG members (e.g. OLGA). The wives & husband of the GPG informants were all born and raised in Italy (Randazzo), the same town as that of their partners.
- ◇ Names in bold, lower case and Italics preceded by an asterisk (e.g.: ***Paolo**) indicate the members of the PG born in the GPG's country (Italy).
- ◇ Names in upper case Italics, upper case preceded by an asterisk indicate the members of the PG born in the country of immigration (e.g. *NICHOLAS).
- ◇ Names in upper case Italics and upper case indicate the CG (e.g. JOE).

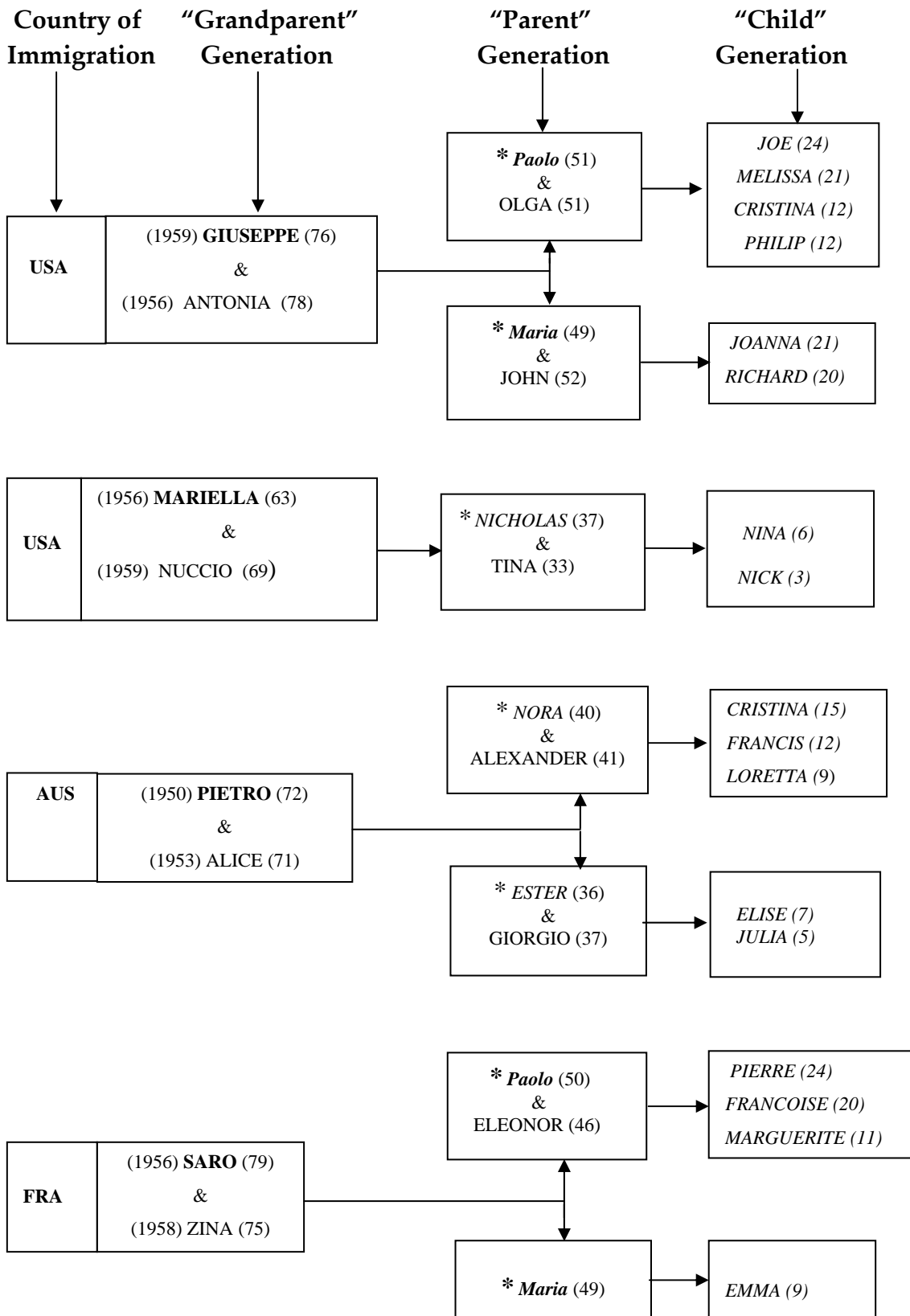
⁶ The informants' names used in the thesis are not their real names.

- ◇ Numbers in brackets (X) **before the name** (used only for the GPG) indicates year of arrival in host country..
- ◇ Numbers in brackets **after the name** (X) indicates the age of the individuals at the time of data collection.

Further personal information about the participants to the study is presented in the chapters dedicated to each branch of the family in the three different countries: USA, Chapter Six; Australia, Chapter Seven and France, Chapter Eight.

In the following sections, as in other parts of the thesis, I may refer to the participants to the study interchangeably as informants, participants or respondents.

FIGURE 5.2 Participants' family relationships



5.2.4 Linking data to propositions

Yin (1994) states that 'the pattern-match' technique used by Campbell in 1975 appears to be successful in case study research. In this technique information gathered from the cases under study are matched to theoretical propositions. 'The pattern-match' technique has been the guiding principle for this study and has shaped the strategies used for data collection as detailed below.

5.2.4.1 Data collection

The major scope of the study is to find out if the CG informants speak/comprehend/read/write Italian. But that would not be enough. Attitudes towards the language and the homeland culture also would have to be identified and be taken into account when conclusions are drawn. The environment that helped create those attitudes, be it the nuclear family, the extended family or the host society, also had to be investigated. One single strategy of data collection could not possibly fulfill the many facets of the answers expected from this embedded-multiple- case study, conducted over three countries. I intended to spend some time in each country with the informant families. But an informant observation strategy on its own would not be enough. To have as complete a picture of the situation as possible, other strategies of data collection would be necessary, including some formal activities, to ascertain the literacy skills of the CG informants in Italian. It was also important that the activities conducted with the informants would be the same in all three countries. This meant that careful preparation had to be put into preparing the material needed for the data collection before visiting the

countries. Therefore, having established contact with all the individuals involved in the study, preparation began.

Yin outlines six strategies of data collection suitable for case studies explaining which strategy is more suitable to what case and outlining the strengths and the weaknesses of each. The strategies are:

- ◇ Documentation
- ◇ Archival records
- ◇ Interviews
- ◇ Direct Observation
- ◇ Participant Observation
- ◇ Physical artifacts

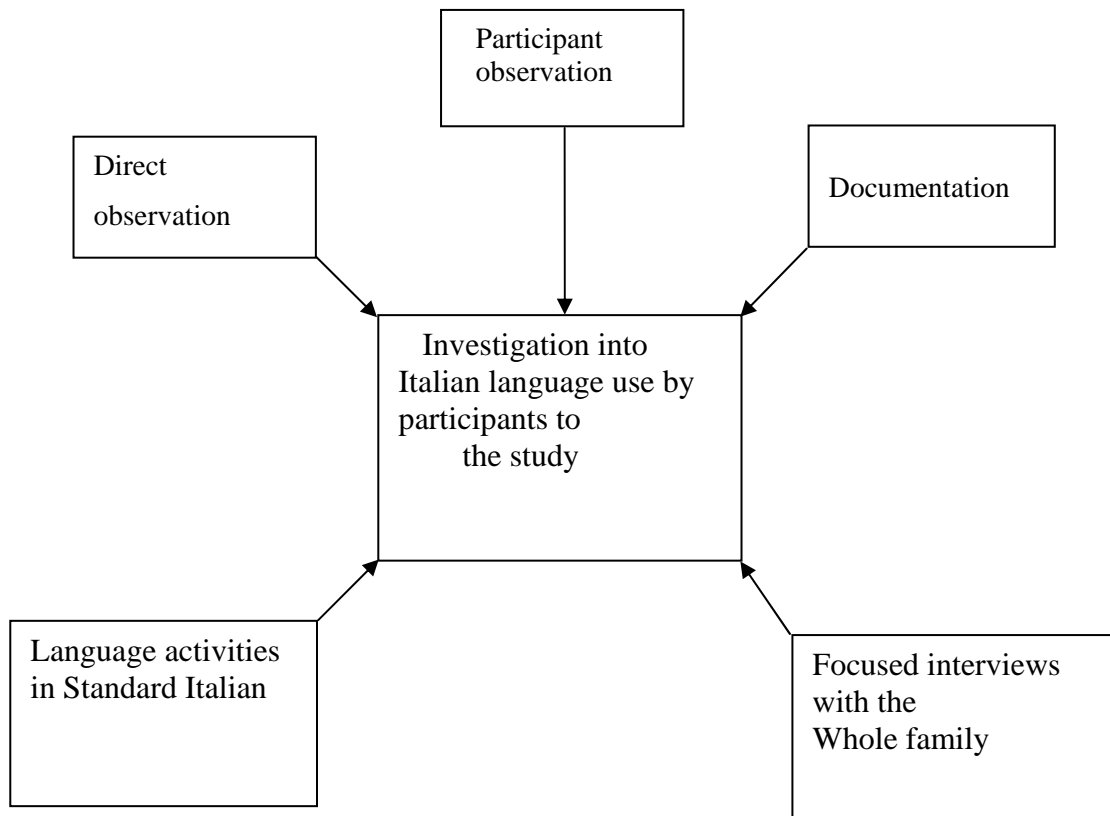
Each of these strategies has a specific aim and, depending on the nature of the case study, one may prevail over another. However, the use of a single strategy in case study data collection is not advisable. Yin suggests that case study data collection can become a major strength towards the reliability of findings if the evidence arrives from many different sources. The use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies allows an investigator to address a broad range of historical, attitudinal and behavioural issues. And

the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of *converging lines of inquiry*, or process of triangulation....Thus any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode. (Yin, 1994:92)

Triangulation, in this case triangulation of data sources, is a process where data providing information comes from different sources, but aims at corroborating

the same fact or phenomenon. In this study data triangulation has been used in the following manner (figure 5.3).

FIGURE 5.3 Convergence of multiple sources of evidence.



These strategies of data collection were employed in each of the three countries where the investigation took place and here follow details of how they were applied.

5.2.4.1.1 Direct observation

The nature of the project required me to visit and stay with the families participating to the research. Direct observation on the sites where they lived was ideal to collect a wealth of data, which, although they may not possibly be

all used when writing the report, helped to create a setting, a background of how and where the families lived. Furthermore, the visit gave the possibility to contact people outside the project itself, who were connected with the Italian community, language and culture and may have had some input in shaping the life of the informants either in the present or in the past. In example, in the US, I participated in meetings held by an Italian Cultural Club, participated in meetings for students of Italian organised by Com.It.Es (*Comitato Italiano Estero*) (this Italian ethnic organization is now called *Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'estero* –CONSITES). Also I participated in religious functions (*feste*) organised by the Italian community which had all the markings of celebrations held in Italy decades before. I had the opportunity to sit in a day seminar for first year teachers of languages etc.

In France, it was interesting to observe the living arrangements of the participating families, the interactions with their friends and the frequency of interactions across the three generations. There, I also had the opportunity to contact the Italian Embassy and arranged for material illustrating the teaching of Italian in France to be sent to me, etc.

As my place of residence is Australia, direct observation of the way Australian participant families live has become second nature to me. I am related to them, as I am related to the families living overseas, and I interact with them on frequent regular bases and participate in all familiar functions and events. Direct observation has been the key to comparison of the three settings in which the participant families live.

5.2.4.1.2 Participant observation

Common to other humanistic approaches for data collection, participant-observation requires the establishment of good rapport with the participants which would guarantee free access to their private life. It was not a problem for me to establish this kind of relationship. Among those living in France and in the US, my visit was eagerly awaited and the stay in their homes was an occasion of rejoicing for all of us.

Participant-observation is a special form of observation in which the researcher is not merely a passive observer. It is expected that the researcher can assume a range of roles and may actually participate in the events being studied. Advantages of this strategy are the possibility to gain access in events or groups otherwise inaccessible. There is also the opportunity of being able to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone “inside’ the case study, rather than external to it. This may become one of the strengths of the case study since this perspective is invaluable in producing an “accurate” portrayal of a case study phenomenon (Yin, 1994). The participant-observation strategy has also some weaknesses. These relate to the potential bias of the observer if s/he, for example, becomes a public supporter for a specific cause the participants may be advocating.

In my case study, the participant-observation strategy had all the advantages but not the problems. I just had to ask, listen, observe, compare the perceptions of the “insiders” with what was happening in everyday life in that community and engage in activities with the participants. Also, my presence on site spurred numerous meetings and reunions of the three generations and gave me the

opportunity to witness and record first hand what I was researching, namely: their language behaviour.

5.2.4.1.3 Documentation

Among the documentation collected for the case study I found it very useful to be able to view video tapes of past celebrations of the families. These tapes had been taken solely for family purposes, prior to my contacting them for the case study and therefore demonstrated the true linguistic behaviour of the participants. There were some video tapes of this sort in each country.

During our stay in each place, my husband assisted my data collection videotaping almost all family gatherings and celebrations, posing as the 'ultimate tourist', but at the same time accumulating information that would be very valuable for me. He later edited the many hours of videotaping, producing a 'documentary' called: *La Famiglia Satra nel mondo* (The Satra Family in the World).

Independent of the videotaping, I also kept a journal recording mostly the ways in which the participants used the various languages known to them.

Other "documents" found their way into my files, such as posters, notices, letters written to me by the participants, pictures drawn by the younger members of the family, etc., which had not been specifically written or prepared for my research but helped towards forming opinions relevant to my project. It is important to remember that, apart from the data collected through linguistic tasks in Italian, the study relies mostly on the *three generations'* perceptions of factors affecting their language behaviour. Therefore, as important as data

collected from observation may have been, it has been used sparingly and only as an occasional point of reference when it seemed relevant to contrast what was seen/heard with the perception the participants had of their language behaviour.

5.2.4.1.4 Focused interviews with the whole family

There was information, however, that neither direct nor participant observation could give me. To be able to have more personally and specifically relevant information I resorted to 'the interview', another strategy very popular with the humanistic approaches when collecting data. As Lincoln and Guba, (1985:273), state:

A major advantage of the interview is that it permits the respondent to move back and forth in time – to reconstruct the past, interpret the present, and predict the future, all without leaving a comfortable armchair.

The interviews conducted during a case study may take several forms. The most common are the *open-ended interviews* and the *focused interview*. In the *open-ended interview* the respondents can be asked about the facts of a matter as well as opinions. They may even be asked their "own insights into certain occurrences and may use such propositions as the basis for further inquiry" (Yin, 1994: 84). In the *focused interview* a respondent is interviewed for a short period of time – an hour, for example. The interview may still remain open-ended and assume a conversational manner but the investigator is likely to be following a line of questioning guided by the study's questions. In this study I chose to follow the *focused interview* approach.

Each member of the family was interviewed, unless they were too young for a 'formal' interview. In that case, some of the data relevant to their language behaviour were collected through their grandparents and parents. The interviews lasted for one to two hours per person. When interviewing, I had in front of me an open-ended set of questions, tailored to suit each generation of the family. The questions were used as a guide to the topics I wanted to discuss. However, I was prepared to be flexible when the interviews/conversations took place. I intended to follow the flow the conversation took. Nevertheless, the guidelines I had prepared served as a reminder of the specific issues that I thought would help shed light on the linguistic behaviour of the CG.

The language/s I used during the interviews (except for the interviews conducted as part of the linguistic tasks, which were conducted by me always using Italian regardless of how the informants responded) varied with the different generations. The language/s used during the interviews with the GPG participants in each country was standard Italian used by me, while the informants responded using any variety of Italian with which they were most comfortable.

The language/s used with the second generation informants during the interviews varied between countries. The American PG informants had to be interviewed in English, as following a few questions in Standard Italian, it was clear that they could not comprehend that variety. The French PG was interviewed in Italian and replied in Italian with one of them using some *integrated transfers* from French and then correcting himself. The Australian PG informants were interviewed by me using Italian and they responding in standard Italian, but with frequent *code-switching* between Italian and English.

The pattern of language use during the interviews with the CG informants (the ones old enough to be interviewed) was similar to that of second generation. In the US only English was used between me and the informants; in France I used Italian. Some of the informants answered using Italian with frequent *code-switching* between French and Italian and other informants used only French. In Australia I used Italian and the informants answered in English.

The interviews were all audio-taped and constituted one of the main resources for the reporting and analysing of data.

5.2.4.1.5 Language activities in Italian

While I asked all participants (the three generations) to undertake some language activities in Italian, the study is focused on its use by the CG. Therefore I will describe and report only the activities that were administered to the CG participants in the three countries.

By “language activity” I mean the purposeful and active use of language where the informant is required to call upon their language resource (in this case their knowledge of Standard Italian) to meet the needs of a given communicative situation (see Vale *et al* 1991). The activities were created and graded to suit the various ages and cognitive development of the participants (they range from 3 to 25 years).

The topics used for the activities can be described as:

- ◇ Familiar topics: these are topics kept within the concrete range of home/family/ close community domains. Topics are dealt with in the

framework of simple conversation, question/answer statements, reading or listening of single words/ short texts in narrative style, discussing, drawing or writing sentences or short text related to self, the family or the narrative heard.

- ◇ Expanded familiar topics: these are topics that expand the language use to include home/ family, school, personal interests as well as the world of imagination and the media.

- ◇ Unfamiliar topics: these include comprehensions of ideas and cultural aspects shown in the ability to discuss and express opinions about them.

All activities, which also included literacy-related tasks, were administered using *Standard Italian*. No literacy-related activities could be conducted in the regional dialect spoken/known by the participant families (Sicilian) given that, as a general rule, in modern Italy, Italian regional dialects are only used in spoken discourse. Although the atmosphere in which the activities were conducted was rather informal, especially for the younger participants, they became the “formal” way of collecting linguistic data about the CG’s proficiency in using the Standard Italian.

Tables 5.1 shows CG participants listed by country and age group. Table 5.2 lists the different language activities undertaken by the CG participants according to age.

Table 5.1 CG participants listed by country and age group

	Under 5 years old	5 to 7 years	8 to 12 years	13 years & over
US1	Nicki	Nina	N.A.	N.A.
US2	N.A.	N.A.	Philip Cristina	Joe Joanna Melissa Richard
AUS	N.A.	Elise Julia	Loretta Francis	Cristina
FRA	N.A.	N.A.	Emma Marguerite	Françoise Pierre

Table 5.2 Language activities undertaken by the CG in Standard Italian.

Under 5 years old	5 to 7 years old	8 to 12 years old	13 years & over
<p>(1) General communication about family & family activities through use of photos</p> <p>(2) Naming familiar objects.</p> <p>(3) Requesting the child to perform actions.</p>	<p>(1) Comprehension and oral production of Italian through</p> <p>a. General interaction through use of family photos.</p> <p>b. Naming familiar objects.</p> <p>c. Requesting the child to perform actions.</p>	<p>(1) Listening comprehension (assessed through narrative.)</p> <p>Listen/answer related questions/draw picture.</p> <p><i>(Appendix I)</i></p>	<p>(1) Listening comprehension (assessed through narrative.)</p> <p>Listen & answer yes/no questions.</p> <p><i>(Appendix III)</i></p>
	<p>d. Requesting the child to describe what is happening in photos or other pictures.</p> <p>e. Talk/write/draw about self.</p>	<p>(2) Oral production</p> <p>Oral description of twelve sequential pictures related to daily routine).</p> <p>Drawing parallels with personal daily routine.</p> <p><i>(Appendix II)</i></p>	<p>(2) Reading comprehension (assessed through questions on newspaper advertisements).</p> <p><i>(Appendix IV)</i></p>
		<p>(3) Written production</p> <p>write simple sentences about self.</p>	<p>(3) Oral production (assessed through the recounting of a picture science-fiction story).</p> <p><i>(Appendix V)</i></p>
		<p>(4) Comprehension and oral production of Italian (conversation about Italian language use)</p>	<p>(4) Written production (assessed through the writing of an informal letter)</p>
			<p>(5) Focused interview</p>

5.2.4.2 Analysis of data

The data collection was guided by the research questions and propositions. The analysis is the device by which the data are linked to them. The analysis selected for this study is that of the “pattern-match” technique. The three aspects of language behaviour identified by Fishman (1964), outlined in section 5.2.2 of this chapter, provided the bases of established theory for data collection and “pattern-match” analysis. Here follows the outline of data analysis as undertaken for this study.

A chapter has been dedicated to the participants in each country (Chapter Six: USA, Seven: Australia and Eight: France). The focus of the analysis is *the child generation participants*. The other participants are interviewed/discussed/their perceptions reported in so far as they help to clarify the CG use (or otherwise) of Italian.

The reporting and analyzing of data in each chapter follows the same format. The chapters begin with the introduction of the informants in the given country followed by the data analysis relevant to those participants.

The analysis of data is divided in three main categories, which match the three aspects of language behaviour discussed above. They are:

- (1) *Domains of language behaviour* - where, when, why and with whom do CG informants use Italian?
- (2) *Behaviour through language* - how do CG informants use Italian?

- (3) *Behaviour towards language* - identity and attitudes towards the use of Italian.

For each category, the analysis of data is conveyed in narrative style. During the interviews, from which most of the data analysed was drawn, the informants used a narrative style and I thought it appropriate to maintain it when writing up the case study findings. The sequence of the analysis of the data has been divided in three sections:

- ◇ CG self-report related to the three categories of language behaviour.
- ◇ GPG's report about the CG behaviour in the three categories of language behaviour.
- ◇ PG's report about the CG behaviour in the three categories of language.

The data analysis for each category concludes with a summary and, where considered useful, a table offering at a glance the findings of that category.

The analysis of the language activities is included in the second category "Behaviour through language". The informants' performance is described detailing each step of the task undertaken. At the end of the analysis of the language activities, the informants' proficiency to use Italian is illustrated in a table.

The generational division of the informants' reports is maintained in the third category "*Behaviour towards language*" but the data analysis is summarized differently. In this section the report takes the form of questions and answers to specific issues raised during the interview.

Each analytical chapter concludes with an overall summary/conclusion in which the findings are discussed and, where relevant, compared to the theoretical perspectives reviewed previously. The three analytical chapters are followed by one chapter in which the case study findings across the three countries are compared.

5.2.5 Criteria for interpreting the study's findings

Yin (1994) claims that the '*Linking data to propositions and Criteria for interpreting the findings*', the fourth and fifth of the five components (see 5.2) to conduct the research of good case studies, have been the least developed in case study theory. He recommends that the utmost care be taken when developing the framework for one's own project in establishing clear guidelines, hoping that the findings or 'patterns' emerging are sufficiently contrasting in terms of comparing at least two rival propositions to see clear results. However, he also points out that:

For some topics, existing works may provide a rich theoretical framework for designing a specific case study. (1994: 28).

The topic of my study is supported by such theoretical framework (theory based research on LM/LS by minority groups in language contact situation) and the whole project has been based on it. It would not be difficult to compare the findings with the established theory and reach analytic generalizations⁷ which

⁷ "analytic generalization" is a generalization in which a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study.

will match and possibly extend and reinforce existing knowledge in this field of study.

5.3 Summary and conclusion

This chapter has discussed the “Case Study” approach used to conduct the investigation following the model of Yin (1994).

The five components identified by Yin as important for case study research have been described and explanations given of how the components have been applied to this project. In the presentation of the research design, the participants in the project were introduced and procedures for data collection and analysis were explained.

The next three Chapters will present data and findings from the case studies in the three countries of this project.

CHAPTER SIX

The United States case study

6.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the US informants. The US Satra family is introduced, followed by the analysis of data using as categories the three aspects of language behaviour (*Domains of language behaviour, Behaviour through language, Behaviour towards language*) discussed in section 5.2.2. The analysis offers insights on *where, when, why and with whom* do CG informants use Italian as well as *what* variety of Italian they use the and *how*. The third section of the analysis deals with the exploration of the CG's attitudes towards their cultural identity and their use of Italian.

6.1 The Satra family in the USA

The extended Satra Family in the US comprises eighteen people. The first migrants to Australia, the Grandparent Generation (GPG), are Giuseppe and his sister Mariella and their spouses Antonia and Nuccio.

Giuseppe and Antonia are Paolo and Maria's parents. Mariella and Nuccio are Nicholas' parents.

Paolo's first marriage was to Margherita, an Italian girl he met during a holiday in Italy. They had four children: Joe (25), Melissa (21), Christina and Philip (12 - twins). Margherita died when Cristina and Philip, were nine years old. A

couple of years later Paolo married Olga, an American of Russian origin. She has three adult children of her own.

Maria married Bill, of Irish descent. They had two children: Joanna (21), Richard (20). Maria and Bill have been divorced for a long time. Maria's present partner is John, an American of Irish descent.

Nicholas is married to Tina who was born in Brazil of Italian parents. Her family arrived in America when she was 6. Nicholas and Tina have two children: Nina (6) and Nick (3).

**Table 6.1 The US Satra family at time of data collection
(names in bold indicate the Satra's line of descendants)**

Grandparent generation	<p>Couple1. Giuseppe & Antonia</p> <p>Couple 2. Mariella & Nuccio</p>	<p>Both retired. They worked as machinists in a men's clothing factory for most of their time in the US.</p> <p>Both retired. They also worked as machinists in the same factory as Couple 1.</p>
Parent Generation	<p>Couple1.Paolo & Olga Paolo Olga</p> <p>Couple 2. Maria & John Maria John</p> <p>Couple 3. Nicholas & Tina Nicholas Tina</p>	<p>Maintenance work in an airline company. Office work at the Pentagon, Washington.</p> <p>Beautician and masseuse Physiotherapist</p> <p>Self-employed painter Hairdresser</p>
Child Generation	<p>Joe (24) Melissa (21) Cristina (12) Philip (12)</p> <p>Joanna (21)</p> <p>Richard (20)</p> <p>Nina (6) Nick (3)</p>	<p>Mechanic Receptionist Student - year 6 Student - year 6</p> <p>Studying at Community college. Apprentice mechanic.</p> <p>Student –year 1 Kindergarten</p>

6.2 Analysis of data⁸: Domains of language behaviour

(Where, when, why and with whom do CG informants use Italian)

6.2.1 Child Generation self-report

Six of the eight CG informants, ranging from 24 to 12 years of age, are in Giuseppe's family. They claim that they do not speak Italian. When the issue was probed further by the interviewer, some of them admitted that they speak Italian with their grandparents and that they understand when the grandparents speak in Italian, but they answer in English. The informants' answer was also negative when asked if they used Italian in any other situation or place. However, when asked if they remembered having used it at any other time in their lives, Joe, Melissa, Christine and Philip, answered that they used it when their mother was alive. They remembered using it when they went to Italy (they went every second year when their mother was alive) and that they could communicate well with their relatives in Italy. The oldest also remembered his mother speaking Italian at the beginning of her residence in the US, but that after a while she started "talking like dad" (he used Dialect rather than Italian). But, he stated, "now ... it has been too long ... I forgot". Melissa reported that, at first, her mother wanted them to speak Italian, but after a while she accepted that "we are here, we have to speak English." Melissa also reveals that she has studied Italian for six months at the Community College (after her mother's death) to learn some of the "formal" part of Italian so she might be able to communicate with her mother's relatives, should she go back to Italy again. Christine and Philip say that they did speak Italian with their relatives in

⁸ See 1.3.1 for terms used to refer to the Italian language.

Italy, but now they have forgotten everything. They understand their grandfather "a little" but they speak to him in English.

Maria's daughter, Joanna, answered to the question "When do you speak Italian?" with a simple "Never". But, she said that she understands her grandfather when he speaks in Italian to her. Richard, her brother, says that he doesn't speak Italian and understands very little.

The two youngest CG in the US, Mariella and Sebastiano's grandchildren, also do not use Italian. However, their mother and maternal grandparents use some endearing words in what they define "their own family language", an idiolect comprising elements of Calabrese (an Italian dialect), Portuguese (they first emigrated to Brazil from Italy, before settling in America) and English when talking to Nina and Nick, their grandchildren. The paternal grandparents usually communicate using their own Italian dialect and/or Standard Italian when speaking to each other or the PG informants, but, when speaking directly to the grandchildren, they use English.

6.2.2 Grandparent Generation report

Grandparents Giuseppe and Antonia

When Giuseppe was asked if the grandchildren spoke Italian, he answered using dialect " *I mei figli s'arrangiano. Ma i nipoti no. Loro parlano con noi in inglese a noi riposndiamo un po' in inglese un po' in dialetto* (My children manage. But the grandchildren, no. They speak to us in English and we answer using a bit of English and a bit of dialect)".

Grandparents Mariella and Sebastiano

Mariella and Sebastiano indicated that they do not speak Italian with the grandchildren and viceversa. However, Mariella reported that with her grandchildren she was doing something she did not do with her own son. She was trying to teach them to count in Italian and some children's songs in Italian or Sicilian dialect. Sometimes she speaks Italian to them, but they do not understand her. Maybe, she suggested, it is because their maternal grandparents speak Calabrese and a mixture of Brazilian which is totally different from the Italian she uses.

6.2.3 Parent Generation report

Joe, Melissa, Christine and Philip's, parents

Paolo recalled that when Margherita was alive the children would hear them speak Italian. Actually, he reported: "Margherita at first spoke Italian, but then she spoke Sicilian dialect so I could understand better". According to Paolo, the children would hear them and understand, but answered only in English. Margherita wanted the children to speak Italian, but they did not want to learn. Now, his new partner Olga, does not speak Italian. She wouldn't mind the children to maintain their heritage language if they wanted to but they were not interested at the time I met them declaring that they "have forgotten everything" related to Italian.

Joanna and Richard's parents

Maria stated that they never use Italian in her house. She does not remember ever speaking "proper" Italian in her life and she said that she never communicated using Italian with her children, not even familiar endearing terms. Her children hear the grandparents speak Italian, and understand

enough of what is being said. But they never spoke or speak Italian in their own home. Joanna's boyfriend and Richard's girlfriend are from Italian backgrounds, but when they were asked (by the mother and the interviewer) if they ever spoke Italian with their girlfriend/boyfriend or their families, they appeared to think that even the suggestion was absurd.

Nina and Nick's parents

Tina, Nina and Nick's mother, reported that she speaks some Italian to her children and so does her mother. But it is their 'personal Italian'. This consists of some words for everyday objects, food and actions. She said the children understand and enjoy it. The children also hear the mother's parents "who always speak Italian because they cannot speak English. And of course, Nicholas parents also speak Italian in their home and with us".

6.2.4 Summary

The Home/ Family domain appears to be the only place of CL use for this CG. In this domain they hear Italian being used and they use it with their grandparents when English does not get the message across. Table 6.2 summarises the domains of language behaviour of the informants as reported by themselves and their family.

Table 6.2 Domains of language use of CG informants: summary of self-and family's report.

(00) = age at the time of data collection

H = Italian heard

S = Italian spoken

INFORMANTS' NAMES IN FAMILY GROUPS	WHEN	WHERE	WITH WHOM	WHY
Joe (24), Melissa (21), Christine (12) and Philip (12)	Present time	Grandparents' home (H, sometimes S).	Grandparents, (H, sometimes S)	Grandparents often speak to them in Italian.
	Future expectations	They think they may have to use Italian if they go to visit her mother's relatives in Italy.	Possibly with relations in Italy	Some communication with Italian relatives
Joanna (21) and Richard (20)	Present time	Grandparents' home (H, rarely S).	Grandparents, (H, sometimes S)	Grandparents often speak to them in Italian.
	Future expectations	In Grandparents' home (H),	Grandparents,	Continue to use it with Grandparents
Nina (6) and Nick (3)	Present time	In own home, Grandparents' home (H only).	Grandparents, (H only)	Grandparents sometimes speak to them in Italian.
	Future expectations	In Grandparents home (H only)	Grandparents, (H only)	Continue to hear it from Grandparents.

6.3 Behaviour through language

(*What* and *how* do CG informants use Italian)

The analysis of data relating to the previous section has established that the CG often hears and/or uses Italian (e.g. when they “have to” because they want to communicate with their grandparents), Italian as defined in Chapter One (1.3.1). In this section the analysis of the data will attempt to ascertain *what* (as in what variety) and *how* (as in how proficiently) the CG informants use Italian when they use it. The data for this section’s analysis comes from the tri-generational reports (as in the previous section) as well as a report based on my direct observation, diary keeping and recording of data of the communicative interactions among the three generations. Also, the data collected when the informants undertook the language activities (see 5.2.4.1.5) are analysed in the attempt to reach an impartial, more structured way to assess the proficiency of the CG when (and if) they attempted to use the Standard Italian.

6.3.1 Child Generation self-report

The oldest member of the CG in the USA, Joe (25) said that he cannot speak Italian at all. His Grandfather speaks Italian to him and he answers in English. He estimated that he understands 'enough' when people speak in Italian to him. Questioned about his Italian use in the past, he reported that he spoke it when he was a little boy. The mother, who was Italian born and educated, could not speak English. He remembered going to Italy often during the first 10 years of his life (his father worked with an airline and one of the benefits of the job was cheap air travel) and being able to communicate easily with his cousins and friends in Italy. "But now" he said: "I forgot, I forgot ... it has been too long". Even when his mother was alive, he remembered that after some time, when he

was going to school, she would speak to him either in Italian or dialect and he would answer in English.

Melissa (21) stated that she could speak Italian well when she was younger. She says that up to the age of 10/12 she went to Italy every second summer and she used Italian there with her relatives. But, back home in America, she thinks that there is no use speaking Italian. Her mother wanted her to, but "we are here, we have to speak English". However, she regretfully said "my English is not great either". At home, during her school days, she remembered, "there was no proper language". Her parents spoke "Italian" or "broken English" and could not really help her at all. Italian was never taught in the schools she attended. "Italian is not of any help here. Maybe if it was Spanish...". However, she said that she likes Italian. She would like to use it with her Italian relatives. For this reason, having an understanding that the "Italian language" used at home fell short of being accepted as "proper" Italian, she attended six months of Italian studies at the "community college" (the equivalent of Australian TAFE). Some time has gone by since that semester's study. She believes she has forgotten what she has done, which "wasn't much anyhow".

Philip (12) and Cristina (12) said that they remember using "little words" when they were young. They remembered being in Italy when they were six and talking to their cousins in Italian. Now, they are convinced they cannot speak it at all: "We can understand Grandpa, but we always speak to him in English". At the end of the interview, Philip commented that he would like to speak some Italian, because perhaps Grandfather might take him back to Italy again.

Joanna (21) and Richard (20), as was the case with their cousins, simply stated that they can understand their grandparents and their grandparents understand

them and, as far as Italian is concerned, this is all that is important for them.

Nina (6) and Nick (3) were not able to report on their own use of Italian language. However, they seemed to enjoy playing with words that they knew are not English. They also knew with whom they could use those words (grandparents and, playfully, with mother and father). They were not willing to try them on me, the interviewer. When I talked to them in Italian, sometimes they appeared to understand. On other occasions, when they did not understand, they would make themselves busy with some task unrelated to the topic of conversation ignoring my words. A few seconds later, Nina or Nick would start conversing again, in English, on a different topic altogether.

6.3.2 Grandparent Generation report

Grandparents Giuseppe and Antonia

The Grandparents do not seem to have any expectations regarding their grandchildren's use of Italian. As far as Giuseppe is concerned, whatever they say and however they say it, is good enough as long as they can communicate with him. As for the quality of the language they use, be it dialect, Italian or English, he is not certainly setting himself up as a censor. "Tanto io che ne so (any how, what would I know)" commented Giuseppe.

Grandparents Mariella and Nuccio

Mariella, Nina and Nick's grandmother, says: *I bambini usano qualche parola che è un miscuglio di dialetto e brasiliano... ma quasi niente, va. Io non li capisco nemmeno. Qualche volta io gli canto una canzoncina in Italiano. Ma parlare si parla in inglese.* (The children might use words that are a mixture of dialect and Brazilian...but almost nothing, really. I don't even understand them. Sometimes I sing

children's songs in Italian to them. But when we have to speak, we speak in English).

6.3.3 Parent Generation report

Joe, Melissa , Philip and Cristina's father

Paolo saw little use in the speaking of Italian. His children speak Italian with their grandfather to make themselves understood, but according to him nothing was gained by speaking Italian in the place where they live (Virginia).

Joanna and Richard's mother

Maria said that the children manage to understand and somehow communicate with the grandparents and this was the extent of their use of Italian, which, she commented, "I know it's not proper Italian".

Nina and Nick's parents

According to Nina and Nick's parents, the few words that Nina and Nick use, which were not identifiable as English, are the words spoken by the family and contains a mixture of terms of endearment and daily routine words drawn from any of the languages or dialects known to the adults in the family.(i.e.: egg (in Ital. *uovo*) is for their children "cocò").

6.3.4 Researcher's report

To report what variety the CG informants use when they use Italian and how they use it, I would like to use as a point of reference "the *continuum* of migrants' language proposed by Gonzo/ Saltarelli (see 2.2.3) which deals with the Italian of the Italians abroad and its process of *involuzione* (involution). As

argued in that section, I do not entirely agree with the descriptors of the different stages of the *continuum*. However, the *continuum* is a good starting point to define the stages of the language of the Italian migrants when described from a time depth of at least three generations.

Also, before I report on 'what' the CG informants use when they use Italian, it is important to discriminate between what they *hear* and what they *say*.

In the US, 'what' the CG informants hear from Italian speaking people could be compared to the third stage of the *continuum*. This is the stage when the local variety of Italian has reached the pidginized stage (the "Pidgin" in Gonzo & Saltarelli's *continuum*) which, in this thesis, I have defined CL (see 1.3.1). However CG individuals do not hear this variety from the PG but from the GPG. The youngest generation may hear it from their parents only when the parents are communicating with *their own* parents. The PG usually communicates with the CG in English.

Although aware that there are other "formal" varieties of the CL they use, the American CG informants consider the variety spoken in the family as "Italian". This is the only variety of "Italian" to which they are exposed, the variety they understand and that allows them to continue to communicate with their elders. Poignantly, one of the CG, Joanna (21 years of age), was disappointed and puzzled when she could not comprehend my variety of Italian or the one heard on tape, since, as she pointed out, she could understand her Grandfather "most of the time, anyhow".

Giuseppe, one of the GPG, discusses that to speak to the CG is more difficult than speaking to the PG, and as an example describes a phone conversation he

had with one of his grandchildren.

Con i nipoti è più difficile. ma ci arrangiamo. L'altro giorno al telefono parlavo con Cristina: "You mangiasti?" - "Yes, nonno" " Who cookin?' "I cookin" ... Così, ci capiamo. (With the grandchildren is harder now, but we manage. The other day I was talking on the phone with Cristina: "You ate" - "Yes, grandpa" " who cooking" - "I cooking" ...in this way we understand each other).

Generally, the base language (as in Grosjean's use of 'base language' -see 3.2.4) of these informants' speech could be described as Sicilian dialect, but the lexis they use is rich with lexical transfers from English. As discussed in 3.2.2, there is also grammatical integration, where the English nouns have to be accommodated into the Italian or Sicilian grammatical system by being assigned a gender and a plural type. Some of the transferred and integrated nouns that have found a permanent place in the informants' speech are:

- ◇ CL: *'na giria* (sing.fem.)
English: a girl
Sicilian: *'na carusa*
Standard Ital.: una ragazza
- ◇ CL: *'u bossu* (sing. mac.)
English: the boss
Sicilian: *'u patruni*
Standard Ital.: il padrone
- ◇ CL: *i bricchi*
English: the bricks
Sicilian: *i mattuni*
Standard Ital.: i mattoni

An example of a sentence is: (Giuseppe talking about his sister Mariella)

CL: *Idda è troppu petticula*

English: she is too particular

Sicilian: *Idda è troppu pirillusu*

Closest Standard Italian equivalent: Lei è troppo meticolosa.

"*Petticula*" is an Integrated lexical transfer from English for 'particular' - In this context used to mean 'fussy' ⁹.

Petticula must have been clearly part of the local or personal variety of CL. However, in these informants' community, it was used and well understood by all participants to their social group, be it first, second or third generation, and, although I have the same language background as the US informants, often I found it hard to understand them.

To sum up, the US CG informants hear a variety of the CL they identify as "Italian" but which does not correspond to any of the conventional varieties of Italian. Furthermore, they never undertook the study of the Standard Italian as a school subject, so it is the only variety of Italian they comprehend.

As to 'what' the CG informants say when they use Italian, their speech can be placed on the last stage of the *continuum* of the migrant language: the "fragment" and very close to the disappearance of the home language, at least in the productive form.

⁹ *Petticula* could also be considered a 'false cognate', since it could lend itself to be understood as the Italian *pettegola* (gossip), which would totally distort the meaning of what is said.

Usually, these CG informants try to put the message across to their grandparents in English. Most of the time, the grandparents understand and reply using their variety of CL. It is only when the grandparents do not understand that the CG informants use their “fragmented” Italian to communicate.

Another way to describe their production of Italian is with the term “ethnolect”. In the final stage before the complete disappearance of the CL- the fourth stage of Gonzo and Saltarelli’s continuum - the third generation informants tend to use an Italian ethnolect of the national language as an in-group variety within the family. This takes over some of the symbolic identity function of the CL (Clyne 2003: 155). Structurally it is the result of ‘turnover’ or ‘change of roles’ of matrix and embedded languages in Myers-Scotton’s terms (1993a). The ethnolect usually entails transferring into the speakers’ English words referring to family relationship (e.g. *nonna* ‘grandmother’, *mamma* ‘mum’, *zio* ‘uncle’), the house (e.g. *cucina* ‘kitchen’, *letto* ‘bed’, *gabinetto* ‘toilet’) or clothing (*vestaglia* ‘dressing gown’, *scarpe* ‘shoes’). Some examples of Italian transfers in the ethnolect are diminutives (e.g. *tesoruccio* ‘little treasure’, a term of endearment, and *nannina* ‘little nap’). A secondary explanation for this phenomenon is that it may result from bilingual communication in the family where parents and/or grandparents speak Italian or CL and children reply in English (see 3.1.1.3). The children pick up on the keywords in the CL and use them in their response as in the short example below:

Grandmother: *Non stare così. Fa freddo! Mettiti la vestaglia*

(don’t stay like that. It’s cold. Wear your dressing gown)

Grandchild: *I’m not cold! I don’t want wear the vestaglia.*

The US' CG informants tended to think of this way of communicating as "speaking Italian".

6.3.5 Summary

All US CG informants of an age that allows them to describe their language use assert that they can understand when their grandfather speaks to them in "Italian". The family's reports, as well as mine, corroborate that the CG communicate well using their own familiar variety of the CL. When communicating using that variety, no one in the family was concerned about "correctness" of language use. The main concern was to be able to understand each other.

6.3.6 Language activities

The reports discussed above were some of the sources of evidence towards ascertaining CG's ability to use the Italian language. Another, more structured way of collecting evidence was to ask the informants to undertake a set of language activities in Standard Italian. I always used Standard Italian when conducting the activities. Informants were asked to use Italian as much as possible. The results of the eight CG informants' performance when undertaking the activities are reported in the following section.

6.3.6.1 Language activities for the 'under five' CG and the 'five to seven' year old

In the US, Nina had just turned 6 and Nick was 3 years old. The two children demonstrated to be more comfortable when together, so I conducted the

activities with the two of them. (For extended list of activities see **Table 5.2**)

Description of performance: Nina and Nick

Nina and Nick demonstrated some comprehension of Italian speech. Often they needed body language actions to help comprehension (eg. pointing at something and asking: *Cosa è questa?* -What is this?). They responded in English. Nina, especially, tried very hard to please the interviewer. If she was able to grasp the meaning, she would talk and talk without stopping, giving lots of details (eg of what was happening in the photos). However, the only Italian words she used were "mamma" and "papà" and when I, at a certain point, asked: "*Me lo dai uno?* (Can you give me one?)". Obviously she thought I asked her to count because she started counting as follows: "...uno, dues, tres, quattro, siquo sei quattro siquo setti..ten". The counting confirmed what the mother had previously reported about their own "family speak". The words for the above numbers appear to have been drawn from Italian (not underlined above), dialect, Portuguese, English.

Nick tried to keep up with his sister, but would get somewhat grumpy when he did not understand and tried to convince me to try one of his games. No Italian word was used by him.

6.3.6.2 Language activities for the 8 to 12 years of age informants

In the US two informants belong to this age group: Philip (12) and Cristina (12).

They asked if they could do the activities together and I agreed.

Description of performance: Cristina and Philip

(1) Listening comprehension (assessed through narrative.)

Step 1: Listening to key words - checking understanding

Philip knew the meaning of about three words out of ten. The others had to be explained to him. Cristina understood the meaning of a few more.

Step 2: Listening to the narrative

Whilst listening to the story the children indicated comprehension (they had to clap their hands when they heard one of the key words discussed in step one) in most of the places where the key words were heard.

Step 3: Retelling the story

After Cristina and Philip listened to the story once more, I asked them if they had understood the story. The answer was affirmative. Therefore I invited them to retell the story. Using English, they summarised the story. I continued to interact in Italian, but the children always answered in English.

(2) Oral production

Oral description of twelve sequential pictures related to daily routine.

Drawing parallels with personal daily routine.

Step 1: Instructions given

Cristina and Philip were instructed to try to use Italian when describing the pictures.

Step 2: Describing the pictures using Italian followed by informal interview discussing Cristina and Philip's daily activities

Cristina and Philip did not use any Italian, although through their answers they demonstrated that they understood most of the questions I asked them.

There were not reading or writing activities. Both Cristina and Philip said that they had never written or read in Italian. Cristina said: "When I was little maybe I could say some little words in Italian, but now I have forgotten them all." Later in the day she drew a picture to illustrate the first story, but did not write anything under it. Philip did not want to draw the picture.

6.3.6.3 Language activities for the 13 years of age and over informants

In the US four informants belong to this group: Joe (24), Melissa (21), Richard (20), Joanna (21).

Description of performance: Joe (24)

Joe, the oldest of the informants, who is Melissa, Cristina and Philip's brother, prefaced the attempt at the language activities saying that he never tried to read or write in Italian. At my request, he tried. Listening to the tapes, he seemed unable to comprehend what the story was about. When it came to the reading /scanning to answer questions related to some newspaper advertisements, I read the questions aloud in Italian, since he declared that he could not read them. He was unsure of the meaning. He checked for each one by asking: "Are you saying....?" I explained in Italian. He seemed to comprehend enough to point at the advertisement needed to supply the answer to the question asked. However, when he spoke he used English only.

Description of performance: Melissa (21)

Using English, Melissa discussed very openly her feelings towards Italian use and Italian traditions and was very keen to attempt the linguistic tasks. Although she stated that she could understand her grandfather well and sometimes she interpreted for her brothers and cousins, she did not quite

comprehend my instructions given in Italian about the language activities. She recounted the picture story fully in English. She tried to read to Italian texts, but she did not comprehend them. I tried another story. On this occasion, with some added explanations, first given in Italian and then in English, she comprehended some of the story. However, she did not use the Italian language with me.

Description of performance: Richard (20)

Richard did not attempt any of the tasks. He accepted to speak with me in one occasion (informal interview, conducted in English), but he stated categorically that he could not and would not attempt to do any activity in Italian.

Description of performance: Joanna (21)

Joanna was more cooperative than her brother Richard. In English, she discussed her feelings about the Italian language and Italians with me. After that she attempted the activities. However, she stated that she could not understand what she had to do. After further explanations, the Italian tape was played. She did not understand the tapes and did not understand what I was saying when I spoke Italian. She was very puzzled and disappointed. She exclaimed: " I can understand my grandpa, most of the times anyhow, but I cannot understand this".

Table 6.3 US CG informants' proficiency in using the Standard Italian

(00) = age at the time of data collection;

Standard Italian = SI - A.N.A. = Activity Not Attempted - Familiar topics (FTs); Expanded Familiar Topics (EFTs); Unfamiliar Topics (UTs); (For description of definition of topics see 5.2.4.1.5)

Informant's Name	Receptive Skills		Productive Skills	
	Listening Comprehension	Reading Comprehension	Speaking	Writing
Nick (3)	Does not appear to comprehend SI related to FTs	Not required to attempt activity	A.N.A.	Not required to attempt activity.
Nina (6)	Comprehend some SI related to FTs	Not required to attempt activity.	A.N.A.	Not required to attempt activity.
Cristina (12)	Comprehends SI related to FTs	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.
Philip (12)	Comprehends SI related to FTs	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.
Richards (20)	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.
Joanna (21)	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.
Melissa (21)	Comprehends SI related to FTs and some EFTs	Reads SI text- has some comprehension	Used minimal SI	A.N.A.
Joe (25)	Comprehends SI related to FTs and some EFTs	A.N.A.	A.N.A.	A.N.A.

6.3.6.4 Summary

The CG US informants spoke in their personal report of how they were able to understand their grandfather when he spoke to them in "Italian" whilst admitting that most of the time they answered in English. The GPG stated that although the grandchildren had problems in speaking "Italian", they were able to communicate with the grandparents. My personal observation and data collection, including the language activities, proved that definitely there was not much Italian in any variety being spoken by these informants. However, when the informants attempted the language activities, I was surprised by the fact that some of the informants did not understand Standard Italian at all. From the facts available, the lack of productive skills was expected. However I expected these informants to have fairly good receptive skills of the Standard Italian. But they did not.

Observation and analysis of data pertinent to the way GPG informants communicated provided the answer. Standard Italian was not being used by the GPG at all. As stated in my report (see 6.3.4), the GPG used mostly what I have defined above as the local variety of CL or, perhaps, it could also be defined as "personal idiolect".

It is clear that the environment in which the US' CG informants live shapes the quality and quantity of Italian they can/want/need to use.

These CG informants

- ◇ have not studied Standard Italian at school nor are there plans to study it;

- ◇ have not traveled to Italy (except some when very young) or corresponded regularly with anyone there;
- ◇ have not had regular input from people visiting from Italy;
- ◇ do not have parents interested in any matter related to the use of Italian;
- ◇ do not have family friends, other than GPG individuals, who use Italian.

In conclusion there are no factors present in the environment of these US informants that would nurture an interest in the use of Italian, with the exception of the small amount needed to communicate with the Italian-American GPG.

6.4 Behaviour towards language

(Identity and attitudes towards the use of Italian)

6.4.1 Report of interview with the Child Generation

What national/cultural identity do these CG informants claim for themselves?

The CG informants who were old enough to be able to understand and answer the question defined themselves as 'Italo-American' or 'American of Italian descent'.

Do the CG informants consider Italian as part of the cultural heritage they will endeavour to transmit to following generations?

These US informants consider Italian the language of their grandparents and they recognize it as something that is part of their family tradition. However, whilst they think that some of the Italian ways of life (traditions) may still be part of theirs and their children's lives, they are sure that the language will not be.

Do/did the CG informants take any action to ensure the active use of Italian?

The only informant among the older CG informants who has formally studied Italian at school is Melissa. She chose to study it, as an elective in her 'Community College' course, a semester of Italian. In her view, this could help her when she is able to go to Italy to visit her mother's relatives. All the other CG informants did not at any time think of taking any actions to ensure an active use (or more active use) of Italian.

To be able to assess the cultural and linguistic environment in which the CG was brought up, I questioned the GPG and PG about their sense of identity, their use of and attitudes to Italian.

6.4.2 Report of the Grandparent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these GPG informants claim for themselves?

All of the four GPG informants declared themselves proud (with different degree of emphasis) to be of Italian origin. However, they all have the American citizenship. Mariella claims that she has always adored America. Nuccio states: "*Io mi definisco italo-americano perché ho la cittadinanza americana. Ma, la mia origine, tutto quello che è il complesso culturale, artistico - non solo non lo nego, ma ne sono orgoglioso* (I define myself as Italo-American because I have American citizenship. But, my origin, all that forms the cultural and artistic heritage - not only I do not deny it, but I am proud of it.)

Giuseppe and Antonia state that they feel comfortable both as Italians and Americans.

Do GPG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

The four members of CPG in the US use and have always used Sicilian dialect or Italian. At home, at work, in their neighbourhood, they could only communicate using their language. The most educated of the four, Nuccio, was invited by a family friend to use more dialect when mixing with compatriots, rather than Standard Italian, because this variety would single him out as the outsider and label him as the 'snob'. Nuccio says that he does not like dialect very much "*perché è, non dico volgare, ma certamente pesante* (because dialect is, I wouldn't say vulgar, but certainly heavy)". However, he felt that if he persisted in using Standard Italian he would have to explain his background and he did not want to. He wanted to become part of that community, not stand alone. Also, in the US he never went to school to learn English. He had learnt some English in his first leg of immigration to Australia, but he did not continue his learning in America. He started working in a factory, with his wife and other relations and friends. He did not need English. His only escape to this regime of life was to join the Italian Cultural Society. Here he would listen to lectures about the "high culture" of Italy and enjoy them very much. He is still part of that society. The language of communication of the Society now is English, but this does not deter him.

His wife Mariella, who arrived in the USA before Nuccio did, tried to learn English. She strongly believed and believes that the language is the key to assimilation and she wanted to assimilate fast. But her attempts were not helped by the fact that she lived in her Sicilian community. Her friends were mostly from the same Italian region and she worked in a community where the majority used the Sicilian dialect. However, with her son, she tried to speak English. The baby-sitter she chose for him when she was working, although of Italian background, spoke English. Mariella and Nuccio say:

Lui sentiva noi parlare in italiano o dialetto, ma lui parlava solo inglese. Non si sforzava mai di usare l'italiano. Forse, ora qualche volta ci prova. ma da ragazzo mai. (He would hear us speak in Italian or dialect, but he would speak only English. He would never make an effort to use Italian. Maybe, now sometimes he tries, but when he was a boy, never).

Most of the same situation applies to Giuseppe and Antonia. They say they did not need English at all. They did not even try to use English in the family, ever. The children learnt at school and, they emphasize:

Non hanno avuto mai problemi. Quando sono andati hanno imparato subito. (They did not have any problems. When they went to school, they learned immediately).

And until they left home, they always spoke Italian with their parents and people of their parents' generation. Giuseppe recognizes that communication with the grandchildren is becoming difficult. However, he claims that they still manage well.

Therefore, it would appear that Sicilian and Italian were and are part of this GPG everyday life. It was also part of their children's life up to adulthood. The way of life of the GPG, as described by themselves, was one of segregation and lived according to the Sicilian ways of life. This type of segregation, which could be considered to have similarities to Fishman's "compartmentalization of language use" (1989), was not seen as a privilege: quite the opposite. The GPG had no choice in the use of their language (see 3.2.3.2). They did not know how to communicate otherwise. For their children, one GPG couple overtly, the other less overtly, wanted mainstream society assimilation. For the sake of their

children's future they knew that the host language was the one the children had to learn, even if at home and in their neighborhood they continued to be immersed in the language the GPG used.

Do the GPG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children and grandchildren?

Sicilian/Italian is part of the GPG heritage but not a part that they seem to value greatly. It is still the prime language of communication in the family, but when speaking directly to the CG, the grandparents try to use English whenever they can. They do not seriously expect their children or grandchildren to try to maintain the language they use any further than their life span.

Do/did the GPG informants take any action to ensure active use of the CL with their children and grandchildren?

The GPG informants never stopped speaking Sicilian/Italian and, in time, their CL. This is perhaps the only action undertaken in favour of its maintenance. However, it was not a choice. When any action was undertaken by choice, e.g. in the case of Mariella, it was towards the learning and use of English. As for action towards their children using and learning the Standard Italian, as well as for their grandchildren, the actions undertaken by the GPG did not go any further than the use of their CL within the home domain.

6.4.3 Report of the Parent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these PG informants claim for themselves?

Without hesitation, to the above question, Paolo answered: "I am Italian". Although I made no comments to that, he added:

I know, I know... I guess I am just saying it. But in America people tend to identify by their heritage. - their country of origin - where their family came from. It is only for identification matter. For example "Black American or African American" - it is a political thing.

He continued saying that there is no pride in being Italian and that he felt that he "really belonged to America". Asked if he identifies with the Italian culture and traditions, he exclaimed:

What culture?! traditions?... maybe, the family traditions, but nothing else.

Maria, Paolo's sister, stated:

At this point of my life I define myself as Italian-American, not Italian-Italian. I am proud I was born in Italy. I have never been back there, but I feel more Italian than other Italian-American born here. Maybe it was because of my upbringing. It was very strict, very Italian. My brother was allowed to do about everything. But I wasn't. That's why I married so young (21). Marriage was an escape.

Now that she is older, Maria says that she is more interested in the Italian traditions. Actually, she is convinced that Italo-Americans in general are more interested in the Italian traditions, folklore and food than they are in the Italian language.

Nick, Maria and Paolo's cousin, asserts that he is very comfortable with his identity. He declares:

I am American. I don't need to cling to the ethnic group. You know, like "African-American" whatever. I am also comfortable as Italian, whatever.

He recalls that once his father took him to a meeting at the cultural society *Figli d'Italia* (Sons of Italy). People at the meeting were reacting very badly at the criticism directed at the Italians in the media "you know Mafia and that". Nick says that he was annoyed by the reaction people had at the meeting. He could not quite understand it. He felt American. He did not think that the media criticism could "touch" him. I asked: "What comes into your mind when I say 'Italian Culture'." Nick answered: "Food - family - traditions - being together - being Catholic". Asked if he thought of language as part of the culture, he answered:

You see, I don't think about it. You think about it because it is your job - but you talk what you need to talk to be understood.

To sum up, these three second generation informants accept in full their Italian heritage. However, they are also aware that probably their life would have been much easier without their 'ethnic' identity.

Do PG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

"You talk what you need to talk to be understood" could very succinctly summarise what these three PG informants think of the languages that are part of their everyday lives. They have a certain consciousness that the Italian they speak is "bad", as Maria put it. However, they use it when in need to communicate with GPG relations and friends of the family. When it comes to using it in their core family, with their children, they simply say that they never

did or do use Italian, exception made for the endearing words and "family speak" that is sometimes used in Nick's home.

Asked if they ever used Italian at school or at work, they say that they never did. Even as children, since Paolo and Maria arrived in the US when they were respectively 11 and 9, they do not remember using it. In Maria's words :

I never remember speaking 'proper' Italian. As for English, in my own mind it seems ... one minute I didn't know anything, one minute I knew. I learnt all on my own.

She says that she always put in her job applications that she spoke Italian. But she was never asked to use it. Exception made for one time. Where she was working at the time was asked to speak to some Italian clients who could not understand English. Apparently one or two of them understood something of what she said. The others did not understand her at all.

Paolo remembers having problems at school: "It was my problem, I just was no good". He remembers that he couldn't read and the nuns banged his head against the board. But, he thinks that had nothing to do with his Italian speaking. He comments: "Oh, it wasn't English. It didn't take long to learn English". At the time of the interview he was rather bitter and defensive about his language ability. "I have forgotten Italian and can't spell, write, etc in English, either". He says that he can't ask for a promotion in his work, because he can't write. The bitter conclusion is: "I have given up. I didn't get it at school and never got it afterwards".

Nick was born in America. He states that he never spoke Italian. "It was all around me - he says - but when they (his parents) spoke to me it was in English. Some of my mates did speak fluent Italian, but I didn't. Later in life (when he was about 20) some cousins come from Italy to visit them. They went for a tour of California and took Nick with them to be their interpreter. He says that he does not know how he did it, but he did interpret for them: "There was no way out. I had to do it. I did it." As for English, he feels that the television was his first teacher and then the children he played with in the streets. He thinks he knew enough English when he went to school to cope with his work, but he asserts: "My English is still lacking. I don't think I am articulate enough."

Paolo, Maria and Nick are three adults with the potential to communicate in three languages, yet feeling that they cannot achieve well in any of them. This would explain the ambivalent attitudes they have towards Italian and their ethnic background that, in their view, if it did not appear to impede their progress in the mainstream society, at the same time, it did not equip them with an asset.

Do the PG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children?

Paolo's experiences with his community language have often been negative. This has happened not only in the US, but also in Italy where unpleasant events occurred due to his use of Italian as he knew it. He recounts:

For example at the airport in Rome - speak English and everyone understands you and treats you well - speak Italian ...they think you are from some... and they treat you like dirt. So I spoke English and only

spoke Italian to communicate with the relatives *nel paese* (in the home town).

When his wife, Margherita, was alive and he had to speak Sicilian or Italian in the house, he spoke it. His children understood it and occasionally used it. Now, with his new partner there is no need to speak Italian at home any longer. The result of his life experiences with Italian is that he does not consider it as a valued heritage for his children.

Maria arrived in the USA when she was nine and has never been back to Italy. Now she thinks that she may want to visit it some time. She claims that she has always lived a life that took her as far away from her native language and traditions as her love and respect for her parents allowed. She says that she "never - ever" used Italian in her own home. Her first husband was Irish-American as is her present partner. This partner does not even want to acknowledge other languages because "they annoy him". So definitely Italian is not seen as part of the heritage she can or wants to pass onto her children.

Nick says that he would not mind if his children learned some Italian:

because is the right thing to do. Nina (*daughter*) hears Tina (*wife*) speak to her mother using something different from English and she would like to learn as well. But, if she has to learn she should learn beginning from elementary school, because, I tell you from experience, learning another language beginning in high school is just a waste of time. I did French at high school and I hated every moment of it. Actually if one wants to learn a language when is older, the only way to succeed is to go to the country in which that language is spoken. Just like my cousins from Italy

did when they wanted to learn English. They went to England. In six months they were speaking well.

In conclusion, the data related to this question indicate that these informants, whilst they accept and identify themselves by their Italian heritage, do not assign any special value to the Italian language and do not consider it as a particularly valued element of their heritage.

Do/did the PG informants take any action to ensure active use of Italian with their children?

From the data analysed above it is abundantly clear that action by the PG to ensure the use of Italian by their children beyond routine communication with members of GPG is not forthcoming.

6.5 Summary and conclusion

Since their arrival in the USA more than 40 years ago, these GPG informants and their families have always lived in a manner that could be defined as segregated. On arrival, they worked in factories where their co-workers were Italians. Most of them from the same region and, often, the same town. They rented and then bought houses in suburbs where Italians lived. They only socialised with other Italians *-i paesani* (see: 4.1.1). In every interaction, communication required them to use their native tongue, Sicilian dialect, or, where the interlocutor had a different dialect, popular Italian. It could be said that it was the ideal situation for the maintenance of their language in the host country.

However, although segregated, they were not isolated from the host society.

They depended on it for all primary services, including their children's education. They, as most of the minority groups in the country, were definitely in a position of "intergroup social dependency" (Fishman, 1989).

In this way, whilst the uses and costumes/traditions of the host society hardly influenced their way of life at all, the national language gradually infiltrated their home language. At the same time, especially with no new immigration arriving from Italy, they had no new Italian/dialect language input.

The new environment in which they lived required them to express their ideas/concepts using a lexis they did not have in their native tongue. They had acquired those concepts through the medium of the host language. They used then the host language to express them; however, they adjusted the host language to suit their way of speaking (see: Andreoni, 1988; Bettoni 1985a and 1988; Finocchiaro, 1995a; Clyne, 1991; Li, 2002).

In time, their speech became a 'lingua franca' used only in their Italo- American community. They kept on calling this 'lingua franca' *Italian*. However, their speech bore little resemblance to the recognised Standard Italian or their original Sicilian dialect. The 'lingua franca' worked perfectly well in their ethnic community. However, the downside of it was that it had very little communicative value in any other language community, including their country of origin: Italy.

PG and CG informants were exposed to this variety of "Italian". They quickly learned that its value was only confined to communication with older members of their ethnic community. Such a limited usefulness did not inspire them to maintain and improve the speaking of it. Nevertheless, these informants claim

"Italian" identity for themselves even if they neither speak Italian nor, as the analysis of data as shown, consider it as one of the principal core-values of being "Italian" (see 3.1.1.3 for review and discussion of core-value theory). Family and family traditions appear to play a far greater role when the informants identify themselves as "Italian". Their attitude appears also to confirm the theory of interdependence of factors for LM/LS, also discussed in 3.1.1.3. This theory explains that an ethnic group may have a central core-value, but for it to continue to be upheld as such at all times it must work interdependently with other less central core-values. For example, (see Smolicz, 1981) the value that the Italians give to the family unit transcends that of their language. However, when living in language contact situation far away from Italy, to be able to communicate with their family and keep it united, Italians of first, second and third generation need to use the language they share (Clyne 1982), be it Italian, Dialect or CL, as defined in this thesis (1.3.1). Therefore the US CG informants have maintained enough of the 'home' language to be able to communicate within the family and it will be maintained as long as it is useful for the family cohesiveness. But the data has established that once this need disappears (e.g. the demise of first generation), so will the heritage language. Nevertheless, these informants do not think it is necessary to speak Italian to claim the "Italian" identity as their own.

The next chapter is dedicated to the Australian informants.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Australian case study

7.0 Introduction

This chapter begins with the introduction of the Italian-Australian informants, followed by the data analysis pertaining to this branch of the Satra family.

7.1 The Satra family in Australia

The extended Satra Family in Australia comprises eleven people. The first migrants to Australia, the Grandparent Generation (GPG), are Pietro and Alice. Nora and Ester are Pietro and Alice's daughters.

Nora (married to Alexander) has three children: Cristina, Francis and Loretta.

Ester (married to Giorgio) has two children: Elise and Julia.

**Table 7.1 The Australian Satra family at time of data collection
(names in bold indicate the Satra's line of descendants)**

Grandparent generation	Pietro & Alice	Jewellery & cake shop owners and managers.
Parent Generation	Couple 1. Nora & Alexander Nora	Language teacher & assistant in her husband's Real Estate Agency
	Alexander	Real Estate agency owner and manager
	Couple 2. Ester & Giorgio Ester	Pharmacist - manages a pharmacy
	Giorgio	Research microbiologist
Child Generation	Cristina (15) Francis (12) Loretta (9) Elise (7) Julia (5)	Student – year 10 Student - year 7 Student - year 4 Student - year 2 Student - year prep

7.2 Analysis of data¹⁰: Domains of language behaviour

(Where, when, why and with whom do CG informants use Italian)

7.2.1 Child Generation self-report

I spoke Italian when interviewing Nora's children, Cristina, Francis and Loretta. Nora was present at the interview. The children showed that they understood very well what was being said in Italian. However, they replied in English except when quoting words or phrases their interlocutor had spoken using Italian.

Cristina, the oldest of the CG informants in Australia, when asked if she spoke Italian and, if so, with whom, answered: "No, I don't really. Nonna speaks to us in Italian. We understand her but we answer in English." I asked: *E Nonna vi capisce?* (and does Grandmother understand you?) "oh, yes!" - answered Cristina. Cristina does not see any need to speak Italian, neither in her family nor at school ("unless in the Italian class" - she exclaimed). She does not think she will need to speak it when she begins work. Though, she adds: "I want to go to Italy. Obviously I'll have to speak it there." Asked if she had plans to travel to Italy soon, she replied:

I would like to go right now...but...anyhow, mum says that after the VCE we'll all go there for a trip.

I suggested that this would be the time to begin practicing using Italian, since her final year of secondary school is not too far away. Cristina exclaimed:

¹⁰ See 1.3.1 for terms used to refer to the Italian language

oh, no, no! If I needed to, maybe... like the time the relatives from Italy were here. I could manage. Not really long conversations. I don't remember what now. Loretta spoke better.

Where the use of Italian is concerned, Francis, Loretta and their younger cousins Elise and Julia confirm they follow similar pattern to that of Cristina: they hear Italian being used by their grandparents, infrequently by their parents, older relatives living in Australia and the occasional relative visiting from Italy. They confirm that they understand what is being told to them but they reply in English. When they had to use some Italian with the relatives visiting from Italy they managed to communicate with them. In Cristina's opinion, the younger ones managed better than she or Francis did.

All five children study Standard Italian at school. Actually, when asked where they used Italian, the first (and only) place they mentioned was "at school". Then, when prompted by me, they discussed the use of Italian heard/used within the family.

7.2.2 Grandparent Generation Report

Grandparents Pietro and Alice

When asked if the grandchildren spoke Italian, Alice responded

Mah.. quando li saluto mi rispondono sempre in Italiano - e anche a te vero Peter? -per esempio -'Ciao Nonna' - e io dico "come stai?" e loro dicono sempre "bene grazie Nonna" well...when I greet them they always answer in Italian -and to you too, isn't that right Peter ?- for example -'Ciao Nonna'

- and I say "how are you" and they always say "Good, thank you, Nonna")

However, when the grandmother is asked for what other topics the children use the Italian, she answered:

Veramente non molto altro. Ma capiscono tutto, tutto! Le piccoline al telefono mi dicono "sì" Nonna" e io dico "dov'è Mamma?" e loro "cucina" oppure "sopra". Ci provano, ci provano. (Actually not much else. But they understand everything, everything! The little ones tell me on the phone "Yes, Nonna" and I say "where is Mamma?" and they reply "kitchen" or "upstairs". They try, they try.)

She also confirms that when her brother from Italy was staying with her, the children always made an effort to speak to him in Italian, especially Loretta, Julia and Elise. However, Alice and Pietro state that they don't think that the children use the Italian language anywhere else. Even the other grandparents speak to them in English. *"Però non dimenticare che loro lo imparano anche a scuola (But do not forget that they learn it also at school)".*

7.2.3 Parent Generation report

Cristina, Francis and Loretta's parents

As a general rule, in Nora and Alex's house, Italian is not spoken regularly. The children, reports Nora, use English almost all the time. The exceptions to this are when the grandparents visit their house or when they visit the grandparents, which is almost a daily occurrence. The grandparents speak Italian and the children respond in English. Nora remembers that when Cristina

was younger she used much more Italian than she does now. This was because when Cristina was the only child in the house, Nora made a point of speaking to her in Italian and the grandparents also tended to speak more Italian, using the Italian baby language. But in time, this way of using Italian petered out (reasons given were the birth of the other children and Cristina refusing to use Italian at home when she began kindergarten/school). At present, Cristina's Italian use is confined to very brief answers to the grandparents and other relatives and to discussing and completing Italian school assignments with her mother. The same pattern of Italian use applies to the other two children. Nora remarks that she wished her mother kept on using Italian with her children. But apparently Alice and the other grandparents use much more English with the children than Nora would like. She complains that the grandparents do not even appear to realise that they use more English than Italian with the children

Elise and Julia's parents

As reported by their parents Ester and Giorgio, the pattern of Italian use by Elise and Julia is very similar to that of their cousins. The use of Italian is very much tied up to the presence of the grandparents. As with Nora, they are in contact with their grandparents very often. Ester says that she also uses "words" in Italian when speaking to them. For example:

I always say "get your '*vestaglia*' (dressing gown)" "say hello to '*zia*' (aunt)" "where is the '*carta igienica*' (toilet paper)" and other words like that. {my note: this language use resembles closely the "ethnolect" variety used by the CG and described in 6.3.4}.

Ester also comments on the fact that the children understand everything when someone speaks to them in Italian and, as her sister Nora, laments the fact that

her mother does not always speak to them in Italian.

7.2.4 Summary

The domains for Italian use in the CG in Australia are the Home/Family and education. The family, including the extended family, is the setting for the use of Italian. However, the CG informants consider the language classes they attend at school as the “formal” setting for Italian use. The children, as well as the parents and grandparents, expect that their Italian learning at school will continue as long as does their school career. The oldest of the CG informants thinks that speaking Italian will only be necessary when she visits Italy. While In Australia, in her opinion, the use of Italian language has little practical purpose. Nevertheless, with her sights set on the oncoming trip to Italy, she tries (and succeeds) in getting excellent results for her Italian language studies at school.

Table 7.2 Domains of language use of CG informants: summary of self-and family's report.

(00) = age at the time of data collection

H = Italian heard

S = Italian spoken

INFORMANTS' NAMES - IN FAMILY GROUPS	WHEN	WHERE	WITH WHOM	WHY
Cristina (15), Francis (12), Loretta (9)	Present time	Grandparents' home and own home: H, sometimes S. At school H & sometimes S.	Grandparents, (H and S in short, formulaic responses)	Grandparents often speak to them in Italian. At school: it is a subject on the curriculum.
	Future expectations	Academic purposes (school)-trips to Italy-relatives visiting from Italy	With relatives and friends in Italy or from Italy	Necessary to use when other people do not speak/ understand Italian. They expect to continue to learn Italian during their entire schooling.
Elise (7) and Julia (5)	Present time	Grandparents' home and own home: H and sometimes S. At school H & sometimes S.	Grandparents, (H and S in short, formulaic responses)	Grandparents often speak to them in Italian. At school: it is a subject on the curriculum.
	Future expectations	Academic purposes (school) - trips to Italy-relatives visiting from Italy	With relatives and friends in Italy or from Italy	Necessary to use when other people do not speak/understand Italian. They expect to continue to learn Italian during their entire schooling.

7.3 Behaviour through language

(*What* and *how* do CG informants use Italian)

As in Chapter Six (6.3), this section analyses the data collected to assess *what* and *how* the CG informants use Italian. Firstly, there are the tri-generational reports, then a discussion based on my direct observation, diary keeping and recording of data of the communicative interactions among the three generations. Also, the results of the analysis of the language activities undertaken by the Australian CG are reported.

7.3.1 Child Generation self-report

Cristina says that she does not try to speak Italian if there is no need for it. Because she is learning Standard Italian at school and her mother and grandparents have always made her conscious of it, she is aware of the difference between 'formal' Italian (as she defines it) and Sicilian dialect. Also, her mother (who is an Italian language teacher) and her grandparents, when speaking to her use Italian and not the dialect. It follows that Cristina uses Italian and not dialect.

The other CG informants assert that they do not mind speaking Italian. They also study Standard Italian at school and the family members make every effort to use the Standard variety when speaking to them. The children also state that they try hard to use Italian if they know that the interlocutor does not understand English.

All five CG informants are adamant that they understand whatever Italian is spoken to them or in their presence.

7.3.2 Grandparent Generation report

The grandparents report that the children's use of Italian is usually restricted to responding to formulaic greetings and to single word responses to questions.

Per il resto tutto in inglese. Però tutto quello che dicono è in Italiano - giusto sai? E' italiano, no dialetto. E capiscono tutto in Italiano. ((Everything else is in English. But what they say is correct Italian, you know? It is Italian, not dialect. And they understand everything in Italian.))

7.3.3 Parent Generation report

Cristina, Francis and Loretta's parents

Nora reports that when Cristina was younger and the other children were either not born or still babies, she was willing to use Italian much more. She comments that now she uses it only

when we have to discuss her Italian homework. And she is good. Francis tries; he improved a lot when my cousin and uncle from Italy were here. Loretta is the one who tries to speak Italian more willingly and she did really well when my relatives were here. Now, I use Italian when I talk about simple every day things. For more complicated things they don't understand me and I use English.

Elise and Julia's parents

Ester also confirms that in her home they don't use Italian much, except for the Italian words that are part of their familiar daily routine. As reported above Elise and Julia reply in Italian with single or short formulaic expressions when

the grandparents talk to them in Italian. If they have to continue the interaction, they revert to English.

7.3.4 Researcher's report

The report on *what* the Australian CG *hears* and *says* in Italian also takes as its point of reference the Gonzo & Saltarelli *continuum*. In Australia the GPG variety of Italian has similar characteristics to the US GPG speech but responding to the exigencies of the personal Australian experience and lifestyle embedded in it.

Members of the GPG use this CL freely with one another, but tend to moderate it and shift to 'Italian' (in their case, the base language used as Italian is a good approximation of the Standard) when speaking to the PG or the CG. This is a conscious choice on the part of the GPG informants. The grandmother asserts: "*io ho sempre parlato in Italiano alle mie figlie e anche con i miei nipoti* (I have always used Italian with my daughters and my grandchildren)". Then, almost in the same breath, during that conversation, she addressed one of her grandchildren, playing nearby with a ball, saying:

Cheeky girla! *Vai a giocare nella yarda*

(Cheeky girl. Go and play in the yard.)

The above is one of many, many instances of language contact phenomena and illustrates Nora's claims that her parents "do not even realise that they use more 'English' than Italian when speaking to the children". Certainly the process of language contact and attrition (at the time of data collection the GPG had been in Australia for more than forty years) has affected their speech in

many ways. Kinder (1987a and 1987b) shares the view that, over time, people's perceptions of the foreign origin of items in their speech do in fact diminish and in several instances I thought that my informants' perception of the origin of many linguistic items used in their speech was rather weak. However, Kinder cautions against thinking that migrants have lost completely their control over the composition of their speech, given that

A cognitive-based view of transference can help us see bilinguals, not as passively unable to avoid interference in their speech and in their language, but as agents in the language-contact process, creatively exploiting the linguistic resources at their disposal. (Kinder 1987 : 11)

He makes the point (1987a and 1987b) that there is a marked difference between the very little control bilingual people appear to exercise over the transference process in normal everyday speech and their linguistic behaviour in atypical formal situations (e.g. like a formal interview with a person from a university). In these latter occasions it has been demonstrated that the migrant bilinguals can "exercise some degree of conscious and active control over their linguistic creativity" (ibid). My informants used their multilingual repertoire in all circumstances of communicative interactions I have witnessed through the years. It is possible that, in my presence, since I am "family" they never felt pressured to be guarded in their use of language and therefore I could witness their linguistic behaviour at its most natural and creative (for an extended overview of variables affecting bilinguals' code-switching/transference see section 3.2.3 in this thesis). However, on the question of which variety of Italian is important to maintain intergenerationally, the whole family is in agreement that it must be Standard Italian (see 3.2.3.3). There are no doubts, indecisions or allowances for creativity in that decision. Hence the GPG has always insisted

that Standard Italian be studied at school by both the PG and the CG. This action in favour of Italian maintenance has resulted in the PG not being limited to the family's speech variety of CL. They are one example of a second generation who, due to interest and study in the language, uses Italian in a manner that is closer to the "Standard" than that of their parents. Therefore, the Australian CG is also exposed in the home to an Italian variety close to the "original stratum" (see the *continuum*, 2.2.3) or, as I would define it, a "Fading-Standard" (in the sense that it is (regional) Standard Italian –stage 1 of the *continuum*- but since these PG informants have few contacts with the modern Italian use in Italy, their speech would also have the characteristics of the stage 2 or 'Fading' stage). Another source of intake of Standard Italian for this Australian CG is the school. This reinforces the concept of the different varieties of Italian.

As a result, when the Australian CG informants communicate using Italian, they are very conscious of "correctness". This some times interferes with communication, as they speak haltingly, self-correcting if they think they are saying something that is not 'formal Italian'. But they eventually put the message across.

These children are not fluent speakers of Italian. They also use quite liberally the Italian ethnolect of English outlined in 6.3.4 and, the younger ones, like their American cousins, consider this to be "speaking Italian". However, they could not be placed on the last stage of the *continuum*. In my opinion, although they often use Italian in a "fragmented" way, their knowledge of how Italian language functions and the way they use it puts them above the final stage of

Gonzo and Saltarelli's continuum. The Italian language is not yet close to disappearing in this family.

7.3.5 Summary

All Australian CG informants claim to comprehend Italian. The family's reports, as well as mine, are in agreement with this assessment. However, the speaking of Italian on the part of the CG informants is limited. Since plans for the future include further studies of the Italian language and visits to Italy, all three generations are convinced that the present situation can change and the children will have the possibility of becoming more fluent in the Italian language.

7.3.6 Language activities

The language activities undertaken with the Australian CG followed the same order and the same procedure as those conducted with the US CG. Here follows the analysis of the activities.

7.3.6.1 Linguistic tasks for the informants under 8 years of age

In Australia two informants are in this age group: *Elise* (7) and *Julia* (5). The activities were conducted with the two informants present at the same time.

(For extended list of activities see Table 5.2)

Description of performance: Elise and Julia

Elise and Julia were at ease with the interviewer and eager to cooperate. The children appeared to comprehend the interviewer well. Their "comprehension" of what was said is not always worded on tape, as the children would nod their head or act in answer to the interviewer's request, without using any words.

Other times they tried to answer, but they couldn't find the words in Italian, would hesitate or emit a few "uhm...uhm.." After this had happened a few times, their mother, who was hovering nearby, intervened saying: "You can answer in English, if you want". At this, the children's hesitations disappeared and, using English, they responded to the interviewer's questions demonstrating in full that they had understood what she had asked them in Italian.

However, during these structured activities, production of the Italian language on their part did not come easily. The language the children used was an example of Italian "ethnolect". Their base language was English but they inserted in it family relations names (nonno e nonna (*grandfather - grandmother*) - zio -zia (*uncle -untie*) etc, object and common colour names (i.e. whilst they could give me the names for red, green and blue in Italian, they did not know 'purple' or other unusual colours) . They also were able to use single word responses in Italian using the key word used by me.

Question: *Julia è la più grande o la più piccola*

(Julia is she the oldest or the youngest?)

Elise: *Piccola!* (small)

Standard Italian: *La più piccola* (the youngest)

Whilst looking at a photo, prompted by me, Elise counted correctly in Italian the items shown in it (four). After the children had finished drawing a picture of themselves, I asked Julia (who had not begun school at that stage) "*Sai scrivere il tuo nome? Scrivi il tuo nome.* (Do you know how to write your name? Write your name.)" Julia appeared not to understand. Elise came to the rescue saying: "Write 'Julia' ".

There was no doubt that these two young informants could comprehend the Italian used by me and interact with me appropriately. However, production of the Italian language on their part was minimal.

7.3.6.2 Language activities for the 8 to 12 years of age informants

In Australia two informants belong to this age group: Francis (11) and Loretta (8). Francis and Loretta conducted the activities separately. Their performance for each activity is described consecutively in the same section.

Description of performance: Loretta and Francis

(1) Listening comprehension (assessed through narrative.)

Step 1: Listening to key-words - checking understanding

LORETTA

When explaining to Loretta what she had to do, I wanted to be sure she understood. Using Italian I asked the child to translate the instructions as well as the key-words which were part of the task being undertaken. Loretta is the youngest of this age group (including the American informants and the French informants).

FRANCIS

The same process in introducing the task was followed with Francis. He was very hesitant. Francis was looking at his mother, who was in the room, waiting for help. When he did not receive any, he decided to tackle the task by himself. Hesitantly, but correctly, he guessed the meaning of the first three words. After this, he acquired confidence and continued the task translating correctly the remaining words.

Step 2: Listening to the narrative

LORETTA

Listening to the story, Loretta recognised all the key-words discussed in step 1.

FRANCIS

Francis also did not miss any of the key-words from the story.

Step 3: Retelling the story

LORETTA and FRANCIS summarised accurately the content of the story they had heard in Italian *in English*.

(2) Oral production

Oral description of twelve sequential pictures related to daily routine.

Drawing parallels with personal daily routine.

Step 1: Instructions given

The researcher instructed the two informants that, in describing the pictures, they had to use Italian.

Step 2: Describing the pictures using Italian followed by informal interview discussing daily activities

LORETTA

When describing the twelve pictures and talking about her daily activities, Loretta did not use any Italian. On two occasions, the first when talking about brushing the teeth and later when naming an item of clothing, she finished the sentences in Italian prompted by her mother and me as follows:

MOTHER: *Come dice mamma?... Loretta..vatti...a...lavare...i...*

English: (What does mum say?...”Loretta..go...brush... the...)

LORETTA: *denti!*

(teeth!)

Later during the same activity:

INTERVIEWER: *questi come si chiamano? - in italiano...lo sai?*

(What are these called? - in Italian ...do you know?)

LORETTA: *pantaloni!*

(trousers!)

However, the answers demonstrated that she comprehended all the questions I asked her.

FRANCIS

Francis did not use any Italian in describing the pictures or in response to my prompting questions. However, as Loretta, when asked "*Come si dice in italiano?*" (How do you say this in Italian?) in response to his : "Brushes his teeth" Francis answered: "*lava denti*" (Standard Italian: *si lava i denti*)

Francis did not use the definite plural article '*i*' (the) needed in the Standard Italian form. However, contrary to his sister, he did not appear to know or remember the word for "*pantaloni*". After this, he did not use any more Italian, but, as Loretta, Francis demonstrated that he understood the questions I asked in Italian.

Neither Loretta nor Francis thought that they could do any reading or writing activities. They promised they would draw the picture related to the story for the listening comprehension language activity "later". Since they had already demonstrated full understanding of the short story, I did not persist in my request.

7.3.6.3 Language activities for the informants 13 years of age and over

In Australia one informant belongs to this age group: *Cristina* (15).

Description of performance: Cristina

(1) Listening comprehension

Cristina listened to the story. She said she understood it. She read well the related questions in Italian. When it was time to answer the questions she needed to have two of the key words explained ('*costosa*' [expensive] and '*equipaggio*' [crew]). She answered all the yes/no questions correctly.

(2) Reading comprehension

I explained the task in Italian. I also asked for the translation of some words that I thought Cristina may not have understood, but she had. At one point she was unsure about the word *mostra* (exhibition); her dad, who was in the room, helped by giving the meaning in English. Cristina, jokingly, applauded him and completed that question well. She continued without further assistance, translating in English -softly to herself- in what seemed a search for self assurance that she had understood correctly - parts of the reading completing the task showing excellent comprehension.

(3) Oral production

Cristina began this task speaking Italian. Her Italian speech was slow and kept to very short sentences. She showed her school language learning by self-correcting several times, but still not arriving at the grammatical form needed in Standard Italian. Examples of this are in the following extract from this activity

Cristina began the description of the pictures by saying with hesitation:

Uomo sied...seduto sulla sedia...la sera

Closest Standard Italian equivalent: *Un uomo è seduto su una sedia.*

E' sera.

Closest English equivalent: A man is sitting on a chair. It is evening.

Interviewer: *Che cosa fa?* (What is he doing?)

Cristina: *Fum..fuma re*

Closest Standard Italian equivalent: *fuma*

Closest English equivalent: He is smoking

Cristina, unsure of what form to use, decides to use the infinitive of the verb.

The interviewer models in her answer: *"Sì, fuma."*

Cristina *e poi...ooooh!* (and then ...ooooh!).

Interv: *Questo è difficile eh?* (this is difficult, eh?)

Cristina: *"Sì".*

Using leading questions, I tried to help Cristina continue to speak Italian.

Cristina tried one more time:

Cristina: *I personi corre*

Closest Standard Italian equivalent: *Le persone corrono*

Closest English equivalent: People run

Interviewer: *Perché corrono?* (why do they run?)

Cristina: *Ho...ha...hai paura.*

Closest Standard Italian equivalent: *Hanno paura.*

Closest English equivalent: They are afraid.

Inter: *E che cosa fanno gli extra-terrestri alla città?* (And what do the aliens do to the city?)

Cristina *..o uhm..uhm..* they are destroying it.

Inter: *la stanno distruggendo? E questo che cosa è?* (They are destroying it? And what is this?)

At this point it was clear that Cristina could not continue in Italian and I said: "*Dillo in inglese, se non lo puoi dire in italiano* (say it in English if you cannot say in Italian)". Thereafter Cristina completed this activity using English, while I continued to use Italian.

(4) Written production

When Cristina was asked to write a letter in Italian to her cousins in Italy and let me have a copy, or, if she preferred, send me an e-mail in Italian she promised she would send an e-mail. She has not yet sent any note, message or letter and I have not pressured her into doing it.

(5) Focused interview

Any informal interaction or conversation I had with Cristina saw me speaking Italian and Cristina speaking English. Cristina clearly understood what was spoken in Italian, but she herself never used Italian.

Summing up Cristina's performance in the undertaking of the language activities, she displayed excellent receptive skills in both listening to and reading in the Italian language. However, her ability in the production of the Standard Italian was definitely far below her comprehension ability.

Table 7.3 Australian CG informants' proficiency in using the Standard Italian

(00) = age at the time of data collection;

Standard Italian = SI - A.N.A. = Activity Not Attempted - Familiar topics (FTs); Expanded Familiar Topics (EFTs); Unfamiliar Topics (UTs); (For description of definition of topics see 5.2.4.1.5)

Informant's Name	Receptive Skills		Productive Skills	
	Listening Comprehension	Reading Comprehension	Speaking	Writing
Julia (5)	Comprehension of SI related to Fts.	Not required to attempt activity.	Uses single words and formulaic expressions	Not required to attempt activity.
Elise (7)	Comprehension of SI related to FTs.	Not required to attempt activity.	Uses single words & formulaic expressions.	Not required to attempt activity.
Loretta (9)	Comprehension of SI related to FTs.	Shows comprehension of single words and simple texts in SI.	Uses single words, formulaic expressions, short sentences related to FTs & EFTs	Preferred not to attempt this activity.
Francis(12)	Comprehension of SI related to FTs.	Shows comprehension of single words and simple texts in SI.	Uses single words and formulaic expressions.	Preferred not to attempt this activity.
Cristina(15)	Very good comprehension of SI related to FTs, EFTs & some UTs	Very good comprehension of written SI texts	Uses single words, formulaic expressions & short sentences related to FTs, EFTs.	Preferred not to attempt this activity.

7.3.6.4 Summary

The Australian CG informants' performance in the linguistic tasks confirms the previous reports about their language use and could be summed up as follows:

The five CG informants can comprehend spoken Italian language very well and in the case of the oldest, Cristina, can also read and comprehend written Italian. She also claims that she can write Italian for educational purposes. However their proficiency at speaking the Italian language is definitely below their comprehension or, as in Cristina's case, reading and writing skills.

Generally speaking, all of them say that they don't mind speaking Italian and they make an effort to respond in Italian if they are spoken to in the language. However, their efforts are short lived, as they don't seem to be able to advance beyond the single word response or the very familiar expressions related to daily life (eg: '*Buongiorno, come stai?* (Good Morning, how are you?) - *Bene, grazie* (Well, thank you.)" *Mamma lavora* (Mum Is working.)" "*No, non c'è.* (No, she is not here.)" "*Ciao, Nonna* (Hello Grandma)" "*Ciao, Zia* (Hello, Auntie)" etc.)

Recently, the presence in their grandparents' home of Italian relatives who could not speak any English motivated the children to try and persist in the speaking of Italian. As reported by the older generations, although struggling and often requesting help from the adults they succeeded. However, if the children know that the person talking to them can understand English, their Italian language use stops at the first difficulty they have in finding the words necessary to continue the interaction in Italian.

The whole family is aware of the difference between Standard Italian and other varieties. They all favour the use of the Standard. For the CG informants, the notion of the difference between the varieties of Italian has been reinforced by their learning of Standard Italian at school. However, the Italian that the children hear in the family environment, especially when the adults speak directly to them, is restricted to daily routines and chores. This was further confirmed when Nora expressed the following thought:

Now I use Italian with them when I talk about simple every day things. For more complicated things they don't understand me and I use English. It's easier.

Therefore the only Italian language the children hear that does not relate to daily or familiar routines is the language they learn at school. Unfortunately, as Cristina reported, at school: “No, we don't do much talking in Italian at school, more writing ... copying things...”

In conclusion, Italian is part of the everyday life of these informants. Undoubtedly there are ways in which their receptive skills could be channeled into becoming productive skills, something desired by everyone in the family. However, although there are plans extending to the near future, at this point in time, the Italian language use of these Australian CG informants is mostly confined to comprehending rather than speaking it.

7.4 Behaviour towards language

(Identity and attitudes towards the use of Italian)

7.4.1 Report of interview with the Child Generation

What national/cultural identity do these CG informants claim for themselves?

"Italian" is the answer the older CG informants give. "Australian-Italian" is what the two younger CG say. When asked why, a similar pattern emerged for all five informants, regardless of age. The only difference between them was that the older ones were able to articulate better the factors influencing their answer.

The pattern can be summarised in Cristina's words :

Well everyone here is Australian, but at school to identify yourself, you have to give your background, can't just say 'Australian' . It is "too jobbo" - to be Italian has a good feeling about it. Anyhow, most of my friends are Italians, but also Australians. Also, the Italian friends understand me better. The Australian- Australians ... well... they are a bit different, they do different things, I don't know, you see them as different ([writer's note]one example given is that among other things the 'Australian' girls are allowed to go out at week-ends and are freer than generally herself and the other 'Italian' girls). Is not that there is name calling or other things. We talk to each other and we joke in class, but at lunch-time we gravitate towards our group. In my group there are also some Polish girls and an Indian girl. They feel comfortable with us because they have that cultural thing. On the other hand, if I were in Italy I would say that I am 'Australian'. But with my friends here I always say 'Italian'.

Her brother Francis (12) says:

We say we are 'Italian' because our Grandparents were born in Italy - because we have some Italian blood.

Loretta (9) also has many 'Italian' friends and some "half Irish-half Australian". She has already discovered that the friendship with the Irish- Australian girl has to be conducted on a slightly different level than the friendship with the 'Italian' friends. She says that often she has to explain some of the things she has/eats/does, while her 'Italian' friends 'know', no explanations needed (eg. names of food and manner in which it is prepared; family traditions related to Baptisms, Confirmation etc.). However, they all concur that being 'Italian' is good and do not mind at all to define themselves as such.

Do the CG informants consider Italian as part of the cultural heritage they will endeavour to transmit to following generations?

All the Australian CG informants are too young to think of generations beyond themselves. Their answers are vague and restricted to some "yes" "maybe"

Do/did the CG informants take any action to ensure the active use of Italian?

All five children are happy that they are learning Italian at school. Actually Francis, whose (private) school does not offer Italian, has accepted willingly his mother's decision to enroll him to study Italian at the Victorian School of Languages (a government run Saturday language school which offers the possibility to study 43 LOTE [*Languages Other Than English*] outside school hours). The interviewer asked Cristina if she would have liked to study a language other than Italian. The answer was a defined "No". She continued saying that although she is not confident enough to speak it well, she wants to study Italian because: "I like it; it is not hard for me; I like it also because of my background and because my friends are Italian.

To be able to assess the cultural and linguistic environment in which the CG was brought up, I questioned the GPG and PG about their sense of identity, their use of and attitudes to Italian.

7.4.2 Report of the Grandparent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these GPG informants claim for themselves?

Peter and Alice maintain that they are "Italian". Alice says: *Certo sono qui, mi piace l'Australia, ma mi sento sempre italiana - noi non abbiamo neanche la cittadinanza australiana* (Well I am here, I like Australia, but I always feel Italian - we are not even Australian citizens).

Peter says *Io sono siciliano o Italiano se vuoi* (I am Sicilian or Italian if you prefer) and adds that, although Australia has been good for him *la nostalgia non se ne va mai. Mi piacerebbe andare in Italia più spesso ma vorrei ritornare qua.* (Nostalgia never goes away. I would like to travel to Italy more often, but I would want to come back here).

Do GPG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

Peter and Alice use and have always used Italian/ Sicilian dialect or the variety of the language that, in time, has come into being in Australia in their social/community group. At home, at work, in their neighbourhood, at social gatherings they always communicate/d using one (or all) of these varieties. However, as an employer in the catering industry, Peter felt it was also important for him to learn some English, even if he mostly dealt with Italian employees and Italian clients. Learning English seemed less important for Alice, but she managed to communicate satisfactorily with English clients when it was necessary. As far as their native language is concerned, both are able to

differentiate in their use between Italian and Sicilian dialect. They say that when they spoke to their children they always tried to use Italian *insomma, come meglio si poteva* (as well as we could).

Do the GPG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children and grandchildren?

The answer to this question is a definite "Si" for both Peter and Alice where Italian language is concerned. They may use Sicilian and CL varieties among themselves and their older friends. But when talking about maintenance or development of their language for their (grand)children, they want it to be Italian, meaning 'Standard Italian'.

Do/did the GPG informants take any action to ensure active use of Italian with their children and grandchildren?

Peter and Alice were active in trying to maintain their children's Italian. In the first instance, they always tried to use Italian at home, then, because Italian was not offered at any primary school at the time their girls went to school, they had private Italian language tutoring for them. At secondary school the girls were able to take Italian as part of their formal studies.

As far as their grandchildren are concerned, they were less determined in their resolve to transmit Italian. They speak to them more often in English than they ever did and do with their children. One concern expressed for this action was that the children would not comprehend them when they speak Italian and may not want to speak to them at all. However, they very dearly would like the grandchildren to speak Italian. Peter says:

Se loro volessero imparare meglio l'italiano, io pagherei per vitto e alloggio in Italia per tutto il tempo che vogliono stare, basta che parlassero più italiano.(If they would want to learn Italian, I would pay for their board in Italy for any length of time they would want to stay there, as long as they speak more Italian)".

Therefore their strongest action was directed to maintain their children's Italian. For their grandchildren they are prepared to help, as long as the cost is not paid in emotional distance between grandparents and grandchildren and breakdown of communication in the family.

7.4.3 Report of the Parent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these PG informants claim for themselves?

The PG informants call themselves 'Italians', but with a few reservations. They acknowledge that their friends are mostly Italian, that their lifestyle is lived along the values and principles that they recognise and define as traditionally Italian. However, as for example Nora says, according to the circumstances in which she may find herself, she defines herself as 'Australian'. For example in her work as a teacher of English to newly arrived migrants she maintains that she finds it more appropriate to define herself as 'Australian' from an Italian background. In the lives of the other PG informants there are also similar situations where identifying themselves as Australians appears more appropriate. This is not seen as a problem by them or as a denial of either identity. To them this is recognition that they can comfortably be bi-cultural and claim the identity that suits better the social or work intercourse of the given moment (see. 3.4.1.1 *cross-over* theory –Fishman, 1991).

Do PG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

All four second generation Australian informants say that they have used and use Italian daily although in different manner and with different applications. Nora and Alexander use it in their work, at home with their parents and sometimes with their children. Ester and Giorgio do the same, but to a lesser extent.

However, I have noticed something about the older couple Nora and Alexander. About six years ago they were interviewed for a smaller project about their Italian language use. At that time, as they do now, both of them were using Italian in their work, Nora as an Italian language teacher, Alexander as a real estate agent. However, they responded in English to the Italian questions posed to them and actually showed clear preference to the interview being conducted in English. This time, they responded spontaneously in Italian to my use of Italian. Alexander maintained the Italian code all through the conversation even when he seemed to strive for words. Nora, who is supposed to be the more fluent speaker of Italian, also responded in Italian. However, apparently inadvertently, she would code-switch often to English, either for single words, entire sentences or some stretch of the conversation.

Ester (a pharmacist) and Giorgio (a scientist) say that they use Italian occasionally in their work. Ester uses it with clients who cannot comprehend English well. Giorgio's use of Italian is somewhat more esoteric. He states that the knowledge of Italian (formal studies at secondary school and some informal Italian and dialect at home) has helped him often to better understand the meaning of scientific terms. Of the four, however, he is the one who would communicate the least in Italian/dialect and then only with his parents or

parents-in-law. He explains this acknowledging that his Italian is very poor and does not want to be a bad example for his children.

Do the PG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children?

Another thing that Alexander did not want to admit to in the past was that the Italian language was an important part of his life. The Italian culture/traditions-yes, but not the language. Now he affirms that the Italian language has always been a part of his life and that it must be the same for his children. The reason he gives first is usefulness "*Non si sa mai quando può servire* (You never know when it can be useful)". He recalls that when he was younger he thought that Italian would never be any good for him. Instead, he points out, Italian has proved to be an asset for his working life (see: 3.4.1.1, in particular Clyne, 1982 and 2003). Another reason for wanting his children to maintain Italian is cultural heritage (see: 3.1.1.3 in particular Clyne, 1991; Bettoni, 1985; Smolicz *et al* 1981 and 2001.) He says that he prefers his children to continue studying Italian because Italian is part of their background and because they already have started formal studies in it. He then adds: *Poi se vogliono imparare un'altra lingua, sta a loro* (Afterwards, if they want to learn another language, is up to them). Nora reinforces her husband's statements claiming that she is sorry that she did not persist in her use of Italian with her children, but that she wants them to continue learning Italian and for them to hear as much Italian as possible. If nothing else, she remarks, if relatives from Italy phone or come here they will be able to understand them, even if their answers will be only "*sì*" and "*no*".

When Giorgio and Ester were asked the same question about Italian language as part of their heritage to their children, they both answered: "Yes, I think so.

Then Giorgio continued:

As for myself I think we use Italian words and that but I think in their (*the children's*) situation they should speak English better. I have seen kids who say they speak both languages - and I think they speak neither. So I think they have to speak English properly. I don't say they don't have to speak Italian...

At this point, I asked if he wanted this only as a symbolic approbation of their background or as something that could be of functional use. Giorgio answered:

I think something that could be functional. I learnt something and I used it as well. We don't discourage them...

Ester intervened:

I suppose we don't do anything to encourage them either, but, yes, we would like them to know about their background. Even with my grandchildren, I would tell them that their great-grand parents came from Italy.

These four PG informants have a confident acceptance of their Italian heritage. They also recognise that language is part of it and that it would be desirable to be able to maintain it in the next generation. However, the two couples have some difference of opinion when expressing their reasons for the transmission of the language. The older PG couple has experienced first hand that, beyond its cultural value, the maintenance of the Italian language can also be useful and

therefore are keen for their children to maintain it as far as possible. The other couple's experience of the use of Italian is more marginal (both at home and at work). They don't discourage (nor actively encourage) their children using Italian and learning it at school as one of the subjects of the curriculum. However, Giorgio and Ester see the Italian maintenance/learning for their children as subordinate to the proper use of what they consider their children's first language: English. Giorgio's resolve comes from the fact that as a child he was never confident to speak English. He says: "When we were younger we never went in front of the class and present things - we were hesitant - we would speak English, but we weren't confident." He is determined that his children will not have the same experience.

Do/did the PG informants take any action to ensure active use of Italian with their children?

The actions taken by Nora and Alexander for Italian language maintenance consists mostly of enforcing the rule for the children to study Italian at school, being exposed to the Italian used in the extended family and sometimes speaking to them in Italian. Nora also often tries to convince her mother to speak to the grandchildren only in Italian (she has not had much success until now). She often tries to cajole the children into speaking/reading/writing more Italian with the promise that soon they will go to Italy for a long holiday.

Elise, Giorgio and Ester's older child is also studying Italian at school and Julia is expected to do the same. On the basis of the opinions expressed by Giorgio in the section above, I asked him to speculate about the future when the children had reached the proficiency he expected them to have in English and they were still studying Italian at school. Would he take any action, I asked, to make the children functionally bilingual. Giorgio answered:

To make them really bilingual I would send them to Italy for six months - I would really consider it, especially if they were doing subjects that related to Italian. But if it was only for a holiday - well - this is something that I would have to consider later. But, I think that if you want to speak Italian you go to Italy.

Therefore, this couple is not against taking decisive actions to help their children maintain and develop their (Standard) Italian. However, the actions will be undertaken only if the children are personally willing to continue the learning of the family language and take it beyond the limited usefulness of routine family communication.

7.5 Summary and conclusion

At the time of data collection, the linguistic situation of the informants in Australia appeared to be the following:

Varieties of Italian, Sicilian dialect and CL were spoken mostly by the first generation. The PG usually spoke English, but, when they had to or wanted to use Italian, they tried to use Standard Italian in the manner discussed in my report (see 7.3.4). The CG informants used Italian only when addressed in that language by people who they knew did not understand English. Their use of the language was restricted to short, simple answers consisting of formulaic expressions. In most other occasions, general communication at home tended to be in the Italian ethnolect of English discussed in 6.3.4.

The older couple of the PG (Nora and Alex) appeared to have found a satisfactory way for them to reconcile bilingualism and bi-culturalism for

themselves and their children. They wanted their children to continue to speak Italian and the reasons given spanned from “the language is part of our cultural heritage” to “it is always useful to know another language. Italian was very useful for us, one day can be very useful for them too.” However, attempts to foster their children’s Italian language maintenance and development were heavily based on the learning the children did at school. At home the support given for its use was mostly confined to the exposure the family offered when using Italian for everyday use or for social interactions.

The younger couple (Ester and Giorgio) was not particularly worried if Italian was not used regularly in the home or elsewhere. As they stated, they were neither discouraging nor actively encouraging the use of Italian by the children. Elise and Julia had just started school. Their primary school offers Italian from the preparatory grade onwards and the children felt very comfortable with the studying of Italian... Actually they declared that they “liked doing Italian at school very much.” As for any other action taken to make them use Italian regularly, their father argued that their primary effort should go into making the girls highly competent in English to prevent them falling into the category of bilinguals who in reality are not proficient in either of the languages they are acquiring/learning. However, he did not rule out a change of direction later, when the children’s interests/or choices in life could be directed towards the need of speaking the Italian language competently.

The five children have grown up together in an extended family whose members share in all facets of daily life. Initially, the first grandchild, Cristina, had the whole family rotating around her needs and wants. The language of communication around her and with her (exception made for her father who always used English with her) was Italian (see 3.1.1.3 for use of language in the

home domain and 3.4.6 for discussion relating to LM/LS and birth-order in the family). With the birth of the other children and Cristina beginning school the mode of communication changed and in a short time English became the preferred mode of communication although Italian continued to be used in the family. At the time of data collection, Cristina was the one who had been exposed the longest to Italian. This did not translate in a noticeably higher competence in the Italian language, although her comprehension of it was certainly at a higher level than that of the other children. It is arguable if this was due to her privileged first-born status, her more advanced formal learning at school, her older age or a fusion of all these factors (see also 3.1.1.3). What can be said is that at the time of data collection all five children in the family had a positive attitude towards the Italian language and culture. Both at home and at school they had been taught that the variety of the community language worth knowing/speaking was the Standard version. They comprehended it and liked to learn it at school, though they were not confident in speaking it. Since everyone around them appeared to understand them when they spoke English, they did not see the need to make the effort to improve their production of the Italian language. However, they were prepared to try to speak it if it was necessary, as they did when they had visitors from Italy.

In conclusion, there are five CG Italians in this family. Depending on the life choices they make, their bilingualism in English and Italian, which at the time of data collection appeared to be latent, could become the reality the grandparents desired. However, since at no time through the analysis of data conducted with this group of informants has the Italian language emerged as the central core-value to be maintained at all costs, the probable scenario is that this CG will only continue to learn the language of their cultural background as an “additional language” (see 4.2.3.3 *Stage 4b*). Their Italian language will have

minimal functions outside the scholastic field (e.g. it may be used sometimes for communication within the family) but mostly it will be 'forgotten' or dormant when the scholastic learning is completed and the need to be used in the family has diminished. But, hopefully, it will not be so difficult to retrieve from its mental storage if/when the opportunity to use it arises.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The French case study

8.0 Introduction

In Chapter Six and Chapter Seven the US and the Australian informants' data were analysed. In this chapter, following the same procedure, the French branch of the Satra family will be introduced. The data collected is analysed according to the three aspects (categories) of language behaviour.

8.1 The Satra family in France

The extended Satra Family in France comprises nine people. The first migrants to France, the Grandparent Generation (GPG), are Saro and Zina. Paolo and Maria are Saro and Zina's children.

Paolo (married to Eleonor) has three children: Pierre, Françoise and Marguerite.

Maria, a single mother, has one child: Emma.

**Table 8.1 The French Satra family at time of data collection
(names in bold indicate the Satra's line of descendants)**

Grandparent generation	Saro & Zina	Saro is retired. He worked as skilled worker in the metallurgic industry. Zina never worked in paid employment. She is a housewife.
Parent Generation	Couple 1. Paolo & Eleonor Paolo Eleonor Maria	Tailor, retrenched from the men's fashion industry—now building accessories salesman. Head-nurse in a major hospital. French and Italian Language and Literature teacher.
Child Generation	Pierre (24) Françoise (20) Marguerite (11) Emma (9)	Computer technician. College student (she is studying languages: English and Spanish) Student - year 6 Student - year 4

8.2 Analysis of data¹¹: Domains of language behaviour

(Where, when, why and with whom do CG informants use Italian)

8.2.1 Child Generation self-report

Emma, (9) the youngest of the French CG, says that she speaks “*Italiano un poco, poco* (a very little)” at home - she did not elaborate any further because she was expected to use Italian and could not.

Marguerite (11) did not use Italian with me at all. However, questions were asked in Italian and she answered in French. The interviewer could understand some of what she said. The rest was translated for her. In short, to the question about language use, she simply answered that she does not speak Italian.

Although like her sister Marguerite, Françoise (20) knows that I speak little French, she answered in French the questions put to her in Italian. She has learnt Italian at school for six months, she said, and “*et c’est fini* (and that’s it)”. She does not use Italian at home with her parents. Where her grandparents are concerned she says that although they may speak either French and/or Italian to her, they do understand French very well. The other person with whom she could speak Italian is Auntie Maria, but Françoise refuses to speak Italian with her because Maria is too demanding (apparently Maria’s expectations exceed Françoise’s capacity to speak Italian). For Françoise, work, friendship and leisure domains are definitely French language domains.

Pierre (24), speaking in Italian, says that he does not use Italian often. But

¹¹ See 1.3.1 for terms used to refer to the Italian language.

“lo parlavo molto quando avevo scuola (I spoke it a lot when I 'had'{was} at school”. He continues reporting that he had studied Italian for six years in secondary school. Italian for him was *“un modo facile di essere... di avere buoni voti alla maturità (an easy way to be...to have good marks at the exams at the end of high school)”*. He used Italian also at home with the grandparents and with Auntie Maria. But, with Auntie Maria

solo delle volte, però non troppo perché aspetta di me che sia...sia...molto...litterato. (only at times, but not too much because she expects me to be...be...very literate).

Pierre also corresponded with an Italian girl. However, he says, it was too difficult for him to write good Italian, his grammar was *“molto tortuosa (very tortuous)”*. However, when visiting the pen-pal in Italy...*“due o tre giorni e ero a posto- parlavo bene (two or three days and I was okay - I could speak well).*

I asked if he ever used Italian with friends or at work (he is a computer technician). Pierre says that he does not use it with friends. His girl-friend is of Italian background and sometimes he speaks Italian with his future in-laws. Once at work he had the chance to help an Italian man who could not speak French. Also, before he completed his qualifications as computer technician, a computer company (*“il sommo mondiale [the best in the world]”*) was interested in him because he could speak Italian and at that time there weren't too many technicians who could speak Italian. Apparently, in the end, nothing came of it. Although he does not use it often, Pierre agrees with me that Italian could be useful for him in his working life.

8.2.2 Grandparent Generation report

Grandparents Saro and Zina

When the grandmother was asked if the grandchildren spoke Italian, she answered "*Ma no! Loro parlano francese* (But not! They speak French)". Then re-thinking:

Qualche volta Pierre - ma Pierre quando era piccolo è stato molto con noi.
(Sometime Pierre -but Pierre, when he was small, stayed a lot with us).

The grandfather claimed:

Certo, loro parlano Francese, ma io parlo come so parlare, come voglio parlare. E mi capiscono, mi capiscono.(Sure, they speak French, but I speak as I know, as I want to speak. And they understand me, they understand me.)

8.2.3 Parent Generation report

Pierre, Françoise and Marguerite's parents

When asked if they would like their children to speak Italian, Paolo and Eleonore, both together, emphatically answered "*Oui, oui, oui* (yes, yes, yes). They continued explaining that they had just chosen a secondary school for Marguerite where Italian was offered. Apparently, for the first two years of secondary education in France, schools offer only one second language, which is usually English. But in the school chosen by Eleonore and Paolo, Italian is offered together with English from the first year of secondary school. The choice was dictated by the parents' desire to pass on some of the Italian cultural background. It is certainly not for any utilitarian reason. According to Paolo,

Italian is not very useful in France. English is indisputably so; but Italian is "*una lingua da intellettuali* (a language for intellectuals)". Also, he continued, "*parlando Italiano si può capire meglio il francese* (speaking Italian may help understand French better)". And he reported a few examples where he had helped his wife, a native French speaker, to understand the meaning of some French words whose roots, he recognised as Italian. However, as a family they did not speak Italian. This was partly because at the beginning of his marriage to Eleonore, there was conflict between the young bride and her-in-laws.

Abitavamo nella stessa casa e...mia madre parlava francese e anche mio padre ...allora meglio di adesso...quindi non c'erano problemi; ma quello che ha fatto un po' male poi, è l'esuberanza di mia sorella e la volontà - come si dice - quasi imperiosa di mia madre di vederla parlare italiano - ha fatto che si è ritirata. (We lived in the same house and ...my mother could speak French and also my father, then better than now...there were no problems; but what went wrong was my sister's exuberance (sic) and the will - how do you say it - almost imperious of my mother to see her [Eleonore] speak Italian - this has made her retreat.).

Eleonore agreed adding that her sister-in-law was 'too much of a professor'. As a result, Eleonore did not use Italian with her or other-in-laws. Nor she used it with her own children. But Italian, said Paolo, is "*la lingua dell'amour*" when no one was there to correct or interfere. Eleonore laughed and confirmed that she understood Italian very well. She had studied Spanish at school and found many similarities with the two languages. Furthermore, living with her in-laws for most of her married life, she had been constantly exposed to spoken Italian and Sicilian dialect. When Eleonore communicated with them she used French. When they spoke to her they used Italian and everyone understood. It is only

when the father in-law spoke "dialetto stretto (pure dialect)" that she sometimes did not understand.

Emma's parent

When in France, I did not meet Emma's father. Maria, her mother, identified herself as a 'single mother'. However, I learnt from Maria that the father (who is from Italian descent and speaks Italian fluently) visited Emma often and they spent time together. Also, Maria, during the course of interviews or informal conversation, reported that Emma's father often spoke Italian with the child. Maria was the person that used the Italian language more than anyone else in the extended family. When talking about their language use, she maintained a clear division between Sicilian dialect and Standard Italian. Sicilian dialect is the language she used with her parents when she could not (because parents may not fully understand her) or when she did not want to use French. Standard Italian ("*mi aiuta a guadagnare la vita* (helps me earn my living)" was the language she uses for work (Maria teaches Italian) and, sometimes, for fun (e.g when holidaying in Italy, she says). Back at home, in France, she used it mostly when she worked and with friends who could understand it. I asked: "*In preferenza al Francese se i tuoi amici parlano anche il Francese?* (In preference to French, if your friends speak French too)" Maria answered: "*Non in preferenza, no. In preferenza no.* (No, not in preference. Not in preference)". However, there were cases, she continued, when one of her friends may prefer to speak Italian. Asked what language she used more frequently at home with Emma and the rest of the family, she answered that she usually speaks French with Emma and dialect or French with her parents and brother.

Ma visto che ho deciso che mia figlia deve arrivare al bilinguismo in fretta, posso anche parlare in italiano [con Emma] - in italiano - scelta conscia - e non

soltanto scelta di passione - perché a volte quando è passione può anche venire fuori l'italiano (but since I have decided that my daughter must reach bilingualism in a hurry, I may also speak in Italian [with Emma] - in Italian - a conscious choice - and not only a choice of passion- because at times, when it is passion, Italian may come out).

Italian was the language in which she could express anger better – “when Emma hears me speak Italian, Maria stated, she knows that that is it, no more fooling around”. For Maria, Italian was also the language of love. She confided that she spoke Italian with Jean-Philippe, Emma's father. Although, she reflected, it may have had a lot to do with the topics they were discussing at the time. For example, if it was related to Italian business or Art or they had read an article on an Italian newspaper that they wanted to discuss, then they would naturally switch to Italian. Jean-Philippe speaks Italian and English with Emma, since he has lived for extended periods of time both in Italy and England. Maria confided that when Emma was a baby he would sing children's songs in English for her.

Asked why she is determined to make Emma bilingual, she argued that bilingualism is enrichment for the speakers. She was also convinced that a person who is bilingual can easily master other languages. She offered as evidence for this the literature she had read on bilingualism, as well as the example of her brother and herself who, having been exposed to bilingualism all of their life (from birth to nine years of age in Sicily with Sicilian dialect and Italian), had no trouble at all in learning French "*perfettamente* (perfectly)" when the family migrated to France. Maria is determined to pass on her daughter the gift of bilingualism. She argued that bilingualism

è una scelta intellettuale...un arricchimento - bilinguismo è una scelta fatta dai genitori (it is an intellectual choice, an enrichment - bilingualism is a choice made by the parents).

Maria quoted as an example a couple, friends of hers. Giovanni, the father, always spoke in Italian to his daughter, and Pascal, the mother, spoke in French to her. Giulia (12), a good friend of Emma, is fully bilingual "*e sta imparando in modo eccellente il tedesco* (and is learning German, excellently). Maria also stressed that she chose Italian not because it is the family's heritage but for general cultural reasons. On the other hand, she admitted, perhaps her background may be a factor in the choice. She elaborates:

Cioè, a scegliere - la scelta si pone: o fai italiano come lingua seconda o fai spagnolo. Ma scusa - spagnolo dico' NO' - quella lì è la scelta sentimentale. Perché spagnolo se sono italiana? Non che non voglia che [Emma] studi spagnolo, ma prima quella tua - quella del tuo passato. (That is, choosing - if the choice is: you study Italian as second language or study Spanish. But, excuse me -Spanish I say NO - that is a sentimental choice - Why Spanish if I am Italian? It is not that I don't want her [Emma] to study Spanish, but first study your own, the one from your past).

At that time of data collection Maria said she was waiting for Emma to overcome some difficulties she had with her literacy in French before she would go ahead with the program she had for Emma's bilingualism. She said that for the time being she was trying to let Emma only hear Italian. She explained

Impongo una comprensione passiva e vorrei che arrivasse pian pianino a parlare, perché altrimenti non ci arriva (I impose a passive comprehension

and would like her to arrive slowly to speaking it, because, otherwise, she won't get there).

She will not let Emma deal yet with any formal learning of the language. That will come later, when she is convinced that Emma is ready.

8.2.4 Summary

The domains of Italian use for these CG informants in France are the Home/Family and Education. For one of them and then once only Italian could be used at work. Therefore, the data indicate that the workplace is a potential domain for Italian use, a potentiality not realised very often; the education institution is seen as providing (and supplementing) Italian use with its formal teaching; the home and (extended) family domain, with its intertwining of relationships among the three generations, is the setting where use of Italian is expected.

Table 8.2 Domains of language use of CG informants: summary of self-and family's report.

(00) = age at the time of data collection

H = Italian heard S = Italian spoken

These CG informants are not presented in family groups as the US and Australian CG to highlight the diverse responses to the use of the Italian the three siblings in the one family have.

INFORMANTS' NAMES	WHEN	WHERE	WITH WHOM	WHY
Emma (9)	Present time	In own home, Grandparents' home (H, sometimes S).	Grandparents, Parents, some friends (H, sometimes S)	Grandparents and Parents often speak to her in Italian.
	Future expectations	In own home, Grandparents' home, school, homes of extended family/friends in Italy. (H & S)	Grandparents, Parents, some friends, teacher/s school peers, family/friends in Italy. (H & S)	Mother would like to implement a plan to make Emma bilingual.
Marguerite (11)	Present time	In own home, Grandparents' home (H only).	Grandparents, Parents, (H only)	Grandparents sometimes speak to her in Italian.
	Future expectations	In Grandparents' home (H), school (H & S)	Grandparents, teacher/s school peers (H & S)	Parents would like Italian language to be part of Marguerite's formal education.
Françoise	Present time	In own home, Grandparents' home (H only).	Grandparents, (H only)	Grandparents sometimes speak to her in Italian.
	Future expectations	In Grandparents' home (H only)	Grandparents, (H only)	Françoise considers her Italian studying/ speaking days over
Pierre	Present time	In own home, Grandparents' home, when on holiday in Italy (H & S).	Grandparents, friends in Italy (H & S & written)	Grandparents speak to him in Italian. For Pierre Italian was interesting in his school days and still is.
	Future expectations	In Grandparents' home (H & S)	Grandparents, friends in Italy (H & S)	He thinks that in future he may have less opportunity to use it in France, but he intends to continue his trips to Italy.

8.3 Behaviour through language

(*What and how* do CG informants use Italian)

In this section the three-generation reports based on the data related to the behaviour through language of the informants are discussed, as well as the data based on my direct observation, diary keeping and recording of data of the communicative interactions among the three generations. The results of the analysis of the language activities undertaken by the French CG are reported.

8.3.1 Child Generation self-report

Emma said that she speaks only a little Italian. However, she was confident that soon she would be able to speak better thanks to the trip to Italy mum had planned. Emma is very eager to meet the same-age cousin in Italy. She had met her briefly a couple of years ago and they had had fun together.

Marguerite said she does not use Italian. Perhaps, she would use it next year when she began taking Italian at high school.

Françoise did not use Italian willingly. She said she could, but not fluently. At the time of the interview she was studying English and Spanish at college. She said that she often confused Spanish words with Italian ones.

Pierre said he does not speak Italian often. However, he reported, when he was studying it at school he used it often and rather well. He says that he enjoyed studying Italian, but languages are not his passion. He is a technician and definitely likes to deal with technical staff. Pierre was not very confident about his writing of Italian. He was convinced that he had problems with the grammar and he thought the construction of Italian phrases was very difficult.

Reading Italian, he said, "*è piacevole* (is pleasant)", but writing was a troubling exercise. When Pierre read again what he had written in Italian, he never liked it.

8.3.2 Grandparent Generation report

The grandparents did not have any expectations in regard to their grandchildren' use of Italian. Whatever they said, however they said it, was good enough. As long as they could communicate with them, whether their grandchildren used Italian or not, whether they used it correctly or not, it did not worry them.

8.3.3 Parent Generation report

Pierre, Françoise and Marguerite's parents

Pierre, Françoise and Marguerite's parents did not comment on the quality of their children's Italian. They knew that Pierre and Françoise could communicate in Italian when they wanted to. Marguerite probably would not be able to, they said, but she could understand.

Emma's parent

Emma's mother reported that at times she used Italian when speaking to Emma. Emma mostly answered in French but when she used Italian it was strongly French accented. However, the mother insisted that for the time being she was only interested in giving Emma receptive skills of the language and she did that by talking to her in Italian. The mother was confident that Emma's Italian productive skills would come in time.

8.3.4 Researcher's report

With regard to language contact situations, in section 2.2.3, as well as in 3.2.2, 3.2.3.3 and 6.3.4 has been discussed how the original migrants speech changes to reflect their personality, interests and experiences in their migration countries when viewed from the time depth of at least three generations.

The French GPG's speech, like its counterparts in the US and Australia, has reached the 'stage of pidginization' due to language attrition. The influence of the national language on the GPG speech was heard in the prosodic features, such as stress and intonation (i.e raising tone at the end of interjections and pronunciation of some consonants –particularly the "c" and "r" or shifting the stress in words). Also noticeable are the lexical transfers, which are integrated phonetically and morphologically. For example, integrated nouns were assigned gender and number as in the Italian grammatical system ("il giampone" and "la bulangeria"(Ital. pron,) for *jambon* and *boulangerie*) and verbs acquired the inflections of the Italian verbs conjugations.

Therefore, the CG in France hears a variety of French-Italian CL, which shares with their American and Australian cousins. However, the grandparents in France appeared to have a lot less influence on the use of Italian by their grandchildren than their US and Australian counterparts. The person who had always had a great influence on the Italian language use of the CG and, indeed, the whole family is Aunt Maria.

Maria speaks up-to-date Standard Italian. Hence, the CG have the "original stratum" (first stage of the Gonzo & Saltarelli *continuum*) as their Italian input. However, in regard to the CG use of Italian, Maria's attitude to its "correct" use

has been a double edged sword. As Johnston (1976: 181) reported, strong insistence to use the CL on the part of parents or relatives may lead to rebellion on the part of the children and, as in this case, any other person involved (cf. Eleonor's reaction to using the CL in 8.2.3).

Maria's attitude has been received with different degrees of resistance by the CG informants. Pierre (24) has always found Italian interesting. At the time he was studying it at school, he was appreciative of his Auntie's help with Italian assignments, although somewhat weary of her expectations of high proficiency when using Italian. After completing school, he had continued the use of Italian with pen-pals and holidaying in Italy. However, Françoise (20) and Marguerite (11) openly declared that they will not speak Italian with or in front of Maria. They understand most of what is said, whichever the variety of the Italian used, but refuse to speak any variety of it. Françoise (20) only used Italian with me on a one-to-one basis. What she used was free of the language contact phenomena which characterised the CL of the grandparents. Instead she drew from other foreign languages she was studying at school (Spanish and English).

In regard to Emma (9), at the time of data collection, it was interesting to note that Maria was not insisting on any kind of use of Italian by her daughter. As reported above, she was keen for Emma to continue to develop her receptive skills, reserving the development of the productive skills for later

To sum up, the French CG is aware of the existence of several varieties of Italian. They hear and comprehend them. However, if and when they use Italian, they tend to use its Standard variety according to the proficiency gained to that point. These CG informants could not be described as being at any stage of "involution", as the speech of the third generation individuals described in

the Gonzo & Saltarelli *continuum*. Two of them have chosen not to speak Italian, or to speak it only on selected occasions, so that I cannot place them on the *continuum*. The other two, one due to personal life choices (Pierre) and the other due to her mother's choice and planning, are on the way to a new phase of "evolution" in their use of Italian.

8.3.5 Summary

All four CG French informants appear to have a degree of knowledge of Italian. All reports are in agreement that the competence in Italian among the four varies from comprehension only (Marguerite), to being able to use it when necessary, although not fluently (Françoise, Emma), to using it freely and comprehending it very well (Pierre).

8.3.6 Language activities

The analysis of the language activities undertaken by the French CG follows the same order and the same procedure as that conducted with the US and the Australian CG.

8.3.6.1 Language activities for the 8 to 12 years of age informants

In France two informants belong to this age group: Emma (9) and Marguerite (11). Emma and Marguerite conducted the activities separately. Their performance in undertaking the activity is described separately.

(For extended list of activities see Table 5.2)

Description of performance: Emma

(1) **Listening comprehension** (assessed through narrative.)

Step 1: Listening to key-words - checking understanding

Emma readily understood all but two words. Her mother helped to explain the two words about whose meaning Emma was not sure.

Step 2: Listening to the narrative

Listening to the story, Emma recognised all the key-words discussed in step 1.

Step 3: Retelling the story

After Emma listened to the story once more she assured me that she had understood the story. Therefore, I asked Emma to retell it. Without hesitations, Emma did so – in French. She did not use any Italian at all. Later she drew a picture that confirmed her understanding of the story, but the caption was written in French.

(2) Oral production

Oral description of twelve sequential pictures related to daily routine.

Drawing parallels with personal daily routine.

Step 1: Instructions given

I instructed Emma to use Italian in the description of the pictures.

Step 2: Describing the pictures using Italian followed by informal interview discussing daily activities

It is clear from the way Emma conducted the activity that she is not in the habit of using Italian for extended conversation/exchanges. Once again she showed a good comprehension of spoken Italian, but this was not matched by her production. To cope with the demands of communicating in Italian, she used the strategy of repeating my questions (or part of them) to check understanding. She would then begin her answers with one or two Italian words, but unable to continue, she would finish her sentence/s in French.

This happened especially during the informal interview when she used two three-word sentences in Italian to answer the questions. Her responses were

modelled on the language I used when posing the questions. When it was not possible for her to use any language from the questions heard, she would revert to French. Emma's base language was French with many lexical transfers from Italian, a sort of Italian ethnolect of French resembling the Italian ethnolect of English used by her cousins in Australia and the USA

Nouns featured *prominently* in Emma's Italian speech. They were often used as single words or, sometimes, with the definite or indefinite articles. She used common kinship names, eg, *mamma* (mum), *sorella* (sister), *zia* (auntie); numbers (*sette & una*); days of week (*martedì*), greetings, names of house items. Emma also used several verbs in Italian: *è* (is) *sona* (rings), *dorma* (sleeps), *comincia* (begins)', *va* (goes), *mangia* (eats), *parte* (leaves) *parlare* (to speak). Except for one adverb, *completamente* (completely), other parts of speech, such as adjectives, conjunctions, discourse markers were not present in Emma's Italian speech. They were transferred from French.

Probably because of the grammatical similarity between French and Italian, Emma was aware of article/gender assignment. For example, she used the noun 'giovannotto' (young man) always with the article (either definite or indefinite). However she used it haphazardly. The appropriate article/s in standard Italian is "il giovannotto" or "un giovannotto". Each time she had to refer to the boy in the pictures, she used a different article and noun ending (i.e. "una giovanotte" "il giovanotte" "le giovanotte" "il giovanotta". She was also aware of conjugations of verbs. However, as for the articles, she was unsure of the appropriate endings of the verb conjugation and often used the endings for the third person when she talked about herself. She used the markers for tenses (both in the present tense and, for the past auxiliary- plus- participle morpheme) grammatically.

Another feature of her tense use was morphological integration, shown when she added the Italian marker for tense after the French stem - such as:

- ◇ 'reveiglia (he wakes up - Standard Italian: si sveglia)',
- ◇ 'reveigliato (he woke up - Standard Italian: svegliato)'.

An example of the above in context is:

- ◇ *ah et non è completamente reveigliato (he is not completely awake)*" (a CG version of the French GPG's CL?).

To sum up, Emma could not be described as a fluent speaker of Italian. However, by drawing on her language repertoire, she was able to complete her Italian language activities reasonably well.

Description of performance: Marguerite

Marguerite did not attempt any of the language activities. I took her through all the steps of the activities as I had with Emma. But when I asked (in Italian) if she had understood the story on tape, the answer was: "NO". I asked if she could try to describe the twelve picture using Italian. She described the pictures in *French*.

I persisted and I asked questions related to her daily life (following the description of the pictures). She answered in French. Marguerite knew that I could not understand French very well. The undertaking of the activities, as with all the other informants, was recorded. When I had the tape transcribed and translated the data showed that Marguerite understood all the questions I asked her in Italian, but she gave all her answers in French. Therefore, whilst I have no doubts about her comprehension of the Italian language, it is not possible for me to assess her productive skills.

8.3.6.2 Language activities for the informants 13 years of age and over

In France two informants belong to this level: Françoise (20) and Pierre (24).

Description of performance: Françoise

(1) Listening comprehension

Françoise listened to the story. She understood it. She read the questions in Italian rather fluently and gave her yes/no questions correctly.

(2) Reading comprehension

I explained the task in Italian. Françoise understood. She performed the whole task well. At one point, since Françoise was silent and reading for a long time, I asked: "Capisci? (Do you understand?)" Françoise answered: "No problem".

(3) Oral production

Françoise did not produce any spontaneous Italian speaking. She tried to use Italian for the language activities but often she reverted to French or, in a few instances, to English or Spanish

Example:

Françoise: C'è un uomo, uuh ... [more than 5 seconds pause].

(there is a man. Uuh ...pause)

Inter.: Seduto?

(sitting?)

Françoise: Seduto ... *d'espagnol je fais de l'espagnol*

(sitting ... Spanish I am doing it in Spanish)

Inter.: Quello che viene ...

(whatever comes out...)

Françoise: Seduto davanti- *je pense que c'est espagnol eh... su casa?*

(Sitting in front –I think that’s Spanish ehh...- his house)

Inter.: Siii...

(yees...)

Françoise: euhm, e ...

(euhm, and ...)

Inter.: E’ giorno o notte?

(Is it day or night?)

Françoise: *De notte ... et vede extraterrestre and the ‘proppetion’ is afraid*

(by night ... and sees an alien and the [proprietor?] *is afraid.*

Inter.: ha paura, sì, sì ..

(He’s afraid , yes, yes ..)

Françoise: *e the extraterrestre ruba ...voilà la ville - e the city*

bruciano. The man that vede hanno paura delle to... pi e...

(and *the extraterrestrial ... steals ...that’s it the city- and the*

city are burning. The man that sees are afraid of the ra ..ts

and ...

The most prominent feature of Françoise's use of language was that, to complete her activities, she freely made use of her entire linguistic repertoire derived from several languages. This included some nouns and a few Italian verbs. Other nouns were from English and several prepositions from Spanish and French. The result was multilingual sentences that somehow achieved the purpose of communicating meaning in that particular interactive situation.

Françoise managed to construct Italian sentences that were grammatical. For example, conjugation of verbs and subject agreement was appropriately chosen, nouns were singular, plural, feminine, masculine, as was required, the adjectives matched accordingly, also the prepositions and articles in Italian

were mostly used appropriately. This indicated a formal knowledge of the language and strict monitoring to use the “right” forms.

(4) Written production

When asked to write the letter, or anything else if she preferred, Françoise answered: "*Non, mais de façon j'ai fait six mois et c'est fini* (no, anyway I finished. I did six months [of Italian at school] and it's finished)'. Therefore I had to accept her decision. Also any kind of small talk in Italian and informal interview had to be ruled out.

Description of performance: Pierre

(1) Listening comprehension

Pierre listened to the story. He then read the questions silently and answered all of them correctly. It was clear that he comprehended the oral text in full and that he could read and comprehend the Italian written text very well.

(2) Reading comprehension

I explained the activity in Italian. Pierre understood and immediately began. He read aloud and questioned some of the words. His questions reflected the fact that he had studied the language formally.

(3) Oral production

Pierre's Italian speech was fluent with only brief hesitations from time to time when searching for words. He said that he didn't use Italian very often at that particular point in time. However, without any difficulties, he was able to converse in Italian and conduct all the Italian linguistic tasks, both receptive and productive. His choice of words at times revealed that Italian was neither

his first nor his dominant language. Some nouns he used were transferred from French and integrated into Italian. When he did this, he often corrected himself as in the following examples:

1. butta fuoco alla villa ...¹² alla città ..., pardon

Closest Standard Ital. equivalent : mette a fuoco la città..., scusa -
'sets fire to the city..., sorry'

2. che ha visto le.. le.. le..aeronavi con gli acchiali, i binoculari

Closest Standard Ital. Equivalent:che ha visto i dischi volanti con il
cannocchiale.

'who has seen the flying saucers with the binoculars.'

3. l'o..l'o..l'ortografo non è un problema, ma però la grammatica, come si dice... anche all'orale ...è molto tortuosa

Closest Standard Ital. equivalent: l'ortografia non è un problema, ma la grammatica ... come si dice, anche all'orale è molto difficile.

'the spelling is not a problem, but the grammar ...how do you say it... even in the oral, is very tortuous.'

He also often used a ubiquitous "fa" (literal translations "makes")" as multi-purpose verb when stuck for a more precise word, for example:

4. fa l'osservazione

Closest Standard Ital. Equivalent: osserva

'observes'

5. Questo fa un'idea –

Closest Standard Ital. equivalent: Questo gli dà un'idea –

'This gives him an idea.'

¹² Two dots: short hesitation in speech
three dots: two/three seconds pause

Altogether, Pierre could express himself very clearly in Italian and his speech was easy to comprehend. He also showed grammatical competence in Italian. The agreement of the subject/verb/object was almost always appropriate. The same can be said of the agreement of gender and number with article/ nouns/ adjective. His use of tenses was grammatical, although he struggled with the choice of auxiliary needed to make the perfect tense. Choice of prepositions also caused some problems.

The Italian prosody of Pierre's speech had strong French interferences. For example, the stress of the words was often on the wrong syllable, eg: '*topi*' – with the stress on the last syllable instead of the first as it is pronounced in Italian '*tòpi*'; with '*idea*' the stress is shifted to the first syllable- instead than the second '*idèa*'; he pronounced '*davànti* (second-last syllable stress) as '*davantì*' (stress on the last syllable) and '*grammatica*' instead of '*grammàtica*' and etc. The vowels were not pronounced very clearly. The consonants were generally pronounced well. In conclusion, when Pierre spoke Italian he could be understood without problems. However, his Italian speech had definite characteristics of “foreignness” that clearly allocated it as Pierre's second (or additional) language to French, his first language.

(4) Written production

Pierre wrote a short letter in Italian, addressing it to his uncle and aunt in Italy - who are also his godparents. He also wrote a short note in Italian to me explaining why he had hand-written the letter and the note rather than using the computer.

The letter begins with an appropriate Italian language opening for a social letter. The sentence construction and paragraphing is correct and the cohesive devices are simple but appropriate. It closes off with a slight elaboration of a familiar formulaic expression. Errors are mostly in the orthography, eg. not showing stress where it is required in the written form; using the wrong vowels (eg. *Affettuasamente* for *Affettuosamente* (affectionately); never using double consonants where appropriate.

The note addressed to me was very informal. It was written with less monitoring of forms and there were many more mistakes of spelling, grammar and a couple of lexical transfer from French, eg. 'office' instead of 'ufficio' (office) referring to his office, 'salutazione' instead of 'saluti' (greetings). However, as it was the case with his Italian speech, Pierre's writing was comprehensible and achieved the task of communicating the intended message.

(5) Focused interview

Pierre was the only CG informants with whom it was possible to have a conversation in Italian. He was quite fluent, although he often corrected himself or asked *come si dice?* (how do you say it?) or *si dice così?* (is this how you say it?). Often he did not need help to find the words he was looking for. He would remember them and use them before I could reply.

Table 8.3 French CG informants' proficiency in using the Standard Italian

(00) = age at the time of data collection;

Standard Italian = SI - A.N.A. = Activity Not Attempted - Familiar topics (FTs); Expanded Familiar Topics (EFTs); Unfamiliar Topics (UTs); (For description of definition of topics see 5.2.4.1.5).

Informant's Name	Receptive Skills		Productive Skills	
	Listening Comprehension	Reading Comprehension	Speaking	Writing
Emma (9)	Comprehension of SI in discussion of Fts.	Shows comprehension of single words and simple texts in SI.	Can communicate when using FTs. Speech contains instances of transference from French to SI and frequent codeswitching.	A.N.A..
Marguerite (11)	Comprehension of SI related to Fts.	Preferred not to attempt this activity.	A.N.A..	A.N.A.
Françoise (20)	Very good comprehension of SI related to FTs, EFTs & some Uts.	Reads fluently and shows comprehension of written text.	Uses SI hesitantly - utilizes successfully her multilingual repertoire to communicate.	A.N.A.
Pierre (24)	Excellent comprehension of SI in discussion of FTs, EFTs & Uts.	Reads fluently and shows excellent comprehension of written text.	Speaks fluently and has good grammatical competence of SI.	Writes simply in SI but manages to communicate the intended message well.

8.3.6.3 Summary

The informants' performance in the language activities is consistent with all reports and that is:

All four CG French informants can function in Italian language with different degrees of competence, ranging from being able to communicate easily and well in Italian to communicating hesitantly or, as in Marguerite's case, not at all.

In their self-reports the informants and their family tended to underestimate their competence in Italian. In self-assessing it, they took into consideration mostly their productive skills and not their receptive ones, which for these four informants can be described as good or very good. This is possibly what sets these informants apart from foreign language learners in schools. The informants display in their performance a level of comprehension and capacity of expression (subject/ verb conjugations /auxiliary/ past participle) that is not reached easily by those learning Italian in the classroom, especially at beginners level. This can be ascribed to the situation in which the informants live. To a greater or lesser extent Italian is part of their everyday life. To activate the knowledge a combination of factors must come together as shown by the data in Pierre's case who used Italian at home – learned it at school – pursued it for personal interest as well as for academic results –kept correspondence with Italian pen-pals - visited Italy. When this takes place the advancement of the Italian language knowledge and use is ensured.

8.4 Behaviour towards language

(Identity and attitudes towards the use of Italian)

8.4.1 Report of interview with the Child Generation

What national/cultural identity do these CG informants claim for themselves?

The four informants defined themselves as 'French'.

Do the CG informants consider Italian as part of the cultural heritage they will endeavour to transmit to following generations?

These four informants considered both Italian and Sicilian dialect as the language/s of their grandparents and they recognised them as something that was part of their family. As for the following generations, the older informants believed that it would be almost inevitable that their children will speak more than one language. English and Italian were very likely to be the languages they would be learning. English "*perché è ormai indispensabile* (because it is indispensable), Italian partly because of their cultural heritage and partly for the ease with which they would be able to come and go from Italy taking advantage of the family members resident there.

Do/did the CG informants take any action to ensure the active use of Italian?

Emma said that she would like to use Italian more and the summer trip to Italy could help her to do just that. Marguerite was aware of her parents' plans for her to study Italian and she accepted it. Françoise decided that she did not want to continue to study Italian after six months and at the time of the interview was not using any Italian at all. Pierre studied it for six years at school, actively pursued its use in school and out of school for a while, but at the time of data collection he was using it only sometimes at home or with his future in-laws.

Pierre did not have any immediate plans that would allow him to use Italian more often.

To be able to assess the cultural and linguistic environment in which the CG was brought up, I questioned the GPG and PG about their sense of identity, their use of and attitudes to Italian.

8.4.2 Report of the Grandparent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these GPG informants claim for themselves?

To this question the grandmother answered:

Oh, io mi sento francese, - perchè la mia vita la sto passando meglio qua che in Italia. (Oh, I feel French - because my life has been better here than in Italy).

However, they do not have French citizenship and she said:

Rimpiangiamo questa cosa! Non l'abbiamo fatto per ignoranza, perchè pensavamo che non c'era bisogno, ormai è tardi, maaa... rimpiango. (We regret this! We did not do it because we were ignorant, but because we thought we did not need it; now it is too late, but...I regret it.)

Do GPG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

The grandmother stated that she had always wanted her children to speak French and to speak French to her from the beginning of their stay in France. She asserted that she could understand them and answered them either in

Italian, Sicilian dialect or French. She herself, hated speaking Italian in public.

To the question:

E se tu eri fuori con qualcuno e parlavi italiano, ti sentivi libera di parlare italiano, fuori...sull'autobus...? (And if you were out with somebody speaking Italian, did you feel free to speak Italian, outside...on the bus...?)

she answered:

E' stata una cosa, te lo sto dicendo, che non mi PIA-CE-VA, pure che io m'incontravo con qualcuno parlare ITALIANO... e non mi piace ancora stesso... qualche volta m'incontravo con mia nipote e mia nipote aveva quella abitudine, e ce L'HA ANCORA, che parla randazzesa. Io quasi non le dava ascolto. Non mi piace, non mi piace... (It was something, I'm telling you, that I did NOT LIKE; even if I met someone who spoke Italian...and I still do not like it now...sometime I would meet my niece and my niece had that habit, and she STILL HAS IT, that she speaks Randazzese (their town's dialect). I almost ignored her. I don't like it, I don't like it...)

then I asked:

E se era italiano invece del dialetto ti sarebbe dispiaciuto lo stesso? (And if it were Italian instead of the Dialect would you also have minded?)

Her answer was:

Sì, pure che era italiano (Yes, even if it was Italian.)

She explained that if "you knew how to behave" no-one would know that you were different. This was important for her because at the beginning of her stay in France some people were not so welcoming of migrants. But, she reported, she knows that this happens everywhere in the world and in France was not that bad after all.

Do the GPG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children and grandchildren?

The grandparents did not appear to value their heritage language in any particular way, although it was still the major language of communication in the family.

Do/did the GPG informants take any action to ensure active use of Italian with their children and grandchildren?

The answer to the above is negative. As reported before, for them the language to use was French, therefore the children had to speak French first and foremost. The grandmother also confirmed what the children had reported earlier: they understand her regardless of what she uses, but she tries to speak to them in French to ensure that they continued to communicate with her. However, she commented:

Certo il mio francese non è troppo buono, così mischio un pochino. (But my French is not too good, so I mix a little).

Therefore the conclusion would be that as long as the grandparents can communicate with their grandchildren, they did not particularly mind if the children did not use Italian.

8.4.3 Report of the Parent Generation interview

What national/cultural identity do these PG informants claim for themselves?

For Paolo this was a straightforward question to answer. His laconic answer was:

Un francese in più non significa necessariamente un Italiano in meno. (One more Frenchman does not necessarily mean one Italian less).

Maria began her answer by saying that she pinpoints her identity awareness crisis at about third year of university when she was trying to resolve *il problema della doppia appartenenza* (the issue of dual belonging). Pushed to elaborate she gave a lengthy answer, part of which is cited below.

La Francia è un paese particolare. Il paese dei diritti dell'uomo, il paese del cittadino europeo, definito da Montesque, definito da Voltaire e io mi sento completamente in questa situazione. Dunque non parlo nè di terra d'adozione nè di altro. Io sono qui perché sono cittadina del mondo, perché sono cittadina europea. Mi riconosco una cultura europea in una particolare situazione -Siculo-italiana- latina - ecc. - come latina mi riconosco così. Io devo molto all'Italia, devo molto alla Francia. Non sono capace ... cioè ... rifiuto di entrare nel discorso dell'etnicità, della differenza del gruppo, come la definiscono gli americani, gli anglo-sassoni.(France is a very particular nation. The nation of human rights, the nation of the European citizen, defined by Montesque, defined by Voltaire and I feel totally at ease in this situation. For that reason, I do not speak either of land of adoption not anything else. I am here because I am a citizen of the world, because I am a European citizen (speaker's stress – spoken with higher and emphatic tone of voice).

I identify with a European culture in a particular situation -Sicilian, Italian, Latin- etc. As a Latin I identify myself in this way. I owe much to Italy, I owe much to France. I am not able to ...actually ...I refuse to enter the ethnicity debate, of the difference of the group, as it is defined by the Americans and Anglo-Saxons.)

Asked to explain how she understood the way Anglo-Saxons viewed the concept of ethnicity she replied:

Lo capisco così: devo continuare a vivere nel gruppo - e secondo le leggi del gruppo - in cui sono nata. Devo dire che ho delle radici e devo mostrare la differenza. Allora dico NO - io non voglio ragionare così.

.....le mie radici sono le mie radici. Senza radici non puoi vivere. Ma sono anche fiera del resto. Di tutto il tronco e quello che viene sopra. (I understand it this way: I must continue to live in the group - and according to the laws of the group - in which I was born. I must say that I have roots and must show the difference. So I say NO - I don't want to reason in this way. ...My roots are my roots. Without roots you cannot live. But I am also proud of the rest, of the whole trunk and whatever comes on top of that.)

The conclusion appears to be that while these PG informants do not have hang-ups about their Sicilian or Italian background, they certainly want to be known as French and even better "cittadini europei " or " cittadini del mondo" (which they seem to think they can achieve best by being French, though of Italian origin).

Do PG informants use/used Italian in the host country?

Maria and Paolo speak fluently both Sicilian dialect and Italian. But their

principal language is French. Their feelings and attitudes towards the Sicilian dialect and the Italian language have gone through a lifetime of changes that, especially for Maria, have at times been troubling. When she first arrived in France at the age of 9 she did not speak any French at all. She was put in a first grade class with slow learners. This was the extent of the help offered by the school to newcomers. There was no special program for children who were learning French as a second language. However, Maria insisted that this did not cause any problem at all. She claimed:

Sono arrivata in agosto e ad ottobre sono andata a scuola - ed ho imparato subito. (I arrived in August and in October I went to school - and I was learning immediately).

And although she admitted that there were times when she did not understand what was happening in the classroom (and she offered some instances laughingly), she declared that she was totally in love with the French language (as observed in Chapter Four, these informants must have absorbed immediately the feelings of the national French people for their language). She reported that she forgot completely Italian, not the dialect, she specified, (which she continued to use with her parents) - but Italian was forgotten (cf. Bettoni 1989) until she reached secondary schooling - the Lyceum. She proudly claimed that she was always the first of the class in all her subjects, but French was her major strength.

When she was in secondary school, following the recommendation of her French teacher, she took Italian as a school subject. She commented

Se io parlo l'Italiano adesso - e non lo parlo come mio fratello - è proprio perchè

l'ho imparato al liceo. Questo è sicuro. Ma prima era completamente dimenticato. (If I speak Italian now - and I don't speak it like my brother - it is because I learnt it at the lyceum. This is for sure. But before that time it was absolutely forgotten).

Further on, at university, she chose Italian as one of her majors for teaching. She majored in French and Italian Literature. After travelling to Italy, she thought she might go back to live there permanently. Eventually she returned to France and her passion for literature and languages was then shared equally between French and Italian.

Maria had very strong views about the “contamination” the language of communication in the family had undergone. She refers to the variety that in this thesis has been defined as CL or the phenomena of language contact. She acknowledged that she used it herself with her parents, but that it was a most “bizarre” variety.

Paolo's rapport with the three languages in his life (Sicilian dialect, Italian, French) is not described with the same colourful and dramatic tones used by Maria. He simply stated that he remembers not understanding French; how it became easier to understand it in a fairly short time; how French became the family's most used language. He reported:

A casa parlavo ancora l'Italiano, poco, - fino a quando non parlavo ancora bene il francese, parlavo l'italiano. Poi -credo che è quasi diventato uno scherzo - perchè per imparare a parlare il francese, parlavamo sempre il francese, e poi quando abbiamo imparato il francese, abbiamo continuato a parlare il francese. (At home I still spoke Italian, a little - until I did not speak French well, I

spoke Italian. Then, - I think that it almost became a joke - because to learn to speak French, we would always speak French, and after, when we had learned French, we continued to speak French).

His communication pattern with his parents was very similar to Maria's.

In conclusion, although Paolo may not speak Italian as competently as Maria does (he never studied Italian formally at school), both Maria and Paolo have a rather positive attitude towards the Italian and the Sicilian dialect and use them fluently and appropriately according to their communicative needs in France.

Do the PG informants consider Italian as a part of their ethnic/cultural heritage that they endeavour to transmit to their children?

Both Paolo and Maria claimed that their Italian heritage is certainly one of the factors why they want their children to learn the Italian language. Paolo rated that factor as one of the most decisive. As it has been reported previously, the choice of the secondary school for Marguerite was made on the basis that they offered Italian, alongside English, from the first year.

Maria firmly explained that she wants her daughter to be bilingual. As for the reason why she chooses Italian as the second language, she says:

Dunque, io non posso offrire un'altra lingua a mia figlia e le offro quella mia, che è la lingua materna e voglio che cresca nel bilinguismo. perchè con il bilinguismo conquisterà più facilmente tutte le altre lingue. E anche per scelta culturale... (Well, I cannot offer my daughter another language and I want her to grow up bilingual, because being bilingual she will master all other languages more easily. And also as a cultural choice ...)

First of all, in Maria's opinion, the choice of Italian is an intellectual and a cultural enrichment choice. Then, there is the sentimental or heritage factor. If a language had to be chosen as a second language for Emma, then there was no doubt that it had to be Italian. For example, she said, if we were Spanish I would insist that Emma study Spanish or, if we were Arabs, Arabic. Therefore, she admitted, the choice of language for Emma to become bilingual was strongly based on heritage as well.

Do/did the PG informants take any action to ensure active use of Italian with their children?

Both Maria and Paolo did not have any particular strategy to have Italian used actively in the family. The use of Italian was rather random in the home and in other sections of this chapter it has been explained when Italian was likely to be used. However, as explained above, both have taken or are in the process of taking actions which will ensure that their children will speak Italian. Both were quite confident that if bilingualism was desirable for their children (in the case of Paolo, for her youngest child), it would not be difficult to attain it. Maria had already outlined a strategy that will lead Emma to bilingualism: travelling to Italy at regular intervals and residing there with Italian relatives. Paolo was happy to send his youngest child to a secondary school where Italian was taught as he had done with his older children. If, in the future she would be interested or needed to learn more, travelling to Italy would also be included in her education.

8.5 Summary and conclusion

The language situation of the informants in France appears to be the following:

The GPG, which was supposed to be the source of the heritage language/s (Italian and Sicilian dialect) speaks very little of what was their initial language after more than 40 years in France. Their speech has reached the “pidginization stage” (“pidgin” in Gonzo & Saltarelli *continuum*) or as I have defined it for the purpose of this thesis, CL (2.2.3). However, notwithstanding this CL use, both Paolo and Maria are very competent speakers of Standard Italian. As explained above, they went through a stage when they thought they had 'forgotten' Italian completely: the urgency to learn French overrode all else. At the time, it seemed that the Italian language had become the casualty of the informants' personal and family assimilation policy in France and no-one appeared to worry about it. However, when communication in French was no longer a problem, the PG rediscovered Italian through frequent trips to Italy, Italian relatives visiting their home in France and life choices. They recovered their expertise in Italian and develop it further, although, in line with the profession they have chosen, to different degrees of proficiency.

For the older member of the CG, Pierre, when very young, the original input of Italian came from his grandparents. They were his baby-sitters for the first six years of his life till he started school. In time, however, it was the PG's input (Father and Aunt – the latter taking great pleasure in being his personal Italian tutor), his choice to study the Italian language at school and to practise it by taking several holidays in Italy that helped his acquisition/ learning of the Italian language. His sisters Françoise and Marguerite appeared to be less interested than he was and certainly more resistant to any tuition on the part of their Aunt. Nevertheless, one managed to communicate using Italian and both comprehended very well spoken Italian. Emma, the youngest of the four CG informants, could both comprehend and communicate in Italian.

Although both Pierre and Emma were very critical of their own use of Italian, in France the difference in competence between the two first-born (Pierre in Paolo's family and Emma in Maria's family) and the other two children was more noticeable than the competence between the first-born and the other children in the Australian family.

Regardless of how "poor" these CG informants thought their Italian language was at the time of the interviews, they all seemed confident that if they wanted to improve their bilingual ability they could do it at any time. It was also noticeable that whilst everyone accepted that Italian was a part of their cultural heritage, no-one considered it as a central core-value of their culture nor was the learning of the language seen as a marker of ethnicity, but as a skill to have or acquire. It was clear that they thought it was an advantage to have it in their background not for reasons of heritage preservation but because it would have made the task of learning it easier. Also, PG and CG informants, without denying their regional background, knew that Standard Italian and not Dialect was the language they had to maintain, develop or learn. They knew that Dialect would have had only some kind of folkloristic communicative value in the region of origin but nowhere else, while Standard Italian is the national communicative currency in Italy and/or anywhere in the world where Italian is used/spoken.

CHAPTER NINE

Review and comparison of findings

9.0 Introduction

This Chapter begins with a brief review of the context of the study and the categories used to analyse the data collected. Next, it compares the study's findings through the answering of the research questions as posited in Chapter One. The Chapter concludes with tables showing the CG similarities/differences of behaviour in and towards the Italian language across the three countries.

9.1 Review of the context

Three generations, thirty eight individuals in all, have been the informants in this project. The Grandparent Generation (GPG) comprises eight informants, the Parent Generation (PG) thirteen and the Child Generation (CG) seventeen. The GPG informants arrived in their chosen country of migration between 1950 and 1959. The informants live in the three countries, as follows:

- ◇ eighteen in the United States – four GPG, six PG, eight CG;
- ◇ eleven in Australia – two GPG, four PG, five CG;
- ◇ nine in France – two GPG, three PG, four CG.

All informants are members of one extended family related to the researcher. The three countries are geographically very distant from each other and, even by the standards of modern travel, Australia and the USA are also very distant from the emigration country, Italy. France, of course, is very close to the informants' homeland.

The sociocultural and sociolinguistic background of the three countries from the informants' arrival (1950s) to the time of data collection for this study (1996/97) was reviewed in Chapter Four. The review demonstrated that initially the immigrants of the 1950s could have said to have met with similar set of circumstances in the three countries and their children, through the school system, experienced similar educational and language policies. With the passing of time however, the immigration, education and especially language policies of the three countries transformed to the point that in the 1990s they differed quite significantly from one country to the other (see Comparative table 4.4). Specific attention was paid to the assessment of the language and cultural situation of the Italian community in each country through the combined use of Giles *et al's* (1977) Ethnolinguistic Vitality Model and Fishman's (1991) GIDS (see comparative table 4.5).

The literature review has highlighted the fact that the Italian community in each country is well integrated into mainstream society. In general, they are well respected as a group and have achieved as individuals at many levels of the hierarchy of their adopted societies. The issue of maintenance of Italian, as discussed in Chapter Four, had to be confronted differently in each country, but the assessment of the language situation of the three Italian communities has shown that the each group has accepted the policies and laws of their adopted countries and fashioned their lives accordingly.

Similarly, the data analysis in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight has demonstrated that the informants in this study are fully functioning members of the mainstream society in their host country. Each family in each country, having overcome the initial difficulties of settlement, accepted and absorbed the ambience. While the countries that received them had not imposed on the new

arrivals the denial of their basic core values such as their cultural and family traditions, overt and covert pressures were exercised by the mainstream through its institutions for acceptance by the migrants of the host society's values. Nevertheless, each group of informants in each country found a *modus vivendi* which allowed them to reach a balance in dealing with the homeland's beliefs and values they had brought with them and the beliefs and values with which they were confronted in the new country. All informants professed positive sentiments towards Italian and the desire to see their children use/learn it. However, in tune with the policies of their migration country, each group of informants had different approaches to its use and different beliefs in relation to its value in their lives.

Furthermore, regardless of the very different language policies operating in the three countries, the informants' language/s use in the USA, Australia and France at the time of data collection (1996/97) revealed strong similarities. While confirming that there is a strong shift to the national language, it established the presence of Italian in the lives of all *three* generations informants.

These findings answered the first of the research questions.

However, to answer the other questions which form the core of the thesis, a much more detailed investigation was conducted (using Case Study methodology, as detailed in Chapter Five). The data was analysed using as categories the three aspects of the linguistic behaviour of minority groups in language contact situations (Fishman, 1964: 33):

- a) *Domains of language behaviour* – which answered the research question related to *where, with whom, when, and why* did the informants use Italian.

b) *Behaviour through language* – which helped investigate the variety/ies of Italian used by the informants and their proficiency in using it/them.

c) *Behaviour towards language* in the intergroup contact setting. This explored the informants' attitudes towards the Italian language and any overt reinforcement and/or planning by them for its maintenance.

9.2 Comparison of findings

The findings related to each country present the answers to the research questions. The first research question was stated as follows:

(1) Do the informants of the CG use and/or comprehend any of the varieties of the Italian language used by their forebears?

In the US, Australia and France the findings determined that the CG informants use and/or comprehend the varieties of the Italian language used by their forebears. It is logical then to ask:

(2) If they use one or more varieties of Italian

- ◇ *Where, with whom, when and why* are they most likely to use it/them?
- ◇ *What* do they use?
- ◇ *How* do they use it/them?

The results of data analysis related to the first category indicated that there are common trends and differences in the use of Italian in the three countries.

9.2.1 *Where, with whom, when and why do the CG informants use Italian*

The US CG informants stand out as making the most restricted use of Italian. They use it exclusively in the home domain and *only* when their grandparents are their interlocutors. The future expectations for the use of Italian for these informants do not seem to extend further than the life-span of their grandparents as the need to use Italian/CL for family cohesiveness – which in regard to Italian heritage is the most important factor for the US CG - would have died with the GP generation.

Like their counterparts in the USA, the CG informants in Australia use Italian mostly with their grandparents and their grandparents' generation as interlocutors. However, they affirm that they often hear it in their own homes spoken by their Parents and the Parents' generation, although they themselves use English almost all the time (see 3.1.1.2). These Australian informants are all studying Standard Italian, which the oldest CG informant designates as "formal" Italian, at school. This gives them an appreciation that there are several varieties of Italian and extends their range of domains and interlocutors for its use. These informants have also been speaking Italian with visitors from Italy, who, the children claim, have really tested their ability to use the "formal" Italian language. At present, their parents keep them motivated in the learning of Standard Italian at school with plans to travel to Italy "soon". With these informants, the use of Italian may extend beyond present family needs. If the grandparents and the parents succeed, these CG informants may soon find themselves in the position of wanting/needing to use Italian with a greater variety of interlocutors. This will enhance the potential for intergenerational LM. However, the maintenance of Italian would not be pursued because of its

centrality as core-value, but rather for the usefulness that the speaking of a second language may have in their future life.

The situation of the French CG informants in regard to this category is not dissimilar from the Australian one. They use Italian with their grandparents and their grandparents' generation. They often hear it spoken among the PG. They are either studying, have studied or will soon study Standard Italian at school. Parents and children have undertaken and plan to continue to undertake frequent trips to Italy. Overall, the data has demonstrated that these informants regard the use of Italian important only in the light of the advantages it can offer them when learning/practising it and not because it is an irreplaceable part of their heritage.

We turn our attention to the description of *what variety of Italian* the informants use and *how proficiently* they use it.

The answer to 'what variety' they use refers back to my reports in the analysis chapters (6.3.4, 7.3.4 and 8.3.4) based on my direct observation, diary keeping and recording of data (and their analysis) of the communicative interactions among the three generations.

As for 'how proficiently' they use Italian there is a *two-part answer*:

- ◇ *The first part* is the answer given by the CG itself and each member of the family on how the CG uses Italian in every day's communicative interactions.
- ◇ *The second part* refers to the results from the language activities undertaken by the CG.

9.2.2 *What variety of Italian do the CG informants use?*

My report in the analysis chapters takes into consideration *what* the CG informants *hear* and what they *say*.

In the USA, it was established that the CG informants hear a variety of Italian, defined CL in this thesis, which is the particular realisation (due to language contact) of the range of Italian varieties used by the older informants in their migration country. The US informants identify this variety as "Italian". The CG informants, although vaguely aware that other varieties of Italian exist, not having been exposed to their use, are only able to comprehend the CL variety spoken in the family. What the US CG informants say, when they use Italian, can be placed on the last stage of the *continuum* of the migrant language: the "fragment" or "ethnolect" (see 6.3.4). Both terms indicate that the heritage language is very close to its disappearance, at least in the productive form.

Whilst the Australian CG informants are also exposed to similar CL -Italian-Australian style- used by the GPG when interacting among themselves and others of their own generation, there is the awareness in the whole family that the CL is not the variety of Italian that the CG informants should be speaking. Therefore the GPG always address the CG generation using Standard/ Popular Italian. Also, the PG is not limited to the use of the CL. They are one example of the second generation using Italian, due to interest and study in the language, in a manner that is closer to the "Standard" than that of their parents. Therefore, what the CG hears is Italian close to the "original stratum", or as I defined it in 7.3.4 a "Fading-Standard". Furthermore, the notion of the "formal" (Standard

Italian) versus “informal” (Sicilian dialect and CL) use is re-enforced for these CG informants at school, where they study it as part of their school curriculum.

When the Australian CG informants communicate using Italian, they are very conscious of “correctness” which interferes with communication, as they speak haltingly and self-correcting unnecessarily. They certainly use some ethnolect, as do their American cousins, and the younger ones consider it as “speaking Italian”. As observed in Chapter Seven, these children cannot be considered fluent speakers of Italian. Their use is often “fragmented”. However, they have input and knowledge of the Standard Italian and can communicate in it when necessary. At this point in time, they cannot be placed on the last stage of the *continuum*. Rather, it could be observed that their future personal choices related to their working lives and/or leisure time will determine if their fluency in Italian will improve or deteriorate

In France, the CG informants are also exposed to a CL variety as their American and Australian cousins. It is CL French-style and, as in the other two countries it is used by the GPG when interacting among themselves and others of their own generation. However, more than their Australian cousins, the French CG informants are quite clear on the different varieties of Italian and their different degrees of prestige. So it is that when they use Italian they try to use the Standard variety, according to the proficiency gained to that point in the time of their life. The advantage these French CG informants have is that their life is structured in ways that offers several occasions to hear the “original stratum” of Italian and they hear it from their parents and their parents’ friends. Also they hear it from their Italian relatives, whom Pierre (the oldest CG) and Emma (the youngest) visit often.

As the Australian CG, it is hard to place these informants on a given stage of the *continuum*. As explained in Chapter Eight, two of them have chosen not to speak Italian, or to speak it only in selected occasions. The other two (Pierre and Emma) may be on the way to a new phase of evolution in their use of Italian: Pierre due to personal life choices and Emma due to her mother's choice and planning. The different competence among the four French informants could be explained partly by their birth-order (see 3.4.6). Pierre and Emma are first-born in their respective families. At the time of data collection Emma could communicate fairly well in Italian, but it was too soon to predict her bilingual development. As far as Pierre is concerned, it could be argued that his initial greater exposure to Italian –due to his first-born status – may have influenced his positive attitude to Italian use and his life choices involving Italian language and culture.

9.2.3 How do the CG informants use Italian

In the reports related to *the first part* of the investigation for the *behaviour through language* category, the US CG informants of an age that allowed them to describe their language use assert that they can understand when their grandparents speak to them using Italian.

The grandparents don't really mind how their grandchildren speak "Italian" as long as they can continue to communicate with them. In general, the three generations agree, the CG has a 'good' comprehension of the Italian variety, or CL, used in the family, but they speak it only if they cannot put the message across to the GPG and the GPG's friends in English.

Australian CG informants comprehend Italian very well and the GPG and the PG agree with this assessment. The GPG and the PG also emphasise that the children speak Standard Italian as this is what the family has always used when speaking with them. However, the speaking of Italian on the part of the CG informants when interacting with the family is limited. Since plans for the future include further studies of the Italian language and visits to Italy, all three generations are convinced that the present situation can change and the children will have the possibility of speaking the Italian language more fluently. At the present time (time of data collection), all the informants, including the CG itself, describe their comprehension of Italian as 'very good', although they agree that their speaking is rather 'poor' and needs a lot more practice.

According to the family's and the personal reports of the four French CG informants, the competence in Standard Italian among the four children varies from comprehension only of the Italian language (Marguerite); to being able to comprehend it well and use it fairly well, when necessary (Françoise, Emma); to being able and wanting to use it rather freely and comprehend it very well (Pierre).

In *the second part* of the question related to the category *behaviour through language* the CG informants undertook language activities in Standard Italian. In each analysis chapter, I have described the CG performance when undertaking the activities. For each CG group in each country there is a table describing their performance (see tables, 6.3, 7.3, 8.3). Across the three countries, these tables demonstrate that while among the younger CG informants the differences in language proficiency are not significant, in the older group of CG informants the differences in language proficiency are much more marked.

The results of the data analysis conducted to answer the third research question related to the informants' attitude towards the use of Italian should help in highlighting some of the factors affecting these differences.

9.2.4 Attitudes of the CG towards Italian

The third category, *behaviour towards language*, is related to the informants' identity and attitudes towards Italian use. The data collection was carried out through "focused interviews with the whole family" (see 5.2.4.1.4). Where the third generation informants were old enough, they were interviewed personally. Where the children were too young to express their opinions on the topic, the parents discussed their preferences/opinions and attitudes for themselves and their children. Some of the parental attitudes are also discussed as it helps in understanding the factors that possibly have/ are /will influence their children's attitudes towards their heritage and language

The research question related to the CG's attitudes towards Italian was simply formulated as follows :

- (3) What are the attitudes of the CG informants towards their forebears' community language and cultural heritage?

In the USA, when the CG informants were asked about what national/cultural identity they would claim for themselves they replied: 'Italian-American' or 'American of Italian descent'.

However, the notion that they do not consider Italian an important part of their heritage was expressed clearly. They thought of it as their Grandparents'

language and they explained that, while some of the Italian ways of life (what they call "Italian culture") may still be part of their lives and their children's lives in the future, they are 'sure' that the language will not be.

This may be a consequence of their grandparents and their parents' attitudes towards Italian. While being positive towards their 'Italian background and their traditions', the older generations had attitudes towards their heritage language which at the best could be defined as 'neutral', at worst, they completely disapproved of it. For the PG informants, some of these attitudes may have its source in personal negative experiences both as young children and as adults, as detailed in Chapter Six. Apparently, when they tried to use Italian the PG knew that they would either be ridiculed or not understood at all by other (Standard) Italian speakers. As stated previously, none of the children has learnt Italian at school (though Melissa learned it for six months as one of her electives at Community College). Their statements that their children (the fourth generation) will not use Italian are not surprising. Nevertheless, the father of the youngest children stated that he would not mind his children learning Italian. But he had many reservations about it. Some of the conditions that had to be met for him to let them learn a language were:

- ◇ *They should begin learn it at elementary school ... "because, I tell you from experience, learning another language beginning in high school is just a waste of time. I did French at high school and I hated every moment of it." (Nicholas in interview)*
- ◇ *If anyone wants to learn a language when older... "the only way to succeed is to go to the country in which that language is spoken. Just as my cousins from Italy did when they wanted to learn English. They went to England. In six months they were speaking well." (Ibid)*

At the time of data collection his daughter was in first grade but the school did not offer Italian as a school subject. It follows that while there are some positive attitudes in this family towards the learning of the standard of the “heritage” language, these young CG, as their older cousins, will not have the possibility to learn it.

“Italian” or *“Australian-Italian”* is how the Australian CG informants defined themselves. They appeared to accept fully their Italian heritage including the language. These informants were fully aware of the difference between the CL when spoken informally at home and the Standard Italian. They knew that this is the variety they were learning at school and that it is the variety they should use if they wanted to be understood by other Italian speakers. However they were too young to be able to project their feeling to the next generation. At the time of data collection, the children were very happy to be learning the Italian language at school and so were their parents. There is a strong feeling among the older generations that the education system can and must play the main role in the maintenance of their heritage language. Trips to Italy were mentioned as a possible means to supplement, at some stage, the children’s home language acquisition of Italian and their formal school language learning.

When the French CG informants were asked about what national/cultural identity they would claim for themselves, the same question as the informants in the other countries were asked, they all responded without hesitation: “French”.

To following questions about the Italian language, they responded by stating that they consider both the Sicilian dialect and the Standard Italian as their Grandparents’ language and they recognise them as something that is part of

their family. As for the following generations, the older informants believed that it was almost inevitable that their children will speak more than one language. English and Italian were very likely to be the languages they would be learning, English, *perché è ormai indispensabile* (because it is indispensable), Italian, partly because it is their cultural heritage and partly because it would be convenient to study it. The ease with which they would be able to come and go from Italy taking advantage of the family's members resident there makes the learning of Italian a very attractive choice to reach fluency in the language. The PG expressed the same opinions and they assured that, come the right time, they will put into practice the plan they have to make their children bi/multilinguals.

To conclude, in their outlook to their cultural and linguistic heritage, the CG informants in each country closely reflect the migration countries' formal and informal attitudes and policies towards minority groups.

Their language abilities also reflect the attitudes and language policies of their adopted countries towards any minority language or bilingualism in general and they assign to Italian the same value that the language policies in their host countries assign to it.

The findings related to language proficiency differences between age groups (e.g. differences of language proficiency among the younger CG informants across the three countries) are not great. However, the differences in language proficiency in the older group are much stronger. These results appear to point to the fact that the older the informants, the more entrenched the attitudes and social mores of the mainstream society. Certainly there is also the interplay of other factors which have influenced the results to a greater or lesser degree such

as birth order, learning the Standard language at school and geographical proximity to Italy, but, in my opinion, the former cannot be dismissed lightly.

9.3 Summary of comparison of findings across the three countries

The fourth and last research question is:

(4) How do the outcomes of the findings related to the above questions vary across the three countries in which the investigation was conducted (United States, Australia and France)?

The results of the data analysis have already exposed most of the similarities and differences existing among the informants living in the three countries. Below, to answer more explicitly research question (4), I have condensed in point form some of the major similarities and drawn a table to illustrate the differences in regard to the use of Italian encountered among the CG informants in the three countries.

Comparison of findings: similarities across the three categories of language behaviour analysed

- ◇ All informants use the host country's language as their principal and most efficient means of communication.
- ◇ All informants use Italian – although with different levels of language proficiency.
- ◇ All informants' receptive skills in Italian are more developed than their productive skills.

- ◇ The home/family domain is the primary location of Italian use for these informants with the Grandparents and the Grandparents' generation as the major interlocutors.
- ◇ All informants understand that there are colloquial or "less formal" varieties of Italian and Standard Italian. They know that the Standard Italian is the prestigious variety and the one worth maintaining/learning if they want it to be of any use outside the home/family domain.
- ◇ None of the informants considers compartmentalization of language functions for the two languages (Italian and the national language) a viable alternative for LM. Language learning at school and a length of time spent in Italy were considered the best alternatives to reach fluency in Italian.
- ◇ General attitudes to Italian cultural heritage were positive.

Table 9.2 Comparison of findings: differences across the three categories of language behaviour analysed.

United States	Australia	France
<p>USE OF ITALIAN This CG does not think that they will ever need Italian once the GPG are no longer part of the family.</p>	<p>USE OF ITALIAN This CG uses Italian in the home/ family domain. Also in the school domain. Their interlocutors belong mostly to the GPG. However, other interlocutors have often been relatives from Italy.</p>	<p>USE OF ITALIAN Besides having the GPG as primary interlocutors for their use of Italian, these informants are also studying Italian at school. All of them have travelled to Italy, either for a short time or for lengthy holidays.</p>
<p>VIEW OF BILINGUALISM Bilingualism is not considered an asset by these informants.</p>	<p>VIEW OF BILINGUALISM Bilingualism is valued and seen as an asset by these informants. Italian/English bilingualism is valued for its heritage significance as well as for its usefulness in academic studies and future career.</p>	<p>VIEW OF BILINGUALISM Bi/trilingualism is considered inevitable by these informants and highly desirable. Both the PG and the CG point out that their children will probably speak at least two foreign languages. Most certainly, they state, one would be English, the other Italian. Family heritage, geographical proximity and the many relatives still living in Italy are all contributing factors to this choice.</p>
<p>COMPREHENSION SKILLS Where comprehension of Italian as used in the family is concerned the informants self-rated it as “good” and</p>	<p>COMPREHENSION SKILLS The CG self-rated their comprehension of Italian used in the family/home domain as “very good” This</p>	<p>COMPREHENSION SKILLS These informants self rated their comprehension of the Italian</p>

<p>so did the family. As for production of Italian, both grandparents and grandchildren do not mind how “correct” their use is, as long as they can communicate.</p>	<p>rating was corroborated by the family. Production was rated by all concerned as “<i>non c’è male, non c’è male</i> (not too bad, not too bad)”.</p>	<p>used in the family as “very good”. Their family is in agreement.</p>
<p>PRODUCTIVE AND RECEPTIVE SKILLS IN STANDARD ITALIAN When these CG informants attempted (some informants did not want to attempt them at all) the language activities in Standard Italian, they demonstrates a minimal level of language proficiency both in the productive & receptive skills. This is possibly due to the fact that this group of informants has never had any formal school learning in Standard Italian.</p>	<p>PRODUCTIVE AND RECEPTIVE SKILLS IN STANDARD ITALIAN This group of informants demonstrated a fairly good level of proficiency in the productive skills. Their receptive skills were very good. All the informants of the CG in Australia study the Italian language at school.</p>	<p>PRODUCTIVE AND RECEPTIVE SKILLS IN STANDARD ITALIAN Two of these informants demonstrated a good to very good level of proficiency in the productive skills. The other two either did not try to speak or spoke very little. The receptive skills of all four CG were very good. They have studied or will be studying Standard Italian at school.</p>
<p>VIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE HOST SOCIETY’S EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE MAINTENENCE OF ITALIAN The informants have never considered the lack of availability (or enough availability) in studying Italian something about which, as a group, they should/could complain or formally request</p>	<p>VIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE HOST SOCIETY’S EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE MAINTENENCE OF ITALIAN There is a strong feeling among the older generations – which is readily accepted by the CG - that the education system can and must play the main role in the maintenance of minority languages, in this</p>	<p>VIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE HOST SOCIETY’S EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE MAINTENENCE OF ITALIAN These informants are convinced that bilingualism is an asset. However, it is the responsibility of the individual or its family to decide how to use the resources in the family, in the nation and outside it, to</p>

<p>the government to provide help in maintaining their language.</p>	<p>case Italian. The PG also promises that if children show eagerness in improving their bilingual skills, the family will find ways of sending them/going as a family to Italy.</p>	<p>equip their children with that asset. The notion of possible “obligations” on the part of the national education system to help maintain minority languages in their country is too unorthodox for them to consider.</p>
<p>VIEW OF ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY There is a full acceptance of group ethnicity and cultural identity. Family traditions – seen by the CG as “Italian culture” – are accepted as a strong part of their heritage. This does not include the Italian language.</p>	<p>VIEW OF ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY This group of informants fully accepts ethnicity/identity membership to the Italian-Australian community. However, contrary to the American group, all three generations of Australian participants, consider the Italian language an integral part of their ethnic identity. For them, this is possibly the strongest motivation behind any effort of LM they attempt.</p>	<p>VIEW OF ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY The concept of ethnicity, as lived by the American and the Australian group is alien to the French informants. They stress that they do not see themselves as a distinct group. They do not belong to any Italian-French association, nor do they identify with any “Italian community” in France. They are French citizens with an Italian heritage. Their attitude to this heritage is positive but it is not their first consideration when deciding what it is best for themselves and their children’s future.</p>

9.4 Summary and conclusion

The findings indicate that the Italian language, although with different degrees of proficiency, is still part of the CG everyday life.

The CG's level of proficiency in Italian is closely related to:

- ◇ *Where* it is used;
- ◇ *What* variety is used and *how* it is used,
- ◇ *The perception of its practical use* in their present as well as future life.

The final chapter compares the findings with the theoretical perspectives put forward as the rationale for the study and draws suggestions towards courses of action which may advance the prospect of intergenerational language maintenance in any migrant receiving country.

CHAPTER TEN

Conclusion

10.0 Introduction

This last chapter presents, discusses and interprets the findings of the study concluding with implications and recommendations for further research among groups who have reached the third-and-beyond generations in migration countries.

10.1 Interpretation of findings

This study was an investigation of Language Maintenance and Language Shift (LM/LS) among third generation individuals of Italian background living in three different countries. The primary informants in this study were seventeen third generation members of an Italian family living in the United States, Australia or France. The maintenance/shift of Italian by the third generation was conducted in the context of the *three generations* and their community of speakers as well as in the context of different policies on migrant integration and minorities languages. The research conducted through case study methodology was structured as an *embedded multiple case-study* project (Yin,1994).

Fishman's (1989) "intergroup social dependency" theory was chosen as the main framework to patten-match the findings of the research. According to this theory, when the immigrant experience is viewed from the time depth of *three* or more generations, the immigrant group generally loses its language due to

its dependency on the host society for its survival. Fishman states that the only strategy that can effectively stop LS is strict '*compartmentalisation of language functions*' between the minority language and the majority language.

The study shows that in the three countries the third generation informants of Italian background, in this thesis referred to as the Child Generation (CG), still use their grandparents' language. Their proficiency in using it varies as does the amount used. However, at the time of data collection, all CG informants were using Italian.

The reasons for its use could be summarised as follows:

- ◇ In the three countries all the CG informants used Italian to facilitate communication in the (extended) family.
- ◇ In Australia and in France the CG informants were learning Italian at school:
 - (a) for heritage reasons,
 - (b) for academic success,
 - (c) for potential usefulness, when seeking employment
 - (d) and because their parents believed that learning a second language was a good way to enhance their children's cognitive development.

The findings have also proved that the stronger the real or perceived usefulness of Italian, the better the language proficiency of the various informants in using it.

These findings are in strong agreement with the theories that have considered *need and usefulness* of one's own language as clearcut factors for language maintenance in minority groups as well as language/s learning in general.

Usefulness or the idea of market-value is one of the factors singled out by Haugen *et al* (1980) when examining the use of minority languages. A similar concept is behind Bourdieu's (1982) market-place theory, although his concept is framed in a social theory related to languages in general. Clyne (1982) included *usefulness and need* in his taxonomy of clearcut factors for language maintenance (see 3.4.1.1). The concept of serviceable use of language is stressed even more strongly in this new century given that "the commodification of languages is becoming increasingly significant with the supremacy of market forces in all domains of society' (Clyne, 2003:68)". However, there is also a warning (Grin, 1996) that language cannot be projected in purely economic terms (given its symbolic value).

The findings in this study also support the latter notion. Need and usefulness are not the only reasons for the maintenance of one's language. However, when the parents have to make a decision about their children's future, these certainly rate as some of the most important reasons.

No doubt linguistic compartmentalisation, as defined by Fishman, would be an excellent method of creating *need and usefulness* to use language and, at the same time, provide the right ambiance for the other factors (e.g. heritage, identity, effective communication in the family and own community, cognitive development, academic pursuits) to be enhanced. However, when minority groups weigh the cost-benefits of LM in terms of compartmentalization in multilingual nations, the costs appear to outweigh by far the benefits.

If continued use of one's own minority language is desired by minority groups, other options must be explored. A brief review of the motivational factors

behind the use of Italian by the informants in the three countries may help towards a selection of those options.

Among the informants in the United States the need to use Italian is perceived as temporary and very limited in scope (communication with the oldest generation in the family). This 'need' will soon disappear and no action is planned to extend it. There is no motivation for these informants to improve or learn anew how to use Italian proficiently. Nor do the policies, practices and general societal attitudes towards the use of minority languages provide any incentive towards the use of a language other than English. The results in the language activities using Standard Italian undertaken by the informants show that their language proficiency in using it is very poor. Fishman's theory of total LS within three generations to the mainstream language may be soon fulfilled with this third generation.

In Australia the perception of Italian functions goes beyond 'present need'. The CG informants use Italian for family communication. In Australia there are positive language-in-education policies encouraging the study of languages for heritage, cultural enrichment, academic and economic reasons. The Parent generation, as well as their children, subscribe entirely to this policy. They also implicitly trust the education system for the maintenance of their language and this is a strong motivation for the choice to study the language from elementary to university level. In addition, there is the 'perceived' usefulness of Italian, both by the parents and the children, that one day its use may help them in their life's pursuits beyond the family and school's boundaries. This belief is encouraged by the strong presence of minority languages use at all levels and institutions of the mainstream society. In Australia, English is considered the

national language (although not *de jure*), but the use of minority languages is recognised and respected.

When undertaking the language activities, these CG informants' language proficiency in the Standard Italian proved to be reasonably good. However, according to the literature, the Australian informants' approach to the use and learning of Italian would not guarantee intergenerational language maintenance (ILM) or, where necessary, Reversal of Language Shift (RLS) towards ILM. Fishman (1991) states that, at most, the school can be seen as a step in an integrated progression of steps, rather than the first, last and most crucial step. Clyne (1982) admits that schools do not have a good record for minority language maintenance. In 2004, in Australia, although school language teaching is still very strong, there appears to be a decline in the richness and variety of language programs offered in schools. Nevertheless, Italian programs in the mainstream school are still well attended.

Rather than leading towards ILM, the way the Italian-Australian informants are using and learning Italian appears to point to ICAL (Intergenerational Continuity of Additional languages) as remarked when reviewing the Australian-Italian language situation (section 4.2.3.3, *stage 4b*). In this kind of language learning, the minority language is not any longer predominant in the life of the third generation individuals. It is learnt anew in each generation and would only be additional to the mainstream language. However, the learning and use of their heritage language in such a manner would continue to enhance the notion upheld by the mainstream that their language is a legitimate and valid means of communication. In the case of the informants in this study, personal biases and life choices would then determine if they would like to further enhance their Italian learning and in which way. For example, living

and studying in Italy for several months is an option. Distance is no longer a problem in modern times although financial means might be. To this end, however, in Australia there is a real possibility that parents can have financial support in the form of scholarships from ethnic associations for their children to travel to the homeland of their language.

In France the third generation informants use Italian for family communication as in the USA and in Australia. They learn/learned it in school as the informants in Australia and, as the informants in Australia, they believe that Italian may enhance their profile when job-searching. These French informants have also had several occasions when they have practised their Italian skills on Italian speakers in Italy. This CG's language proficiency in Italian ranges from good to very good. In France, however, using/learning a language is not a question of maintenance of one's own community language which, supposedly, is central to the lives of the individual/s. The European Union, of which France is one of the members, is an aggregation of nation states with legal recognition of national languages. Lo Bianco (2003) comments that if in the next few decades Europe remains an aggregation of nation-states and retains legal protection of national languages (as France certainly would like it to be – see section 4.3.2.3), it will have multilingualism at its core. Learning languages other than French in France will be considered a priority.

As in Australia, the language/s learning of the French CG could be defined as ICAL, but it would be intergenerational continuity of more than one language learned anew in each generation. The findings of this study suggest that anyone who lives in France and has a European language as part of their cultural background, most likely will choose that language as a second foreign language

(the first usually being English) to utilize their advantage while upholding their heritage.

With regard to the CG generation and beyond, I would predict that, in the near future, the following outcome will apply in the informant families in each of the three countries:

- ◇ The United States: English only.
- ◇ Australia: Intergenerational continuity of additional Languages (ICAL), where the Italian language is chosen to be learned anew in each generation, primarily for heritage reasons, followed by educational and other instrumental reasons.
- ◇ France: Multilingualism (ICAL style), where the Italian language is chosen primarily for instrumental reasons followed by heritage reasons.

10.2 Concluding remarks

In the relevant research literature, the process of LM/LS is presented as a group phenomenon. Conversely, the findings of this study point towards LM as a product of individual choices.

In France and in Australia I have encountered parents in the family's second generation who want their children raised bilingually from birth. In all three countries I have found parents of the second generation who do not think about language beyond the everyday use of what they now consider their first (certainly most proficient) language: the national language of the country in which they live.

There are many strategies that can be used by the parents who decide to raise their children bilingually. But, as some of the informants in this study who have tried can attest, one essential element is determination. Of help for these parents would be some of the strategies that Fishman suggests for linguistic compartmentalisation. These could be adapted, perhaps scaled down, and used by the parents to motivate their children in using the language they want them to use. Beyond Fishman's theories, one strategy that has been shown to be successful in many countries is "the one-parent, one-language strategy" (see 4.2.3.3, *stage 6*). But, according to all informants in this study, the best strategy for LM, or bilingualism in general, is one or several fairly long periods of residence in the country where the language is spoken.

In 2004 and beyond, due to the global environment in which modern societies have to function, research targeting third and further generations minority groups living in diverse migration countries would highlight the benefits of bi/multilingualism. Diverse types of investigations should be undertaken to discover what individuals/families belonging to those groups have decided in regard to the use and maintenance of their language. The investigations could be in the form of comparative studies among families living in the same country but belonging to different ethnic groups or, as in this study, the same ethnic group but with the informant families living in different countries. There could be longitudinal studies with the same group of informants to ascertain if the findings and predictions of the original study have eventuated. But most of all, I would like LM/LS researchers to get into schools, observe, study and report in greater depth the effects on the LM in minority groups of the diverse language programs in the education system of their country. As observed previously, the literature related to language learning in school and LM is rather sceptical about the school succeeding in this field. However, my study has demonstrated

that in the countries where the second and third generation had undertaken Italian language learning at school the Italian language was still being used actively (albeit, generally, not as primary means of communication). Actually, some informants in France showed signs of “evolution” rather than “involution” of the language. As it happens, even if in Australia and in France there are contrasting language policies and societal attitudes to ethnicity, it would appear that several factors in these two countries have combined to achieve a positive environment towards second/foreign/minority language learning in schools and its effects are spreading to the mainstream society. Through the results of the CG informants’ proficiency in their Italian use, the findings demonstrated that the stronger the positive societal environment towards second/foreign language learning, the better the proficiency and the greater the willingness to use that language, whether it is their heritage language or not.

If research can demonstrate that second language programs in schools are helping to achieve LM for those willing to pursue it as well as widespread bi/multilingualism, modern nations may find it necessary to continue to resource efficient school programs. If research could highlight which factors help in making a language program meet its stated language learning goals, the results could be used to improve school language curricula. On the strength of this research, educators and policy makers may decide that funds are necessary to educate parents of second/third generation children on how to raise children bilingually. Family and school would then complement each other to reach the *desideratum* for the children: bilingualism.

Of course, there is no certainty that LM will continue in any given family from generation to generation. Probably, as Fishman recommends in *stage 6* of the

GIDS, only the creation of ethnically concentrated communities and compartmentalisation of language functions could guarantee intergenerational LM. But the reality is that modern minority groups living in multilingual settings are in a situation of “intergroup social dependency” and want to remain in such a position. The demands of modern life would not allow otherwise. Ethnically concentrated communities with compartmentalisation of language functions to achieve LM as a group are not considered desirable by most, if not all, minority groups living in language contact situations.

Clyne (2003: 68) points out that the right to maintain and the right to shift are two democratic rights and individuals will choose according to the perceived cost-benefits of one or the other. This suggests that, in modern societies, the decision to maintain or shift from one’s own language will not be a collective choice made by a unified and uniform minority group towards a utopian LM. It will be a choice made by informed members of a group that, after serious consideration of their values, beliefs and options, will choose (or choose not) to continue to give a prominent role in their life to their heritage language.

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UNA STORIA TRANQUILLA

TRANQUILLA

PACE

PIACEVOLE

CONFORTATA

SOFFICE

CONTENTO

CALDA

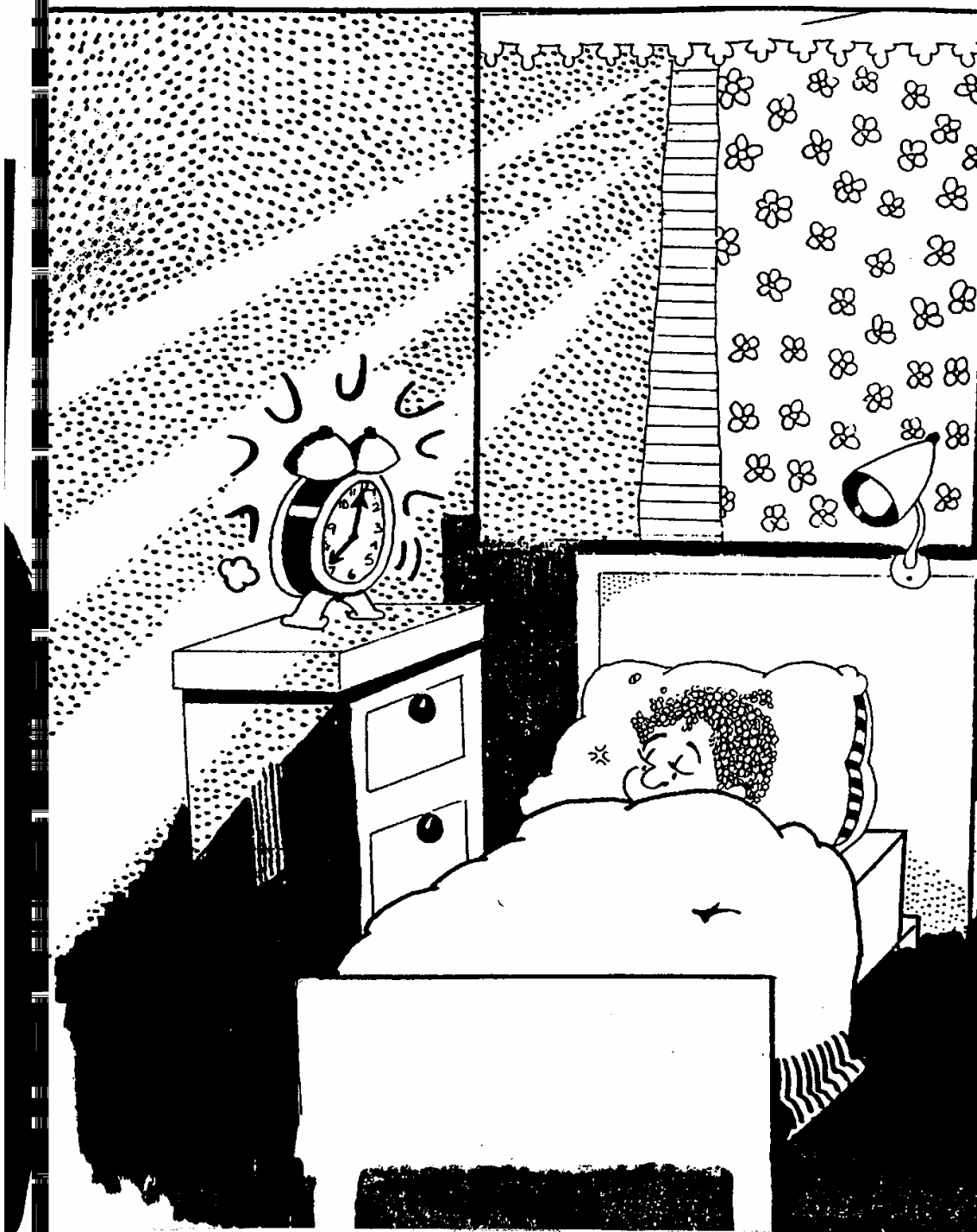
FELICE

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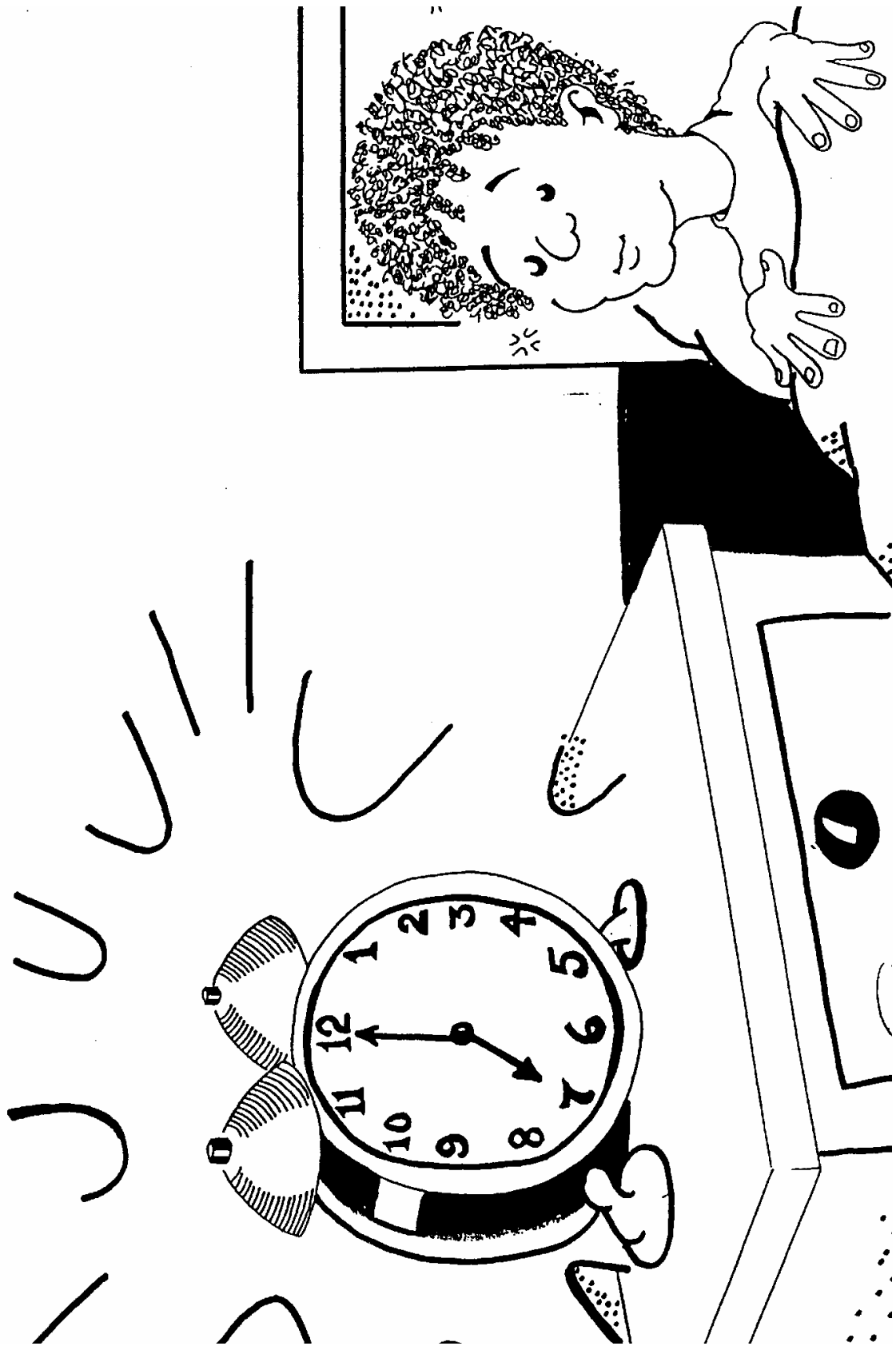
UNA STORIA TRANQUILLA

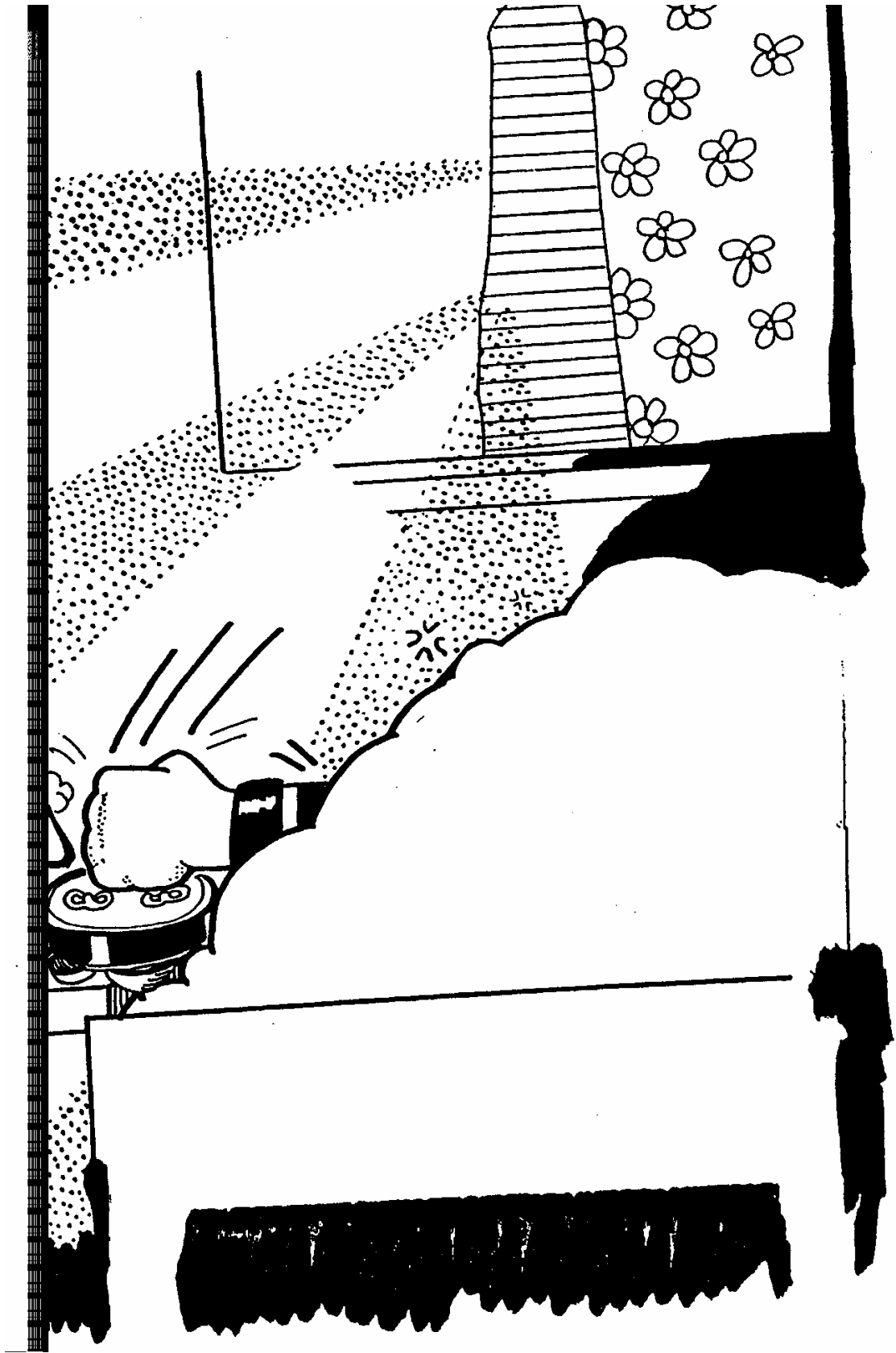
Piove. Sonia è a casa e guarda dalla finestra. Tutto è così tranquillo fuori e a casa c'è un'atmosfera di pace. Sonia si guarda intorno.

Tutto nella stanza è così bello. IL fuoco è acceso nel caminetto e Sonia si sente confortata. IL gatto dorme vicino al fuoco; sembra così soffice e contento sotto la sua bella coperta calda. Sonia è felice.



INCOMINCIA IL GIORNO DI MARCO....



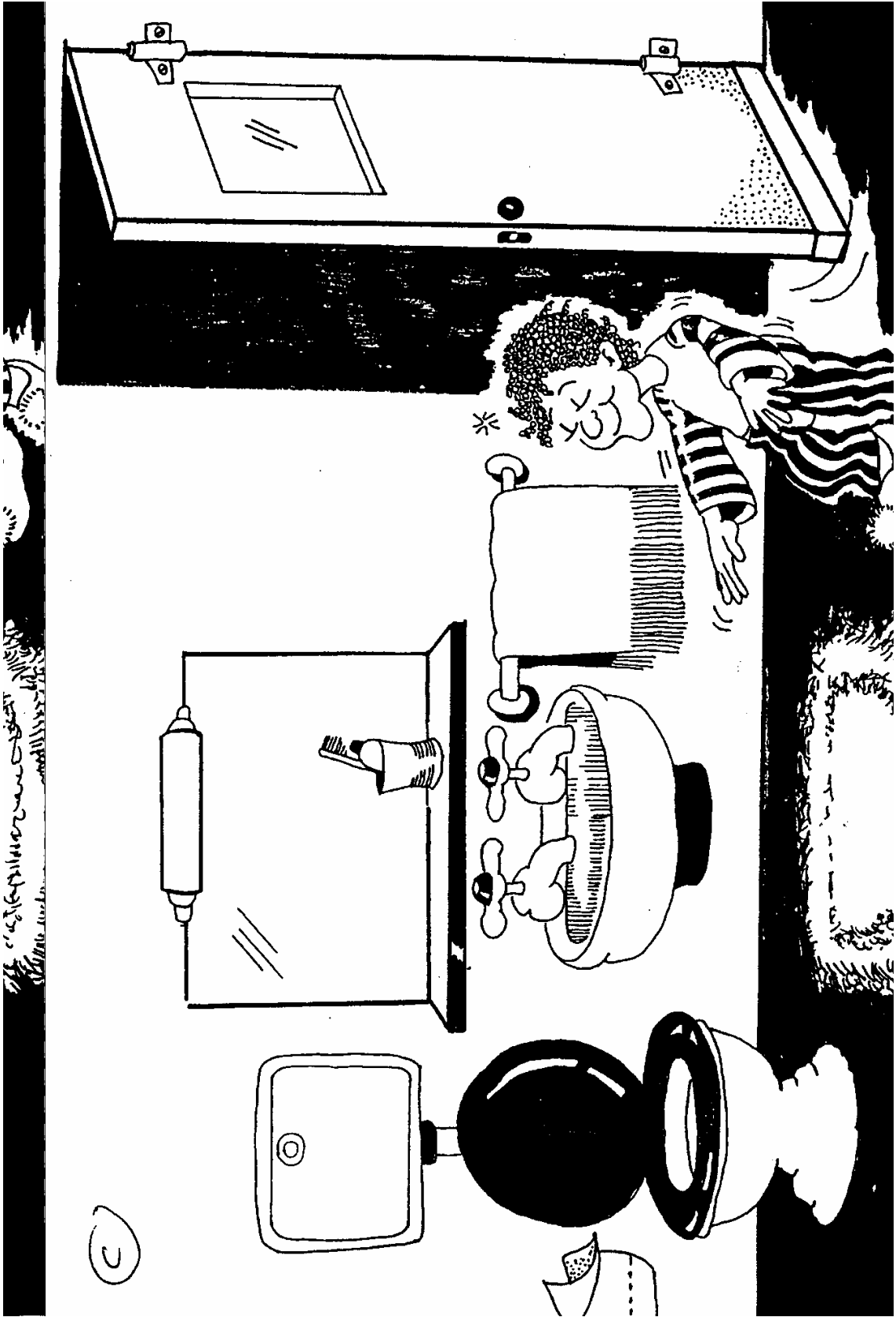




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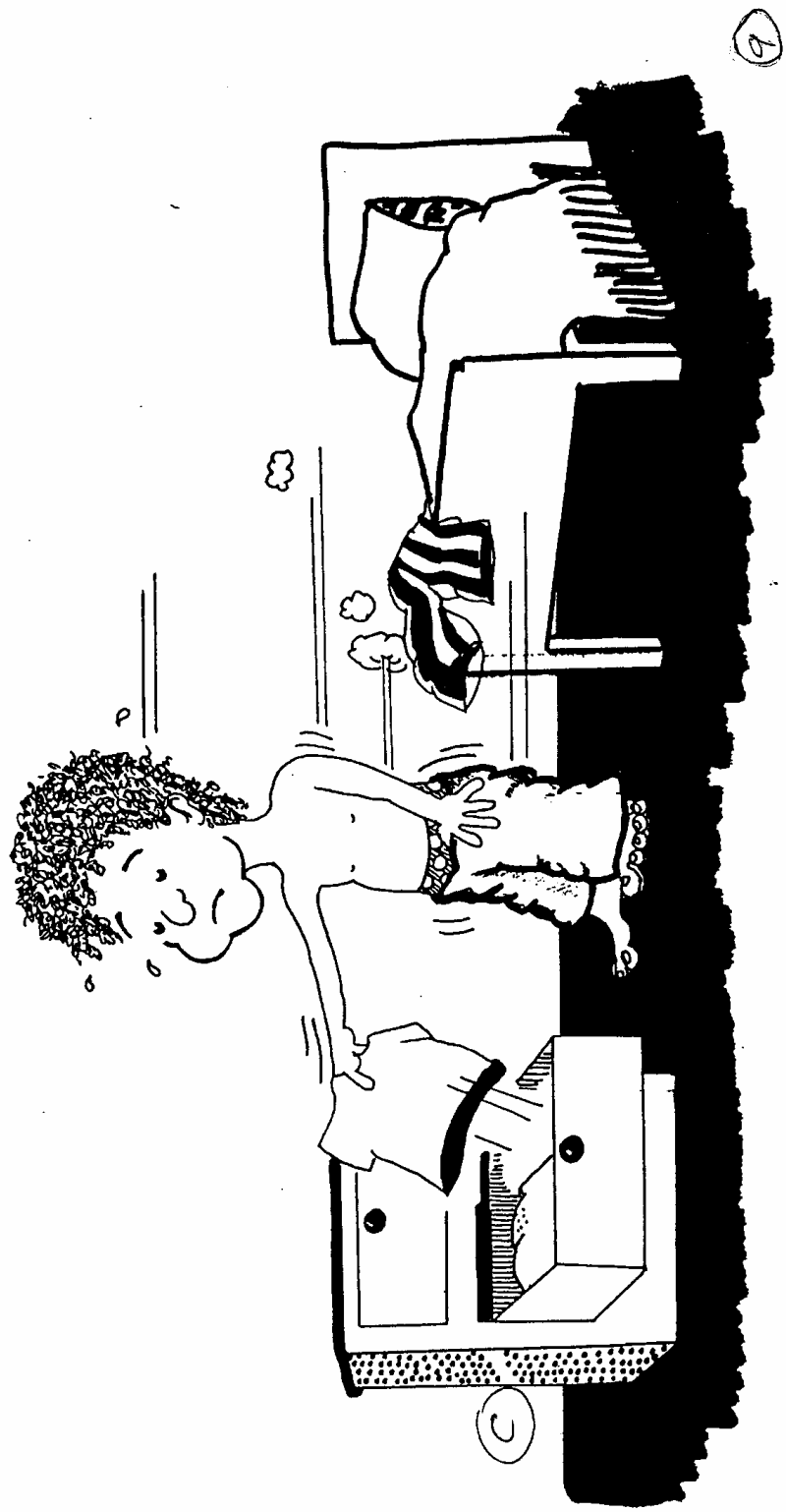


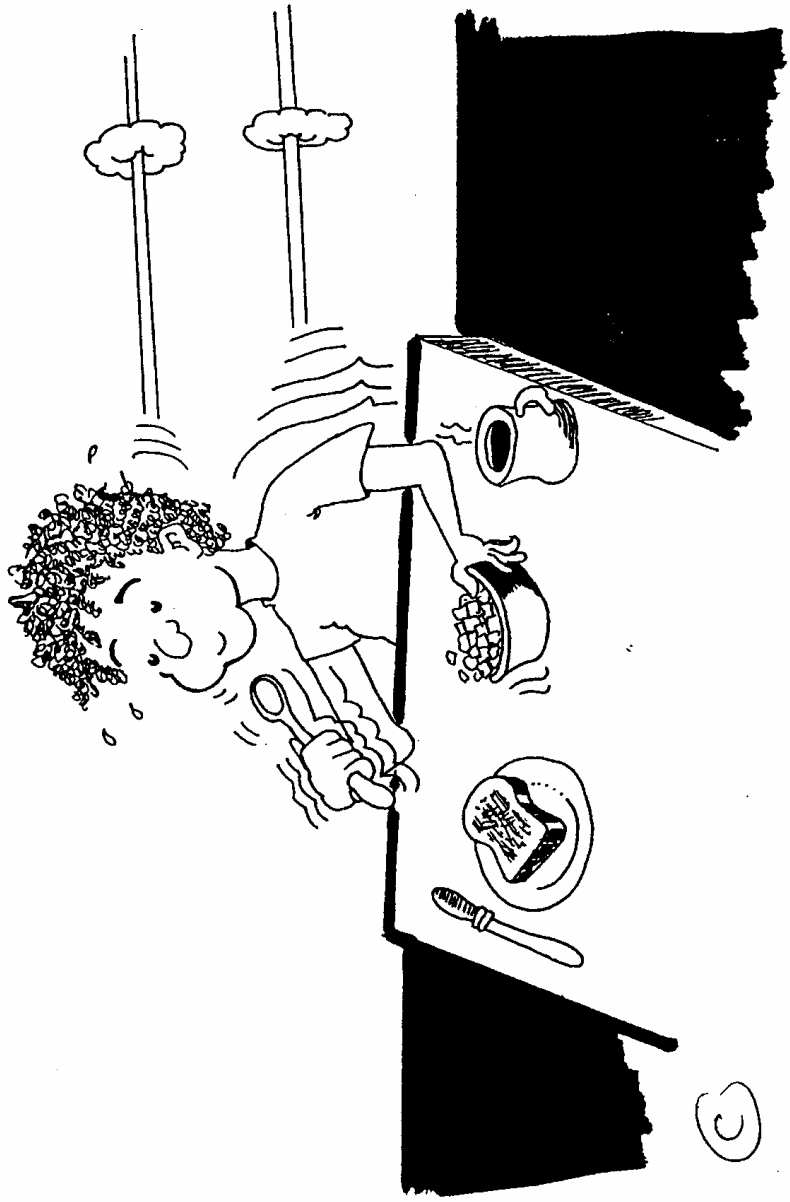
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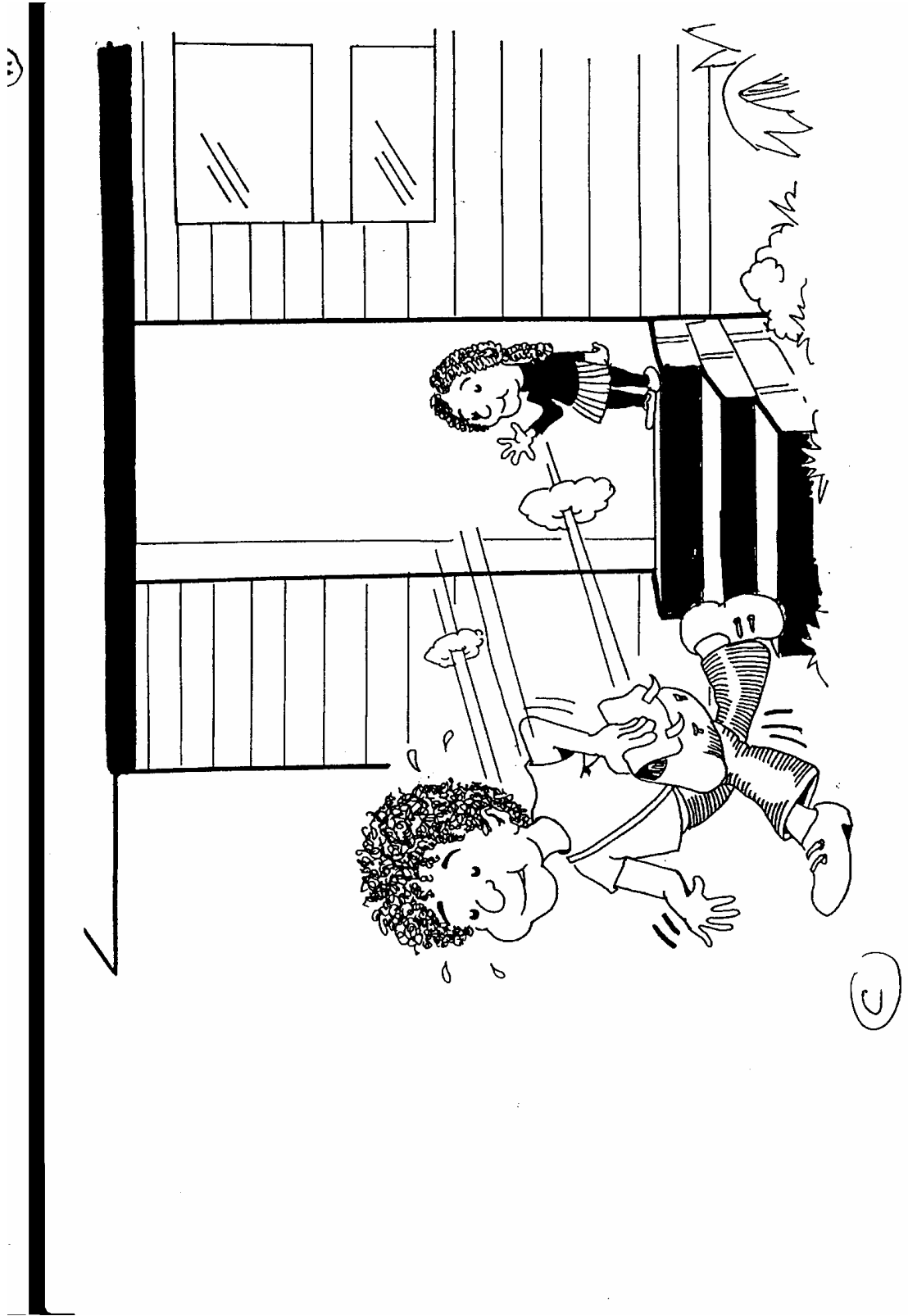


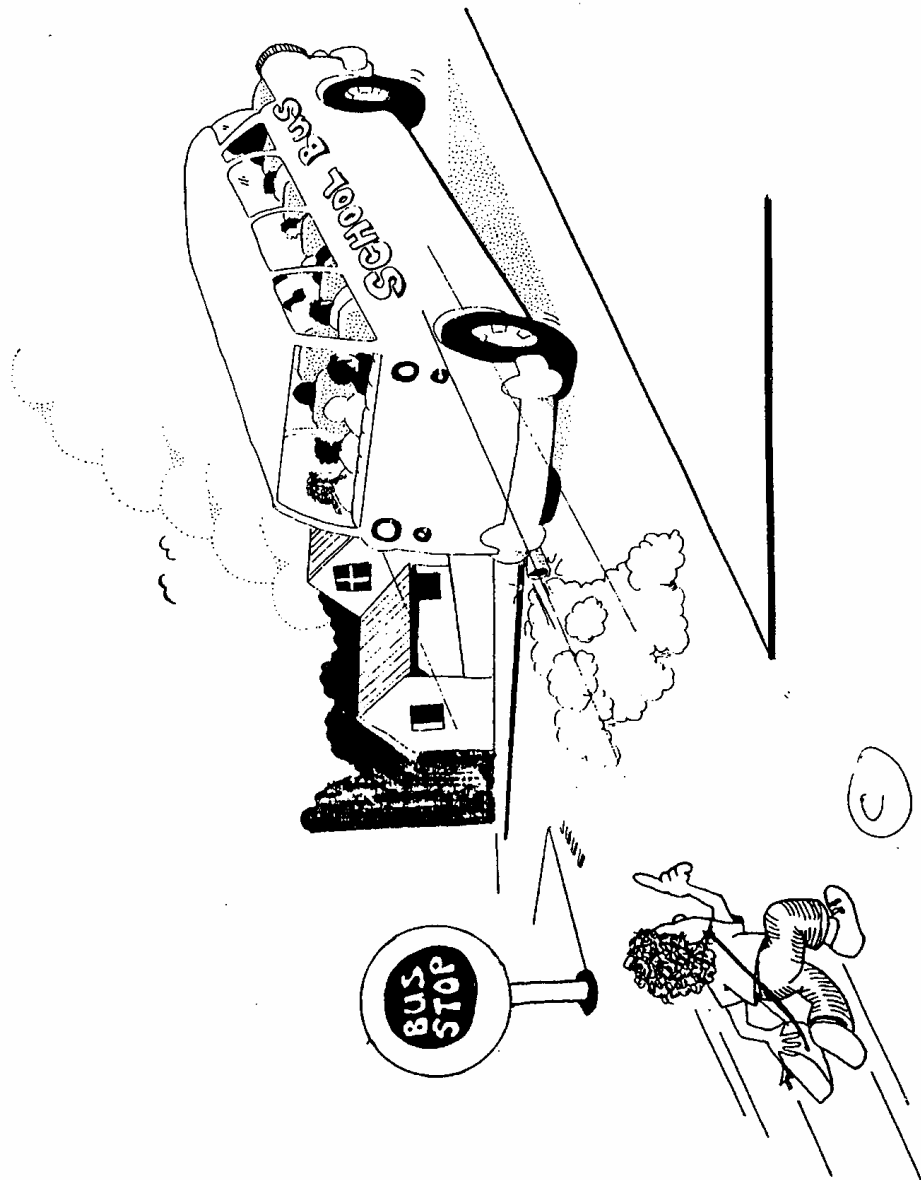






C





Text for narrative on tape:

LA NAVE REGINA ELISABETTA SECONDA

La nave nella fotografia si chiama 'Regina Elisabetta Seconda'. In inglese la chiamano con le iniziali QE2. E' una nave passeggera grande e moderna. Al giorno d'oggi non ci sono molte navi come la QE2. La maggior parte delle persone preferiscono viaggiare con l'aereo. La QE2, in paragone con i jet moderni è molto lenta e costosa.

Però, a molta gente non piace viaggiare con l'aereo e viaggiare con la QE2 è davvero molto... beh, diciamo, diverso.

La nave è in realtà un enorme albergo galleggiante, quasi una piccola città che galleggia. I cinque giorni di viaggio da Southampton in Inghilterra a New York diventano una vera e propria vacanza.

The QE2 può portare 2.000 passeggeri ed ha un equipaggio di 950 persone che accudiscono alla nave e servono i passeggeri. La nave ha tre ristoranti, otto bar, un parrucchiere per donna e un barbiere per uomo. Per di più ci sono quattro piscine, due cinema (i cinema mostrano molti film per adulti, ma ci sono film anche per bambini), un casinò, due biblioteche, un ospedale, una banca e una palestra. Ci sono anche alcuni negozi.

Sì, questa nave è proprio come una piccola città.

Però, non ci sono macchine, autobus o camion and non c'è smog: l'aria è bella pulita e tutto intorno c'è pace e tranquillità.

LA NAVE "REGINA ELISABETTA II"

DOMANDE:

- (1) E' PICCOLA LA NAVE DI QUESTO DISEGNO?
- (2) CI SONO MOLTE NAVI COME QUESTA?
- (3) PENSI CHE LA MAGGIOR PARTE DELLE PERSONE PREFERISCONO VIAGGIARE CON LE NAVI?
- (4) E' MOLTO COSTOSO VIAGGIARE SU QUESTA NAVE?
- (5) QUESTA NAVE PUO' TRASPORTARE 2950 PERSONE. VERO O FALSO?
- (6) POSSONO NUOTARE SULLA NAVE I PASSEGGERI?
- (7) VENDONO DA BERE SU QUESTA NAVE?
- (8) SU QUESTA NAVE MOSTRANO FILM PER BAMBINI?

THE QE2

- (1) IS THE SHIP IN THE PICTURE SMALL?
- (2) ARA THERE MANY SHIPS LIKE THE QE2?
- (3) DO YOU THINK THAT MOST PEOPLE PREFER TO TRAVEL BY SEA?
- (4) IS IT EXPENSIVE TO TRAVEL ON QE2?
- (5) HE SHIP CAN CARRY 2,950 PEOPLE – TRUE OF FALSE?
- (6) CAN THE PASSENGERS SWIM ON THE SHIP?
- (7) DO THEY SELL DRINKS ON THE QE2?
- (8) CAN CHILDREN WATCH FILMS ON THE SHIP?

PUBBLICITÀ

Rinnovo delle iscrizioni**all'Associazione Giuliani e Dalmati**

A L'Associazione Giuliani e Dalmati Usa informa i propri soci che è aperto il rinnovo delle iscrizioni. Il canone annuo è di 20 dollari (più 20 dollari per coloro che desiderano abbonarsi al bollettino "Il Faro" pubblicato mensilmente dal sodalizio). I soci, e coloro che desiderano iscriversi all'Associazione sono pregati di inviare l'assegno, intestato alla presidente Yolanda Maurin, a questo indirizzo: 7307 5th Ave., North Bergen N.J. 07047. Per informazioni, telefonare al n. (201) 868-7582.

ACIM: Lotteria cartellino verde

B L'Ufficio nazionale per l'emigrazione italiana (Acim) di New York comunica che dal 12 febbraio al 12 marzo 1996 si potrà partecipare alla prossima Lotteria cartellino verde.

IL 10 FEBBRAIO - L'Italian American Writers Association presenta "Open Reading for Italian American Writers".

C L'appuntamento è alle 6:00 p.m. presso il Cornelia St. Cafe di Manhattan (29 Cornelia Street). Per informazioni, tel. (212) 267-1434.

D **FINO AL 24 FEBBRAIO - La Marisa del Re Gallery di Manhattan presenta la mostra "Mimmo Rotella: Recent Works".** Per informazioni, tel. (212) 688-1843.

E **IL 7 FEBBRAIO - Il Lincoln Center,** per la serie "Great Performers", presenta un recital del basso **Samuel Ramey**, che, in **"A Date With The Devil"**, interpreterà, tra l'altro, arie dal **"Mefistofele"** di **Boito**. L'appuntamento, alle 8:00 p.m., è presso l'Avery Fisher Hall (65th Street & Broadway). Per informazioni, tel. (212) 721-6500.

F **IL 7 FEBBRAIO - L'Istituto Italiano di Cultura di New York** presenta **"Morphology as a Turning Point in Architecture and Urban Research"**. All'appuntamento, alle 6:00 p.m. presso la sede dell'Istituto (686 Park Avenue), parteciperanno **Barry Commoner** (Queens College/CUNY), **Kenneth Frampton** (Columbia University), **Vittorio Giorgini** (Pratt Institute), **Guy Nordenson** (Princeton University) e **Paolo Spedicato** (Brooklyn College/CUNY). Per l'occasione sarà anche presentato il volume **"Spatiology: The Morphology of the Natural Sciences in Architecture and Design"** di Vittorio Giorgini (L'Arcaedizioni, Milano). Per informazioni, tel. (212) 879-4242 (ext. 66).

Straordinaria Signora Blake

G **PSICHICA -** Se siete in cerca di una risposta onesta e veritiera chiamatela oggi stesso. Una domanda gratis. Lei parla inglese

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H **OGGI - La New Jersey Symphony Orchestra** presenta un recital del flautista **Jean-Pierre Rampal**. L'appuntamento, alle 3:00 p.m., è presso la Symphony Hall di Newark, NJ. Per informazioni, tel. 1-800-ALLEGRO.

I **PROFESSORESSA SILVANA**
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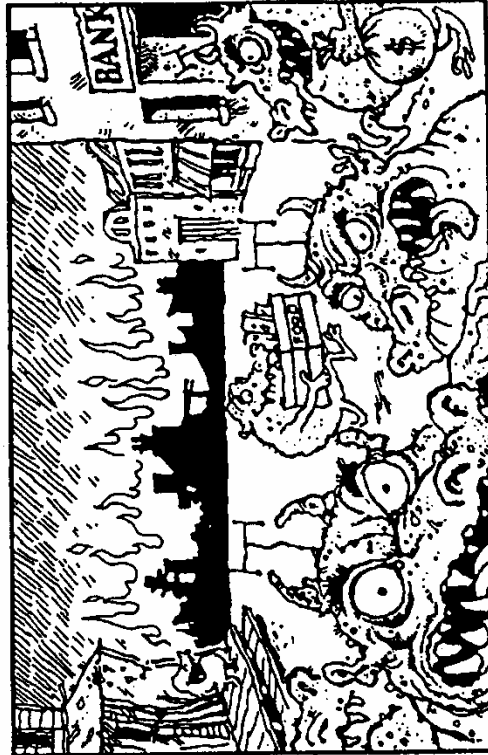
(1986/3/31)

Domande per la pubblicità

- (1) Come è descritta la Signora Blake?
- (2) Che cosa succede all' Italian American Writers Association il 10 febbraio?
- (3) Chi dice che può guarire le persone quando gli altri non ci sono riusciti?
- (4) Quando si chiude la mostra "Mimmo Rotella - Recent works"?
- (5) Che strumento suona il musicista che suona con la New Jersey Synphony Orchestra?
- (6) Qual'è la data in cui si terrà la lotteria per il 'cartellino verde'?
- (7) Che cosa presenta l'Istituto Italliano di Cultura il 7 Febbraio e a che ora è l'appuntamento?
- (8) A che ora incomincia lo spettacolo al "Lincoln Center" il 7 febbraio?
- (9) Quale associazione informa i propri soci che il rinnovo per le iscrizioni è aperto?

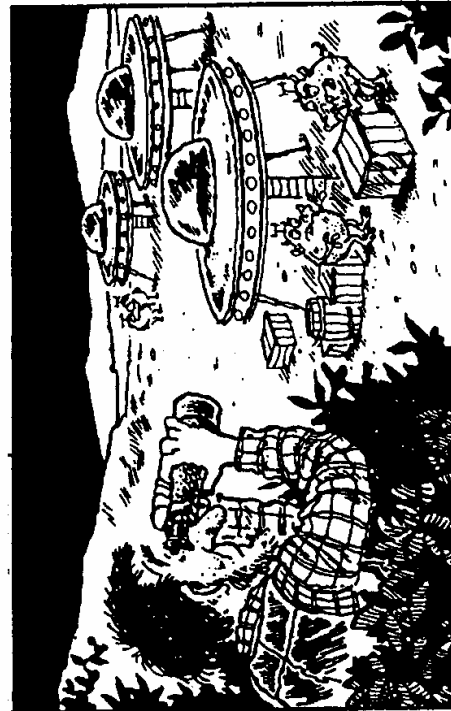
SALVATO DAI TOPI

1980



IL GIORNO DOPO





QUELLA NOTTE

LA SERA DOPO



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