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Alessia Waller April 22, 2009

“Il Toscano Non È Un Dialetto” : Variation in Italian Language Attitudes

by

Alessia Waller

Adviser

Susan Tamasi

Program in Linguistics

Susan Tamasi
Adviser

Roberto Franzosi
Committee Member

Judith Raggi Moore
Committee Member

Donald Tuten
Committee Member

_____
Date

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a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
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Abstract

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Italy is home to one standard and many regional dialects. The standard variety, Italian, has enjoyed a relatively recent and widespread proliferation, yet until about 1950, most Italians grew up speaking regional dialects (many of which are mutually unintelligible). Here, I present an examination of how Italians evaluate their country's dialects in terms of beauty, prestige, and similarity to codified Italian. Specifically, I ask how respondents' age and region of residence shape their perception of dialects. To answer this question, 530 respondents from three regions of Italy (Veneto, Tuscany, and Campania) performed a map-coloring task based on methodology pioneered by Preston (1989) in language attitude research in the United States.

The results of my research showed that 1) respondents did not always rate their local region positively for judgments of beauty and/or prestige 2) linguistic judgments reflected North-South socio-economic divides and cultural stereotypes, and 3) younger respondents associated more strongly with Italian than with their local dialect.

I did not expect the dialect of Tuscany to be rated so overwhelmingly positively by the majority of respondents, even at the expense of their own local dialect. These results led me to conclude that the linguistic situation of Italy warrants a different paradigm than the "correct" vs. "pleasant" one used by Preston in United States, and that these data can be best understood within the context of the changing relationship between Italian and the regional dialects.

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Glossary

(This glossary is a compilation of my own definitions of these terms as I believe they apply to this research as well as definitions provided by Loos et al. 2004 and Gerfen 2002.)

Covert prestige	Associated with group social identification among speakers of non-standard speech varieties, often expresses itself in opposition to the overt prestige associated with the standard variety
Isogloss	A line meant to approximate the geographical differentiation in use of certain dialect features
Linguistic insecurity	The self-consciousness about speech that is felt by speakers of socially unprestigious dialects
Overt prestige	Prestige that is associated with the standard variety of a language
Solidarity	Feelings of shared identity, association with a group
Status	Feelings of hierarchical identity, often tied to association with the standard variety

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Introduction:

Italian as it exists today is a relatively new language—before Italy's unification in 1861, there was no official spoken standard, and before the early 17th century, there was no official written standard either (Della Valle & Patota 2006). Instead, the population of Italy spoke a number of different regional dialects[1], many of which were mutually unintelligible. As such, language standardization was a slow process, born of multiple cycles of convergence and divergence between written and spoken as well as national and regional varieties.

The accordingly complex and changing relationship between Italian and the regional dialects is one that this thesis intends to investigate. The dialects are themselves currently undergoing a great deal of change as they are leveled by globalization, youth culture, and the now-ubiquitous use of the national standard. Such a dynamic coexistence of varieties in Italy makes it an important location for linguistic study, particularly for understanding how Italians evaluate their own dialect and those of their regional neighbors, for understanding how history, culture, and geography continue to shape language attitudes, and for understanding how those attitudes change in tandem with the living languages they refer to.

This thesis explores how respondents' region and age affects their evaluation of dialects in terms of beauty, prestige, and similarity to Italian, and aims to understand language attitudes specifically in terms of North-South regional differences and stereotypes. Based on existing linguistic isoglosses as well as demonstrated North-South

[1] For the purpose of this thesis, *Italian* will be used to refer to the standard variety and *dialect* will be used to refer to the modern regional speech varieties. *Vernacular* will be used to refer to the historical regional speech varieties.

social differentiation, I expect the results of this research to organize themselves within the following oppositions: North vs. South, status vs. solidarity, and covert vs. overt prestige[2]. Although it is impossible to make any large-scale claims about North-South linguistic relationships and attitudes based on the limited amount of data collected for this research, I hope this thesis to be a pilot study that will pave the way for further questions.

Historical Context: The Languages of Italy

In order to understand the status of dialects in Italy today, it is useful to understand their past, and the changing nature of their relationship with the national standard, Italian. Historically, each of Italy's dialects stems from a different Latin vernacular. After the Roman conquest, Latin was adopted by the disparate populations of Italy, including the Celts, Veneti, Etruscans, Umbrans, the Oscans, and others (Lepschy 2002). Each of these populations spoke a different language, whose sub-stratum influence on Latin gave rise to early forms of what are now Italy's regional dialects (Lepschy 2002). The choice of the Tuscan (or more specifically, Florentine) vernacular as the template for the eventual standard variety resulted in part from the multitude of important works written in Florentine during the 14th century, as well as Florence's own economic and political power (Della Valle & Patota 2006).

Although the written standard of the 14th century was Latin, Florentine authors such as Dante, Petrarch, and Bocaccio chose to write in their regional spoken vernacular. Briefly, the written and spoken varieties converged. However, as the spoken vernacular of Florence changed and the written standard did not, the situation soon became

[2] The terms status, solidarity, and overt and covert prestige are used here with reference to their specific linguistic meaning, as outlined in the glossary.

problematic, and by the 18th century, a debate was raging between those authors that insisted on continuing to use a spoken vernacular from 400 years prior, and those that thought it had outlived its usefulness (Della Valle & Patota 2006).

By the time the Renaissance and the scientific revolution had swept through Italy, the vocabulary of Dante and Bocaccio was simply too poor to cover all the new inventions, discoveries, and philosophies of the previous four centuries. However, those few Italians that could read and write still only knew how to do so in the vernacular of 14th century Florence. This new divergence between the spoken and written form gave rise to "the language question," or *questione della lingua* (Della Valle & Patota 2006).

The dilemma was this: no one spoke the literary language natively, and it was accessibly only to an elite educated echelon of society (Bruni 1996). It was primarily "una lingua da apprendere sui libri[3]" that was high on prestige but low on practicality (Bruni 1996: xxxiii). Although outdated and limited in scope, the literary standard was nevertheless codified and therefore was guaranteed an extra-regional audience. On the other hand, the proposed new literary standard (based on the then-current vernacular of Florence), was more productive and practical but was limited to a Tuscan audience. Trying to implement either model had its share of impracticalities, and for a while no consensus was reached, and early Italian continued to be confined to the page (Tosi 2001; Lepschy 2002).

Compounding this problem of finding a common medium of expression was the fact that before 1861, Italy existed only as a kind of "geographical expression" (Metternicht, quoted in Tosi 2001: 1)—it was a conglomeration of city-states, each

[3] "A language to learn from books"

independently governed, and each allied or pitted against its neighbors with no over-arching national loyalties. In the early 1860's, only an estimated 2.5% of the population spoke Italian, which was still almost exclusively a written form, and the unification of Italy in 1861 changed what had been a literary *questione della lingua* to a socio-political one (Della Valle & Patota 2006). Italy was suddenly under a great deal of pressure to catch up to its neighbors, such as France and Great Britain, and establish itself as a single country with a single national identity—represented, ideally, by a single national language (D'Agostino 2007).

Yet in the late 1800s there were still several different cultural and economic Italys, with the largest discrepancy in productivity and employment existing along the North-South axis of the country (D'Agostino 2007). The lack of a spoken national language only emphasized such divisions, and according to D'Agostino, the linguistic situation provided the clearest evidence for these elements of fracture (2007: 24). For example, in 1881, Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria had literacy rates of more than 50%—a statistic it took Calabria and the Basilicata until 1931 to match. Emigration, urbanization, and industrialization did much to change Italy, but these trends favored the North, especially the "industrial triangle" of Piedmont, Lombardy, and Liguria (D'Agostino 2007).

The outbreak of WWI, mandatory public education, and industrialization all served to spread the use of Italian and give it its current spoken form (Della Valle & Patota 2006). In each of the above situations, Italians from different regions were thrown together, and from the common need to understand one another and be understood, they began to use as a *lingua franca* what had previously been an exclusively written language

(Della Valle & Patota 2006). This living version of the static written standard was called "popular Italian," and even though it was codified by schooling and spread by urbanization, it was first born in the dirt and blood of army trenches (Lepschy 2002).

Millions of soldiers from all over Italy had come together to fight in the First World War, and soon developed a common idiom that Lepschy describes as "rough, uncouth…but…lively, vigorous, spontaneous" (2002: 53). This early version of the standard has been called "unitary Italian," because it was the first spoken variety that the different regions of Italy had in common (De Mauro 1963, cited in Lepschy 2002: 53). Cortelazzo (1972) defined the "unitary Italian" of WWI as "the kind of Italian which has been imperfectly acquired by those who have a dialect as their mother tongue" (quoted in Lepschy 2002: 53). This somewhat patronizing definition ignores the important fact that once again, the spoken and written forms of Italian had converged. What was unusual about this instance of convergence was that the spoken form was born of the written, instead of vice versa.

Although WWI did more than almost any other event to create a spoken standard, the fascist regime of the 1930s and 40s truly cemented Italian not only as a practical language for communication between regions, but also as a national language whose use was an act of loyalty and patriotism—and whose misuse was considered criminal (D'Agostino 2007). The Fascist regime ushered in an age of *dialettophobia*, and dialects were seen as sources of error and "broken Italian" (D'Agostino 2007: 37). It was during this period that regional languages were compartmentalized and demoted to "dialects" as though they were subsets of Italian instead of older sisters of the same. In fact, in 1940, the Accademia d'Italia went so far as to try to replace loan words such as *dessert* with *fin*

di pasto, or *cocktail* with *arlecchino* (D'Agostino 2007). Such language planning did little, and dessert is thankfully still dessert, but the efforts of the 1930s and 40s did cast a lasting stain on dialects that is still evident.

Today, television, radio, internet, and Short Message Servicing (or SMS) have made their own contribution to Italian, and Italian also continues to both influence and be influenced by regional dialects, youth culture, and other national languages such as English and French (Della Valle & Patota 2006). The younger generations of Italy are exerting perhaps the greatest "mixing" influence, and are not only bringing diverse regional elements into spoken Italian, but flattening regional varieties as well (D'Agostino 2007). In fact, the current state of Italian and of the dialects of Italy could be compared to that of a regression towards the mean, whereby Italian is becoming more regional and the dialects are losing some of their regional distinctiveness (Sobrero 1997). Thus the cycle of converge and divergence is repeating itself.

The Italianization of Dialects and Regionalization of Italian:

Sobrero (1997) defines three main phases in the process of Italianization (or leveling) of dialects:

Phase 1: Diglossia without bilingualism. In this phase, which lasted until roughly the beginning of the century, all Italians spoke in the regional vernacular and some wrote in the standard. The written, or high variety, was reserved for formal, official uses and was entirely distinct from the spoken, or low variety, which was for all other daily interactions (Sobrero 1997). Ruggero Borghi, in 1855, complained that writing in Italian

"costava più pena di molto, e più fatica che scrivere in Francese[4]." (D'Agostino 2007: 24).

Phase 2: Diglossia with bilingualism. In the second half of the 20th century, when the industrial revolution changed what had been a fundamentally agricultural society to a manufacturing and commerce-based society, populations shifted and mixed, especially in urban centers, and within the space of two or three generations, bilingualism was the norm (Sobrero 1997). As Italian was spoken by more people and used in more situations, diglossia began to decline even as bilingualism rose (Sobrero 1997).

Phase 3: Bilingualism without diglossia. Sobrero claims that today, dialects are at risk of being totally abandoned, as they have lost their functional distinction from Italian (Sobrero 1997). He cites as cause the advent of mass media such as radio and television, which has enabled what used to be exclusively the high variety (Italian) to infiltrate every domain of public and private life (Sobrero 1997).

Tosi (2001) outlines the same shift from diglossia without bilingualism to bilingualism without diglossia. He claims the two codes—national standard and regional variety have"interpenetrated" each other, and just as Italian has a flattening effect on the dialects, the dialects have the effect of differentiating Italian, giving it regional flavor (24). Although Italy is no longer plurilingual, Tosi cites DeMauro's claim that it is "still strongly pluricentric" (De Mauro 1970, cited in Tosi 2001: 25).

Post 1950—the age of television—most Italians grew up speaking the national language as opposed to a regional variety in the home (Lepschy 2002). Italian gained a whole new generation of native speakers, and now, in addition to movements aimed at

[4] "Costs more pain and effort than writing in French"

preserving dialects, there are several movements aimed at maintaining the "purity" of standard Italian both at home and abroad (Della Valle & Patota 2006). Italians are once again faced with a language question, but this time it is not "What should the written standard be?" but "What should the spoken standard be?"

This could be called the "new" *questione della lingua*, and it is likely to be even more difficult to answer than the first, for a standard spoken language is inherently unattainable and only exists as an abstract ideal (Coveri, Benucci, & Diadori 1998). Standard spoken Italian is defined negatively by what it does not contain rather than by what it does: it is that "unmarked" variety devoid of any regional flavor or accent (D'Agostino 2007: 121). Berruto's (1987) nine-part definition of Italian illustrates the difficulty of defining the language as a whole, let alone pin down its standard form. Berruto describes registers such as: "fixed literary standard," "neo-standard," "bureaucratic Italian," "regional popular Italian," and even "obscure informal Italian" (Berruto 1987, cited in Tosi 2001: 42; Coveri, Benucci & Diadori 1998:15). What Berruto is attempting to show with this sprawling definition is that there is no single, monolithic version of Italian—there are only permutations, and these change depending on context, interlocutor, and geography.

The state of dialects in Italy today:

In the 1860s, out of 22 million citizens, more than 14 million were illiterate, and if one did not have the good fortune of being born in Tuscany (or Rome, 75-80% of whose total immigrant population was from Tuscany) one did not speak Italian, and so was cut-off from national discourse (D'Agostino 2007). Schooling was technically obligatory but in 1870, only 38% of the population was enrolled in public education, and of those

Italians who were receiving schooling, the majority lived in the industrialized North (D'Agostino 2007). A side effect of the North's industrialization and high literacy rates was that the use of dialect declined significantly among its population (D'Agostino 2007).

On six occasions between 1964 and 1996, ISTAT (The Institute for Linguistic Research) distributed questionnaires throughout Italy that asked respondents to indicate how often and in what context they used their regional dialect. The results indicated a consistent decline in the use of dialects both at home and with friends and colleagues (Lepschy 2002). The effect of internal emigration (mostly from the agricultural South to the industrialized North) as well as the spread of mass media has already been cited as having a negative impact on the use of dialect, and, from the ISTAT data shown here, it may seem that the dialects of Italy are doomed to disappear within a few more generations:

Table 1.1 ISTAT data showing change over time in patterns of dialect use

	1974	1982	1988	1991	1996	2000	2006
At home	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Dialect with everyone	51	47	40	36	34	19	16
Italian with everyone	25	29	34	34	34	--	--
With friends and colleagues							
Only or mainly dialect	42	36	33	23	28	--	--
Only or mainly Italian	36	42	47	48	50	--	--

(Compiled from Lepschy 2002: 42 and D'Agostino 2007: 175)

Yet given a closer look, the ISTAT data reveal that after the initial decline in use of dialect, a balancing occurred between use of dialect (the private code) and use of

Italian (the public code) (D'Agostino 2007). Lepschy admits the decline in use of dialects and parallel increase in use of Italian both inside and outside the home, but also emphasizes the slowness of the process and the "extraordinary tenacity" of the dialects (Lepschy 2002: 43). He points out that in the period between 1991 and 1996, the use of Italian with all relatives in the home remained stable, and the use of dialect with friends and colleagues increased from 23 to 28% (Lepschy 2002).

D'Agostino believes this "balancing out" to be part of the *nuova dialettalità*—new dialectophony—that is based in and grows out of the youth culture, finding expression in SMS, internet chat, email, graffiti and popular music (D'Agostino 2007: 180), and Berruto claims that, "ora che sappiamo parlare l'Italiano, possiamo anche (ri)parlare dialetto[5]" (Berruto 2002: 48, quoted in D'Agostino 2007: 180). No longer synonymous with ignorance and low social class (as they were during industrialization) nor with broken Italian (as they were during the Fascist regime), dialects are now viewed by younger generations as both a source of cultural pride and a resource for linguistic expressiveness (D'Agostino 2007). Although clear diglossia may have been lost, dialects have not yet lost all linguistic or social usefulness (D'Agostino 2007).

Rather, they can be used as 1) a communication tool for daily life, 2) a resource for greater expressiveness, 3) a representative or symbolic gesture, and 4) a historical gesture/attempt at folk tradition. (Berruto 2002: 120, cited in D'Agostino 2007: 180). Although much has been made of the leveling effect of mass media communications, dialects are often used in television shows or advertisements to give folk color or extra-linguistic information (D'Agostino 2007). In fact, D'Agostino quotes Moretti's claim

[5] "Now that we know how to speak Italian, we can also (re)speak dialect"

that dialects are not dying and that there is "una volontà maggiore di riscoprire il dialetto[6]" (Moretti 2006: 44, quoted in D'Agostino 2007: 184). D'Agostino believes that the "pseudodialect" spoken by adolescents is used as a positive identity marker that associates them with their region and family (2007).

Dialect features are indeed an important part of youth language, and new mixtures of Italian, slang, and dialect called *gerghi* are increasingly used in urban environments, especially those of the less dialectophone North (Tosi 2001). However, dialectal influences have different connotations in the North and the South, and Tosi claims that the trend among youth to incorporate dialect into slang and colloquial speech is *not*, as D'Agostino believes, a willingness to re-learn dialects, but rather an anti-conformist statement (Radkte 1993c, cited in Tosi 2001: 194).

This new hybrid of Italian and dialect has not been universally welcomed: Stella, writing in 1974, called it "laughable" :

> "Un tempo il dialetto era la proprietà di tutte le classi…ora la lingua italiana è penetrata nell'uso delle classi più colte. Benché non ancora parlata comunemente, s'è però imposta tanto, che ha snaturato il dialetto nella conversazione delle persone non volgari. In certe conversazioni ha creato una specie di…italiano vestito alla vernacola che è quasi risibile…[7]" (A. Stella 1974: 336, quoted in Bruni 1996: 189).

Yet Berruto (1987) and Lepschy see this transformation not as a degradation of dialects but as evidence of the birth of a new, "ordinary Italian" (Lepschy 2002: 66). For Lepschy

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[6] "A greater willingness to re-discover dialects"

[7] "At one time dialects were the property of all [social] classes…now Italian has penetrated in the speech of the most cultivated classes. Even though it is not commonly spoken, it has nevertheless imposed itself to the point of distorting dialects in the conversation of non-vulgar [non working-class] people. In certain conversations it has created a kind of…Italian dressed in the vernacular that is almost laughable"

and Berruto, the mixing of dialect and Italian is simply another resource for communication, and represents a positive, identity-forming feature.

Theoretical Context: Language Attitudes and Perceptual Dialectology

Language Attitudes:

The premise of language attitude studies is that the social evaluation of a group is transferred to the features associated with that group (Preston 1999b: 360). In other words, beliefs and/or stereotypes about a group are illustrated in attitudes about its language (Ryan et al. 1982). The first (and definitely most well-know) language attitude study was conducted in 1960 in Quebec, and was the brainchild of the social psychologist Wallace Lambert. Lambert, while sitting on a bus, overheard the conversation of two English women as they discussed two other women who were sitting behind them and speaking together in French. The first two women had very negative things to say about the French speakers, even though, as Lambert states incredulously, "the English ladies couldn't understand the French conversation, nor did they look back to see what the people they seemed to know so much about even looked like" (Lambert 1967: 93). Lambert used this experience as the basis for his subsequent matched-guise experiments with French and English speakers in Quebec, and his methods soon became the paradigm for most language attitude research until the late 1970s (Bradac, Cargile & Hallett 2001).

Bradac et al. criticize the "tenacity" of this methodological paradigm, and cite the matched-guise technique's atheoretical and acontextual nature as a flaw that has been largely overlooked (Bradac et al. 2001). Be that as it may, Lambert's methodology was rewarding in its simplicity and groundbreaking in its results, and it is small wonder that the "empirical avalanche" (Giles & Coupland 1991: 37, quoted in Milroy & Preston

1999: 4) that followed Lambert's initial 1960 experiments was based on similar methods. As conceived by Lambert, a basic matched-guise experiment presents several recorded samples of speech, each in a different variety but recorded by the same bilingual or bidialectal speaker. By isolating the change in language variety as the only variable and asking respondents to rate each speaker on attributes such as intelligence, sociability, ambition, or honesty, the matched-guise experiment is able to make social stereotypes about speakers explicit (Milroy & Preston 1999).

Lambert's original experiment asked French- and English-speaking Canadian respondents to evaluate speech samples recorded in both French and English. Unbeknownst to the respondents, the speaker for the matched samples was the same; however, respondents gave significantly higher ratings of intelligence, sociability, and ambition to the speaker presenting in the English version (Lambert et al. 1960). Although respondents rated the speaker presenting in French poorly for features of status (prestige, ambition, intelligence), they rated him highly for features of solidarity (friendliness, honesty, likeability) (Lambert et al. 1960).

This split between status and solidarity, as well as the divergent allotment of features of each, has proven to be one of the most significant and repeated findings of language attitude research. Speech is unarguably an indicator of group membership, and "evaluations of language varieties…do not reflect either linguistic or aesthetic quality *per se*, but rather are expressions of social convention and preference, which, in turn, reflect an awareness of the status and prestige accorded to the speakers of those varieties" (Edwards 1982: 21, quoted in Tamasi 2003: 43).

Perceptual dialectology:

Stemming from the work of social psychologists such as Lambert and Ryan, Giles & Sebastian is a relatively new trend in language attitude research called "perceptual dialectology." Bringing together features of dialectology, social geography, and language attitudes, perceptual dialectology as it exists in its modern form was pioneered by Dennis Preston in the late 1980s (Tamasi 2003). Yet to understand Preston's contribution we must first understand the context in which he made it: dialectology has traditionally not been concerned with the layman's opinions about language. Perceptual dialectology, however, is exclusively concerned with what non-linguists have to say about language, and attempts to discover both respondents' opinions about where different varieties are found as well as their judgments of those varieties (Preston 1999a).

The earliest perceptual dialectology research explored respondent classification of dialect boundaries; Weijnen's well-known "Little Arrow" research provided Dutch respondents with a map and asked them to draw arrows from the local region to places where people spoke similarly to them (Weijnen 1999). The resulting dialect boundaries mostly corroborated with existing isoglosses of the Netherlands; however, Weijnen's reliance on respondents' subjective impressions received criticism because it did not control for the non-linguistic factors that affect perception (in other words, stereotypes of speakers that might influence classification of a dialect) (Preston 1999a). Yet, as Wolfram and Fasold (1997) note, "it is the perception of dialect differences and the social evaluation of these differences…that is the real basis for the existence of social dialects" (110).

Subsequent research conducted in Japan that further explored subjective classification of dialect boundaries found that respondents' perceptions of the latter did

not corroborate known linguistic isoglosses (cf Sibata 1999, Grooaters 1999). These results were not encouraging, and Grootaers (1999) cites them as support for his claim that the psychological judgments linked to community and tradition have no place in defining dialect boundaries. Yet Weijnen (1999) defends subjective classification research, postulating that the lack of corroboration between Japanese perceptions of boundaries and actual linguistic boundaries was a consequence of emphasizing dialect difference as opposed to dialect similarity. After all, there is always some degree of difference to be found, but focusing on difference instead of similarity means losing sight of the forest for the trees.

Subjective dialect boundaries do not, in fact, offer a clear or concise picture of dialect distribution, but their ability to corroborate or contradict linguistic evidence is useful as a tool for discussion and as inspiration for further research (Preston 1999a). The emphasis on folk knowledge and the concern with extra-linguistic stereotypes is part of perceptual dialectology's attempt to not only understand where people believe dialects occur, but also to understand how those dialects are perceived. Research on the subjective classification of dialects was largely dropped following the Japanese controversy, yet, as Kretzschmar points out, it is exactly the "mismatch" between perception and production that is "one of the most important facts about language, and its discovery is one of the most important findings of modern empirical linguistics" (Kretzschmar 1999: xvii).

Preston himself was not as concerned with the mismatch between perception and production as he was with the ability of subjects to place dialects in a particular geographical region at all; he wanted to know if respondents had "mental maps" of

dialect areas (Preston 1989). Although previous language attitude studies had focused almost exclusively on bilingual communities, Preston surveyed respondents within the United States, providing them with a blank map of the country and asking them to draw and label the different dialect areas therein (Preston 1989).

His methodology consisted of five basic tasks, including: "draw-a-map," (described above), "degree of difference," in which subjects ranked regions on a scale for the perceived degree of dialect difference from the home area, and "correct and pleasant," in which subjects ranked regions for correct and pleasant speech (Preston 1999a: xxxiv). This combination of techniques from cultural geography and language attitudes resulted in a particularly flexible and productive methodology that has been adapted for many subsequent research projects (Tamasi 2003).

The results of Preston's research indicated that for the United States, when respondents judged the speech of iconic dialect areas (such as "the Northeast" or "the South"), the linguistic differences indicated were representations of the social contrasts they indexed (Irvine 1996: 17, quoted in Preston 1999b: 360), revealing a cultural divide that expressed itself along a North-South geographical axis. For example, although Northern respondents ranked the speech of the South as very low for attributes relating to correctness, they nevertheless gave it high rankings for attributes relating to pleasantness (Preston 1999b). This led Preston to conclude that the Northern respondents, having used all their linguistic capital on establishing their dialect as "correct," and therefore of high status, gave Southern speech more "solidarity" capital (Preston 1999b).

The discovery of a perceived dichotomy between "correct" and "pleasant" speech varieties is representative of the familiar "status vs. solidarity" dichotomy of language

attitudes (cf Ryan, Giles & Sebastian 1982). Although Preston used the terms "correct" and "pleasant" to elicit judgments of status or solidarity in the United States, Inoue (1999) found that "dialect image" in northern Japan generally expresses itself along an axis of "emotional" or "intellectual" attributes. According to Inoue, dialect image is the "socio-psychological image of a (geographical or social) dialect" (1999: 147). In other words, it is a belief about the nature of a dialect, not knowledge about how it sounds.

In Great Britain, the "status vs. solidarity" dichotomy was obtained by asking respondents to measure dialects on gradient scales of "urbanity/pastoralness" and "standardness/accentedness" (Inoue 1999). In this instance, Inoue found the formation of dialect image to depend not only on the degree of difference of a dialect from the standard language, but also on the extra-linguistic social prestige of the residents of the area being evaluated (Inoue 1999). Based on these findings, Inoue postulated that two kinds of experiences contribute to form a dialect image—the individual and the collective experience (Inoue 1999: 174). The former entails first-hand linguistic knowledge, in which a respondent actually comes into contact with a speaker of a dialect, and the latter entails stereotypes of dialects perpetuated by the mass media (Inoue 1999: 174).

The research question:

Language stereotypes often pit a standard variety against other language varieties, and emphasize the tension between affiliation with globalizing institutions vs. affiliation with more local and personal communities (Eckert 2004: 369). In Italy, the marked economic difference between the richer North and the poorer South has done much to divide the country both culturally and socially, and a study of Italian language attitudes

may reveal not only the division and/or tension between northern and southern regions, but also regional differences in the importance of status or solidarity.

This research uses a modified version of Preston's 1989 methodology and bases its hypotheses partly on the generalizations that he extracted from his investigations:

1) For maps of perceived dialect areas, respondents draw stigmatized and then local areas most frequently
    a) Respondents from areas with high linguistic security rate the local areas as uniquely correct, but include a larger region in the area they consider most pleasant; respondents with low linguistic security rate the local area as most pleasant but rate a number of areas as most correct
    b) Linguistically secure respondents often find the same area to be both least correct and least pleasant; linguistically insecure respondents often find different areas to be least correct and least pleasant
2) Respondents with high linguistic security find regions of least correctness and pleasantness also most different (often ranking them as unintelligible); respondents with low linguistic security may find areas of either high or low correctness and pleasantness maximally different from the local area

(Preston 1999a: xxxiv).

Based on the existing socio-economic differences between regions, as well as the decline of dialect use in recent generations, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

1) Respondents will most frequently indicate their local region for positive values judgments (whether most beautiful OR most prestigious)

2) Language attitudes will reflect regional stereotypes; therefore southern regions (those lying below the Rome-Ancona[8] line) will be judged as less prestigious and less similar to Italian more frequently than northern regions.

3) Younger respondents (age 18-30) will show a preference for Italian over the local dialect; therefore the first hypothesis in particular will be more significant for respondents over the age of 30.

Methodology:

Respondents were presented with a blank map of Italy and asked to judge the speech of pre-determined areas (namely, the administrative regions) in terms of beauty, prestige, and similarity to current Italian. This methodology is essentially a hybrid of the perceptual dialectology methods pioneered by Preston in 1989.

Surveys were collected over a five-week period in three different regions of Italy, each of which was chosen on the basis of its linguistic iconicity and distinctiveness. The Veneto region, which lies above the La Spezia-Rimini[9] line, and the Campania region, which lies below the Roma-Ancona line, are prototypical representatives of northern and southern varieties; furthermore, their dialects are generally well-known both within Italy and without, having received repeated exposure through song and film. Tuscany was a special case, and was chosen both as a linguistic and social control. Because Tuscany lies between the two major isoglosses of Italy, its dialect(s) contain both northern and

[8] One of two major isoglosses in Italy, separating the Meridional dialects from the Tuscan/Umbran dialects. For a map showing the Rome-Ancona and La Spezia-Rimini lines, see Appendix A.

[9] The other of the two major isoglosses in Italy, separating the Settentrional dialects from the Tuscan/Umbran dialects.

southern features (Giannelli 1997). Also, since a variety of Tuscan was the historical template for Italian, Tuscany is the only region that claims "dialectlessness"—a process of backformation that will be examined in greater detail in the discussion section.

For the purpose of isolating those variables most interesting to this research, I split the data sample into groups based on the region of data collection and age of respondent. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 99, and were grouped into two age sets: "18-30 year-olds" and "31+ year-olds." Although I aimed for 90 surveys for each age group within each region, (for a total sample of 540 surveys) I was only able to approximate that number, and the sets of data within the larger sample set are not perfectly split[10]:

Table 1.2: Age and region distribution of respondents

Region of data collection	Number of respondents 18-30	Number of respondent 31+	Total
Veneto	92	90	182
Tuscany	102	71	173
Campania	96	79	175

Respondents were provided with six colored pencils and a blank map of Italy on which regional boundaries but no labels or cities were indicated. Respondents were then asked to circle areas of Italy where they believed the following dialects were spoken: the most beautiful dialect, the least beautiful dialect, the most prestigious dialect, the least prestigious dialect, the dialect most similar to current Italian and the dialect least similar to current Italian[11]. One color corresponded to one value judgment. When I ran out of

[10] For additional breakdowns of respondent demographics, see Appendix C.
[11]These terms for the value judgments are translations of the terms as they appeared on the original survey in Italian. Though I use the short-hand term "beautiful," the Italian

colored pencils or there were not enough to distribute to a large group of respondents, respondents used numbers (1-6) or color words (e.g. “green,” “purple”) to attribute judgment to a certain region.

Map responses ranged from careful shading within single regions, to circles that encompassed half the country or an entire coast, to circles around a single city, to simply dots in the middle of a region. Because of the difficulty of coding for such variation during data entry, the results for the map-coloring task were interpreted in a purely binary manner. In other words, if a region was colored in an obvious way[12], it was entered into the data set without making distinctions for *how* it was colored: the data read as either “1” if the region was indicated or “0” if it was not. Analyses of respondents’ methods of shading for the map-coloring task might be interesting but are not within the scope of this thesis.

In addition to the map-coloring task, the survey included a section asking for demographic information, a short multiple-choice section that asked respondents about the frequency and context of their use of dialect, and a free response section that asked the open-ended question, “Is there anything else you would like to say about dialects?”

The demographic section included the question, “Do you speak a dialect? If so, which one(s)?” This question elicited very specific in answers from respondents, the nuances of which could unfortunately not be honored in the process of data entry. For instance, though respondent A might indicate she spoke “Senese,” and respondent B might indicate “Fiorentino,” both answers were entered into the data set as “Toscano.”

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survey asked respondents to identify the “most melodious, or acoustically pleasing dialect.” For the survey in Italian, as well as an English translation, see Appendix B.

[12] Some circles overlapped into other regions but I assume were intended to specify a single one. For examples of completed surveys, see Appendix D.

Likewise, if a respondent indicated that she spoke “Vicentino” but understood “Padovano,” her response was simply entered as “understands and speaks the Veneto dialect.”

About a third of all respondents also answered the open-ended question at the end of the survey to some degree—either with a few words or with several paragraphs. Although these comments are not analyzed in this thesis, a detailed discussion of what they reveal is certainly a possibility for further research.

The surveys were distributed mostly by hand and in person, sometimes one at a time and sometimes, if the collection site was a university classe or office workplace, in large groups. Before distributing the survey and the colored pencils, I briefly explained the purpose of the research, emphasized that it was anonymous, summarized the directions and content of the survey, passed it out, and then stood by to answer questions as needed and collect the surveys when they were complete. When surveys were distributed to groups of two or more respondents, discussions inevitably sprang up, and though a relatively small percentage of respondents wrote anything in the free response section, I witnessed that this was not for lack of strong opinion.

For the older age group in particular I often collected surveys one by one—from office buildings, banks, schools, hotels, and small shops—and the data collection process was slow and non-systematic. (The difficulty of collecting data from the older age group is accordingly reflected in the under-representation of 31+ year-olds in the total data sample.) For the younger age group I was able to use university courses, libraries, and study halls that almost always contained assemblies of at least three or more respondents.

In all aspects of my data collection I was greatly aided by my knowledge of and fluency in Italian, as well as by several important contacts in each city.

Specific data collection sites included: the Istituto Elsa Moranti, a professional/remedial school of Florence where I surveyed students, teachers, and janitors, and the University of Siena, where I collected surveys from students, professors, and administrative assistants. I also collected surveys from members of the Nicchio contrada[13], from hotel doormen and concierges, and from public office workers, or *impiegati*[14]. In Naples I collected surveys from journalists at *La Repubblica*[15], from patrons of the bar "Perditempo," from students and professors of the University of Naples, from small business owners around the city, from factory workers at a ceramics business and from stall owners at an outdoor market. In Vicenza my data sample consisted of students of the University of Padova, family members, neighbors, bank and regional office employees, friends, restaurant patrons, and elementary school teachers.

Although almost every survey was completed entirely by the respondent and in my presence, there were a few exceptions—in Naples, some surveys were dictated to me either because an informant was illiterate or had their hands full, or both. In some instances, surveys collected from much older respondents, (over 80) became more like interviews, and I took copious notes while the respondent talked. In Vicenza, my relatives often simply took a pile of surveys to work with them and brought them back completed, or my friends took a couple of surveys home to their parents overnight.

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[13] Siena is still divided into ancient neighborhoods called *contrade*.
[14] "Impiegato/a" is a catch-all term that most closely translates to "employed" and can indicate any sort of white-collar office job where one is not one's own boss.
[15] The largest circulation daily newspaper in Italy

Finally, a few surveys from Naples and Vicenza were sent to me by email after I had already returned to the United States.

After the completion of the data collection, responses for each section of the survey were numerically coded and entered into the statistical program SPSS (graduate pack version for Mac version 16.0).

Results:

The following figures illustrate responses for the map-coloring task only: what regions were colored with which pencil, by whom and how often. An analysis of the multiple-choice and free-response questions in the second half of the survey was unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis.

Each figure presented here indicates the frequency with which a given region was chosen for a value judgment ("most beautiful," "least beautiful," etc.), either for the total data sample or for subsets of the data sample that demonstrated statistically significant correlation between age and distribution of responses. As basic counts, these figures are useful for showing major trends in survey responses but do not proportionally indicate these trends, since the age groups 18-30 and 31+ were never exactly the same size.

Therefore, in addition to the basic frequency figures, I have included tables below each that show what percentage of responses was allotted to a given region. I chose to include only the top four percentages because more often than not, after the top four, the differences were not remarkable. (For example, there is little interesting distinction to be made between the 2.4% of responses that indicated Basilicata as speaking the least beautiful dialect and the 2.7% that indicated Molise).

For a broad statistical analysis, I performed a chi-square test to determine the effect of region of origin (which, for matters of simplification, is assumed to be the same as region of data collection[16]) on the geographical allocation of each value judgment. For every value judgment except one, the test returned a *p* value of less than .001, proving that a respondent's region of origin was indeed significant in determining how they colored the map. The only exception was for the value judgment of "least similar to Italian." For this criterion, the effect of region was not significant, indicated by a *p* value of .276.

I also determined the mean fraction of respondents who indicated a particular answer, and determined the 95% confidence interval test for the aggregate mean responses for each value judgment. For instance, in response to the question "where is the dialect closest to Italian spoken?" the vast majority (71%) of responses indicated Tuscany. The 95% confidence interval for this mean value produced an upper limit of .75 and a lower limit of .66. These limits indicate that even if the data sample were drastically increased, the proportion of responses indicating Tuscany would still fall within their relatively small range 95% of the time.

For every value judgment, some respondents indicated more than one region with the same colored pencil. For instance, the same respondent might indicate that the most beautiful dialect is spoken in Tuscany, in Campania, *and* in Emilia-Romagna[17]. This creates a need to distinguish between *respondent* and *responses*, since a single respondent

[16] Not all respondents were born in the region in which they were surveyed; yet control analyses (see Appendix F) confirmed that this did not make a significant impact on the major results trends.

[17] See Appendix F for control graphs demonstrating data robustness despite the indication of multiple regions for a single value judgment.

could (and often did) provide more than one response for a given value judgment.

Additionally, a distinction must be made between "data collected in Veneto" and "Veneti," for, as I have already mentioned, not everyone surveyed in a region was also born and raised in it. However, without ignoring the importance of these distinctions, for the purpose of expediency and efficiency when referring to each table or graph, I will use the simplified terms "Veneti," "Tuscans," and "Campagnoli" to refer to responses collected in Veneto, responses collected in Tuscany, and responses collected in Campania.

Figure 1.1 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample

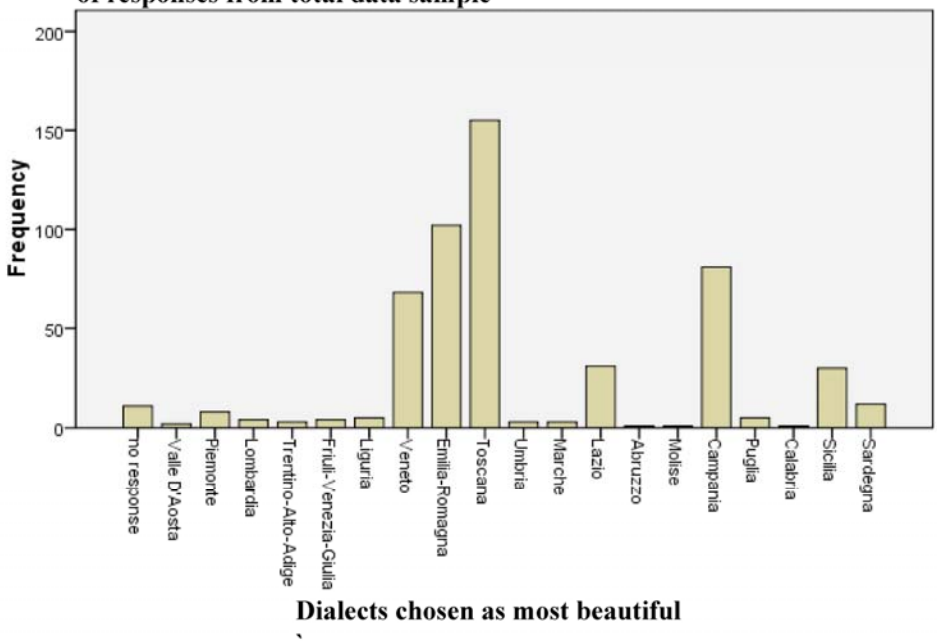


Table 1.3 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Tuscany	29%, CI ± 4%
Emilia-Romagna	19%
Campania	15%
Veneto	13%

For the question, “where do you believe the most beautiful dialect is spoken,” every region in Italy was indicated at least once. Figure 1.1 shows a preference for the northern regions, however—Campania is the only region below the Rome-Ancona line that received a substantial number of indications. The region that received the highest number of indications (29%) was Tuscany. 78% of all respondents gave single-region responses for this value judgment.

Table 1.4 “Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?” : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses		
	Veneto	Tuscany	Campania
No response	2%	2%	2%
Valle d'Aosta	0%	1%	0%
Piedmont	0%	2%	2%
Lombardy	2%	1%	0%
Trentino Alto Adige	1%	1%	1%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	2%	1%	0%
Liguria	1%	1%	2%
Veneto	17%	16%	5%
Emilia-Romagna	24%	23%	11%
Tuscany	35%	27%	26%
Umbria	1%	1%	0%
Marche	1%	1%	1%
Lazio	3%	4%	11%
Abruzzo	0%	0%	1%
Molise	0%	0%	1%
Campania	9%	12%	25%
Basilicata	0%	0%	0%
Puglia	1%	1%	1%
Calabria	0%	0%	1%
Sicily	2%	5%	10%
Sardinia	1%	2%	3%

Here and in all subsequent tables indicating aggregate percentages of responses, I have highlighted self-indication within each region since the tendency to indicate (or not indicate) the local region is of primary importance to the hypotheses of this thesis.

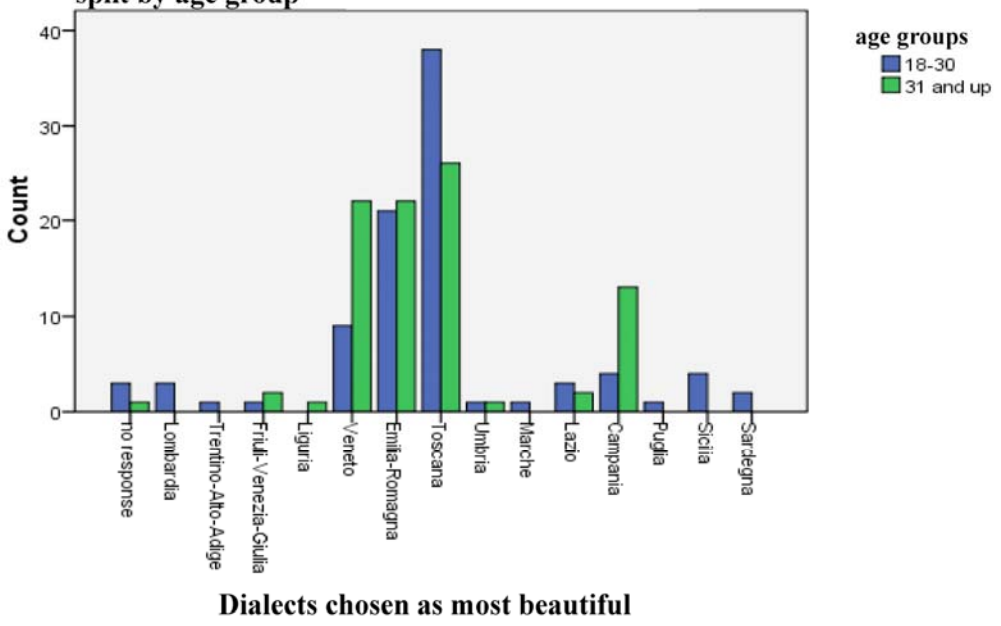
In Table 1.4, two major trends are evident: 1) Tuscany received the highest percentage of responses from each region for "most beautiful dialect," and 2) local regions received generally high frequencies of positive evaluation. However, though 17% of Veneti indicate Veneto as having the most beautiful dialect, this is hardly more than the percentage of Tuscans that perceive Veneto as having the most beautiful dialect. In other words, positive evaluation of Venetian by locals is barely higher than outsiders' evaluation of Venetian.

In a parallel trend, a smaller percentage of Tuscans than Veneti positively evaluated the dialect of Tuscany. The highest frequency for indication of the local region occurred in Campania, where 25% of Campagnoli chose the local dialect as the most beautiful. The frequency of positive self-evaluation in Campania is almost as high as that occurring in Tuscany. Also, though more Veneti indicated Tuscany than Veneto as having the most beautiful dialect (by a difference of nearly 20 percentage points), Campagnoli were very nearly as likely to indicate their own dialect as most beautiful (25% of responses) as they were to choose that of Tuscany (26% of responses).

Table 1.5 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Tuscany	41%	29%
Emilia-Romagna	23%	24%
Veneto	10%	24%
Campania	4%	14%

Figure 1.2 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group



In trying to determine how age correlates with choice of region, it was found that only the data collected in Veneto showed statistically significant non-random distribution of responses. (Although the age-based differences in responses from data collected in Tuscany and Campania were not determined to be statistically significant, they are nevertheless noteworthy, and can be found in Appendix E). Figure 1.2 shows the distribution of the responses of Veneti split by age, and a preference among 18-30 year-olds for the dialect of Tuscany over that of the local region is immediately evident. Respondents from the 31+ age group balanced their preferences between the dialect of the local region and that of Tuscany, instead indicating a marked preference for the dialect of Campania that was not matched by the 18-30 year-olds. Both age groups demonstrated a positive evaluation of the dialect of Emilia-Romagna, a border region of

Veneto. Once again an overall preference for the dialects of the North is evident, with Campania being the only southern region that received any great percentage of votes.

Figure 2.1 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample

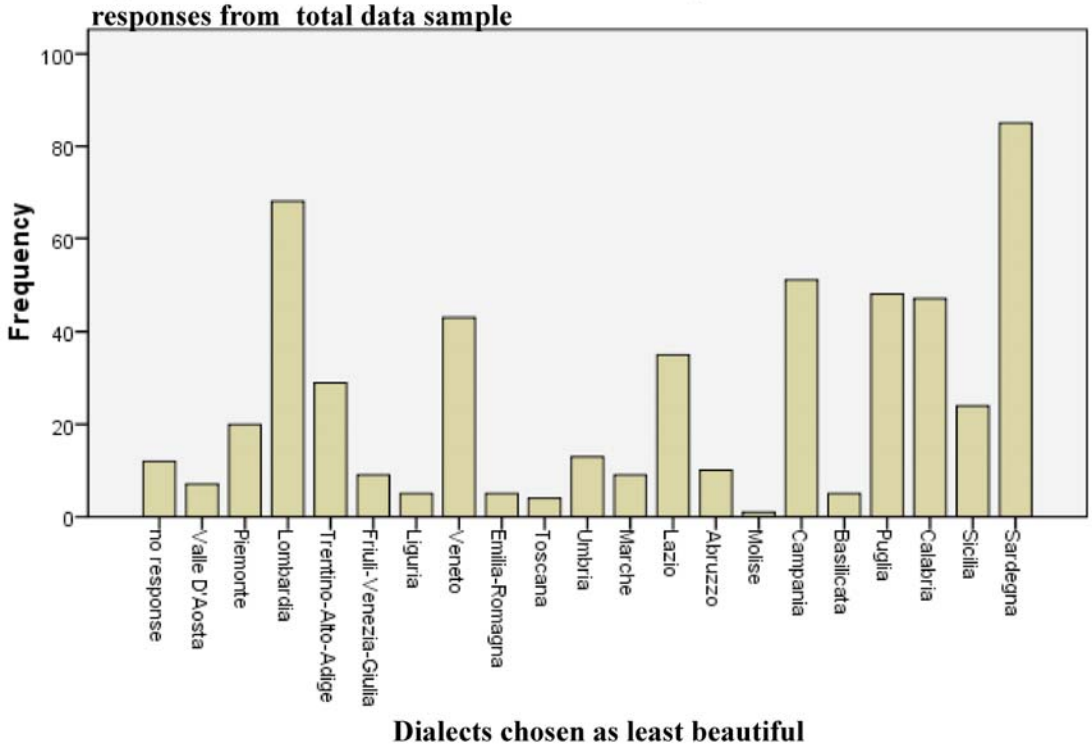


Table 2.1 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Sardinia	16%, CI ± 3%
Lombardy	13%
Campania	10%
Puglia	9%

In Figure 2.1 the mode is not as readily obvious as it was in Figure 1.1, and answers for "where is the least beautiful dialect spoken" are distributed more evenly

across all 20 regions. 81% percent of respondents gave single-region answers for this value judgment, and in general, southern regions were indicated more often than northern regions. However, the second most frequent response for this value judgment was the region of Lombardy, which is situated in the extreme north of Italy.

Table 2.2 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses		
	Veneto	Tuscany	Campania
No response	3%	2%	2%
Valle d'Aosta	0%	1%	3%
Piedmont	3%	2%	6%
Lombardy	14%	9%	15%
Trentino Alto Adige	6%	6%	5%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	4%	0%	1%
Liguria	2%	1%	1%
Veneto	12%	7%	5%
Emilia-Romagna	1%	0%	2%
Tuscany	1%	1%	1%
Umbria	1%	5%	2%
Marche	1%	4%	1%
Lazio	6%	6%	7%
Abruzzo	1%	2%	2%
Molise	0%	1%	0%
Campania	14%	7%	7%
Basilicata	0%	3%	0%
Puglia	5%	9%	13%
Calabria	5%	13%	9%
Sicily	7%	4%	3%
Sardinia	15%	17%	16%

In table 2.2 we see that Sardinia was chosen most frequently as the region with the least beautiful dialect. Although Sardinia was the top choice for all regions, this was not by a large margin, and regions such as Campania and Lombardy also received a

certain percentage of votes. Indication of the local region was infrequent in all data collection sites—the highest frequency of negative evaluation of the local dialect was 12% of responses, and occurred in Veneto. Campagnoli did not negatively evaluate the local dialect to the degree that was expected, and the negative self-evaluation of Tuscans was the lowest of all.

Overall, the regions chosen as having the least beautiful dialect cluster in the South, but Veneti, more than the either Tuscans or Campagnoli, tended to split their votes fairly evenly between northern and southern regions, including the local region.

Figure 2.2 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

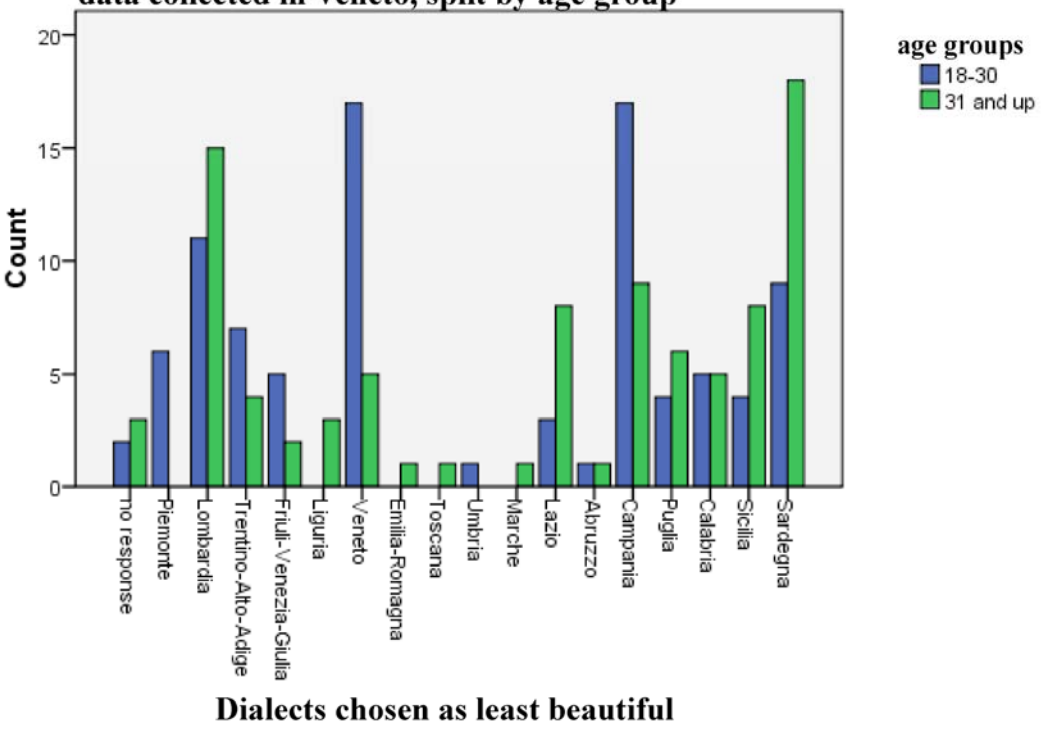


Table 2.3 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

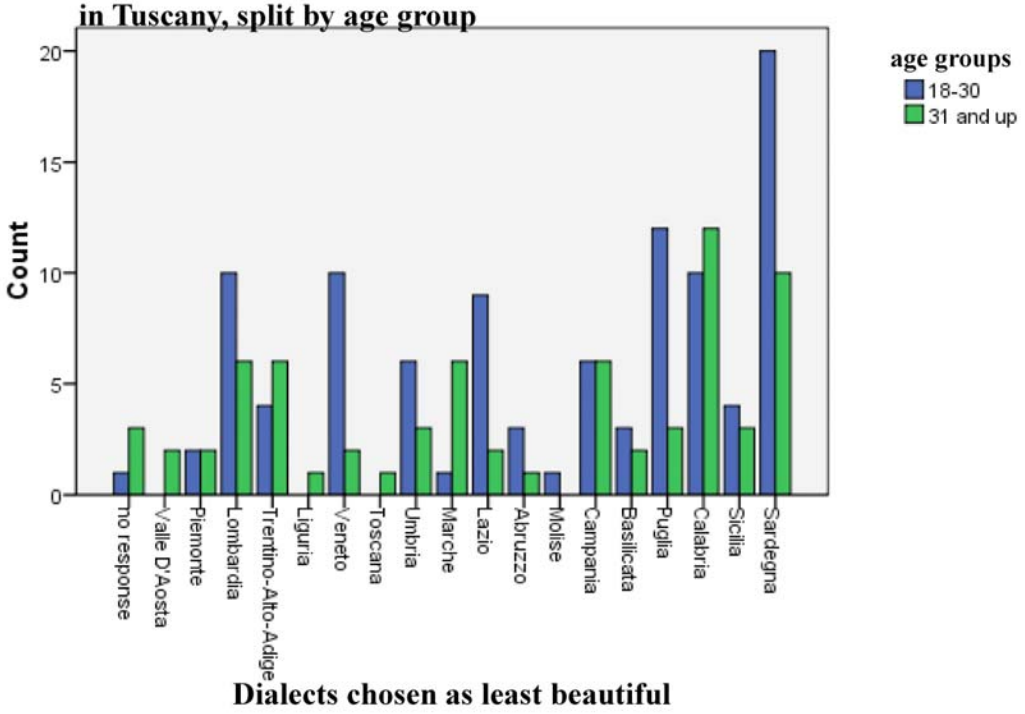
Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Sardinia	10%	20%
Campania	18%	10%
Lombardy	12%	17%
Veneto	18%	5%

For both data collected in Veneto and Tuscany there proved to be a significant correlation between distributions of responses and age of respondent. In Figure 2.2, which displays the distribution of responses for Veneti, we see some important differences in opinion between age groups, most notably with respect to evaluation of the local region. The younger age group perceived Venetian as being the least beautiful dialect with much higher frequency than did the older. Instead, 31+ year-olds more frequently chose regions such as Lombardy, Lazio, and Sardinia as having the least beautiful dialect. Both 31+ year-olds and 18-30 year-olds demonstrated geographical variation in responses and there is little obvious clustering in either the North or South for choice of region with the least beautiful dialect.

Table 2.4. "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

Region chosen	Percentages of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentages of responses of 31+ year-olds
Sardinia	20%	14%
Puglia	12%	4%
Calabria	10%	17%
Veneto	10%	3%

Figure 2.3 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group



In Figure 2.3 we see the differences in responses of 18-30 year-olds and 31+ year-olds in Tuscany. For Tuscans more than Veneti there is a tendency to indicate southern regions more often than northern regions as having the least beautiful dialect, and this trend is especially apparent in the responses of the younger age group. For example, Table 2.4 shows that the top three regions indicated by 18-30 year-old Tuscans for where the least beautiful dialect is spoken were all in the South. Figure 2.3 demonstrates almost zero indication of the local region for the value judgment of "least beautiful dialect." This is a major difference with regard to the responses of Veneti, who did not similarly spare their local region, as evident in Figure 2.2.

Figure 3.1 "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample

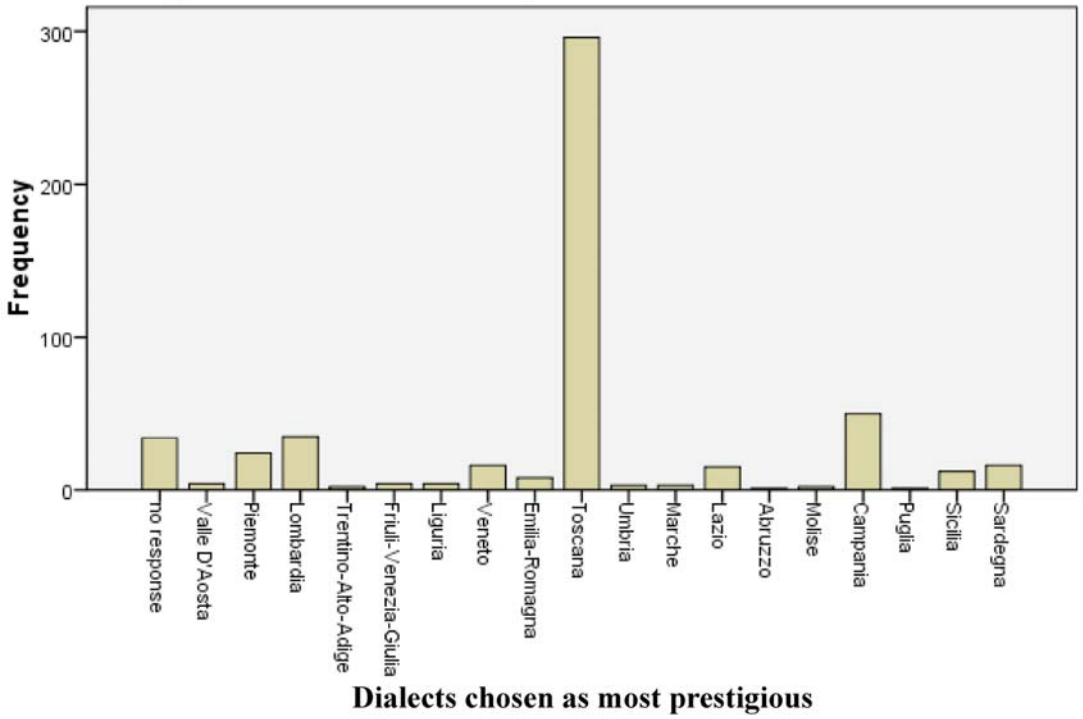


Table 3.1 "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Tuscany	56%, CI ± 4%
Campania	9%
Lombardy	7%
No response	6%

Figure 3.1 illustrates the most frequent response for the value judgment of prestige—more than half of all responses indicated Tuscany. Also, nearly 90% of all respondents only indicated one region for this value judgment. This trend demonstrates a high degree of consensus in respondent opinion: Tuscany has the most prestigious dialect, and *only* Tuscany has the most prestigious dialect. Interestingly, the next most

frequent indication (after Tuscany) for region with the most prestigious dialect was Campania. (Analyses of data subsets show that almost all of these votes came from Campagnoli themselves; this was not a nationally shared opinion.)

Table 3.2 "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses		
	Veneto	Tuscany	Campania
No response	3%	8%	9%
Valle d'Aosta	1%	1%	1%
Piedmont	4%	7%	3%
Lombardy	7%	9%	4%
Trentino Alto Adige	0%	1%	0%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1%	1%	0%
Liguria	1%	1%	1%
Veneto	5%	2%	2%
Emilia-Romagna	1%	1%	3%
Tuscany	71%	52%	44%
Umbria	1%	0%	1%
Marche	1%	0%	1%
Lazio	2%	4%	2%
Abruzzo	0%	0%	1%
Molise	1%	0%	1%
Campania	1%	6%	21%
Basilicata	0%	0%	0%
Puglia	0%	1%	0%
Calabria	0%	0%	0%
Sicily	2%	3%	2%
Sardinia	1%	4%	4%

Table 3.2 demonstrates that once again, Veneti appear to love Tuscan even more than Tuscans themselves, for the percentage of Veneti that found Tuscan to be the most prestigious dialect is higher even than the percentage of Tuscans who believe the same.

However, Campagnoli chose Tuscan as the most prestigious dialect less frequently than either Veneti *or* Tuscans. Instead, they distributed their votes between Tuscany and the local region, indicating the latter 21% of the time, resulting in the second highest percentage of responses from Campania.

Although Tuscany monopolizes most of the responses for this value judgment, indications of other regions, when they occurred, tended to favor northern rather than southern regions. In fact, some southern regions received absolutely no votes (Umbria and Marche for Tuscans; Basilicata, Puglia and Calabria for Veneti.) The presence of "no response" for this value judgment is noteworthy, especially its high rates of occurrence in Tuscany and Campania. The effect of age had no statistical significance for this value judgment.

Figure 4.1 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample

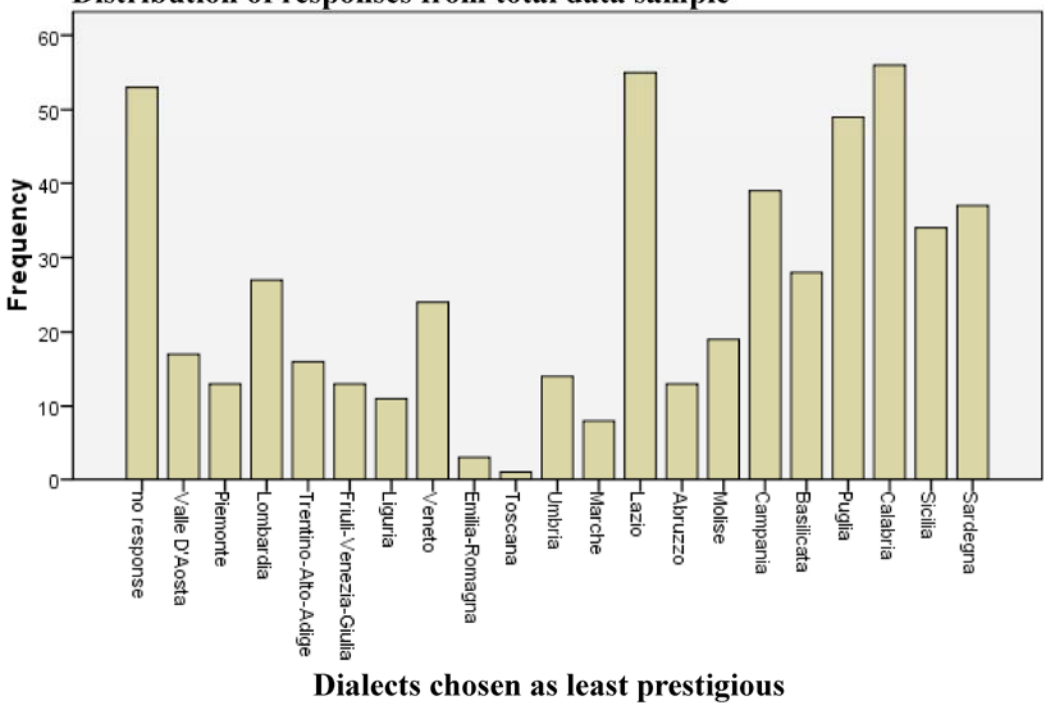


Table 4.1 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Calabria	11%, CI ± 2%
Lazio	10%
No response	10%
Puglia	9%

Figure 4.1 illustrates a particularly interesting distribution of responses—the bars appear to form a regression away from the mean. Excluding for the moment the high frequency of responses indicating Lazio, it is possible to see the chart as a large V whose point occurs above "Toscana." The farther a region is from Tuscany[18], in other words, the higher the frequency of responses indicating it as having the least prestigious dialect. Figure 4.1 is almost an inversion of Figure 3.1, which indicated a peak frequency for Tuscany and low frequencies for the surrounding regions.

Table 4.2 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses		
	Veneto	Tuscany	Campania
No response	6%	14%	10%
Valle d'Aosta	3%	2%	4%
Piedmont	0%	2%	6%
Lombardy	4%	6%	6%
Trentino Alto Adige	5%	1%	2%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	3%	1%	3%
Liguria	1%	2%	3%
Veneto	9%	2%	3%

[18] The regions along the x-axis are distributed more or less geographically, that is, northern regions on the left and southern regions on the right.

Emilia-Romagna	0%	1%	1%
Tuscany	0%	1%	0%
Umbria	1%	4%	3%
Marche	0%	3%	2%
Lazio	15%	11%	5%
Abruzzo	1%	3%	3%
Molise	2%	4%	5%
Campania	12%	9%	2%
Basilicata	5%	5%	5%
Puglia	11%	6%	10%
Calabria	8%	12%	11%
Sicily	4%	7%	8%
Sardinia	9%	5%	7%

Table 4.2 shows an even higher occurrence of "no response" than was evident in Table 3.2. Once again, Tuscans and Campagnoli in particular were those that most frequently did not indicate any region. Those respondents that did choose a region, however, were more apt to choose southern regions over northern ones. Some regions were hardly ever indicated; most notably, Tuscany, which received only one vote out of more than 530 responses[19]. A relatively low 86% of respondents gave single-region responses for this value judgment, and one respondent from Veneto actually indicated all twenty regions[20].

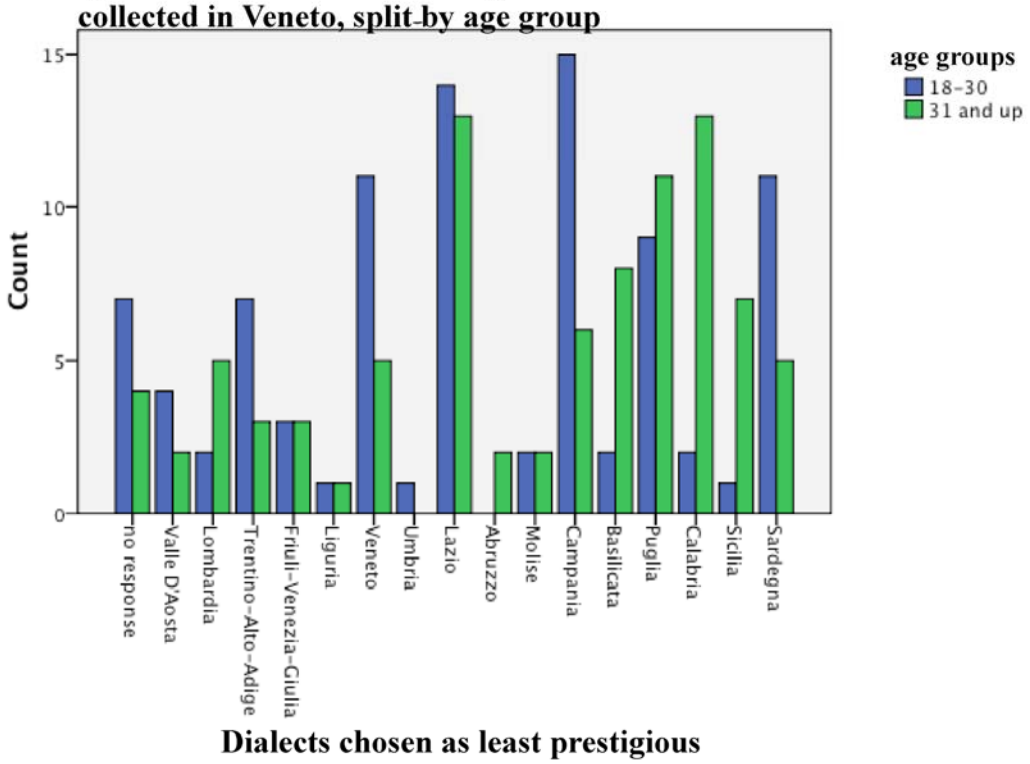
Indication of the local region was low in all three sites of data collection, though Veneti once again gave their own dialect the poorest self-evaluation. Compared to 2% of Campagnoli, 9% of Veneti perceived the local dialect as being the least prestigious of Italy.

[19] *More* than 530 because of respondents' tendency to indicate more than a single region for a given value judgment
[20] See Figure 9.4, Appendix D

Table 4.3 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Lazio	15%	14%
Campania	16%	7%
Puglia	10%	12%
Veneto	12%	6%

Figure 4.2 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group



Two elements of Figure 4.2 stand out—the difference in opinion between 18-30 year-olds and 31+ year-olds with regard to the local region and with regard to Campania. The greatest difference in responses for Veneti have centered around these two regions,

and 18-30 year-olds have demonstrated a persistent negative evaluation of both the local region and Campania that is not matched by the 31+ year-olds. In fact, in Figure 1.2, we can see that 31+ year-olds from Veneto frequently indicated Campania as having the most beautiful dialect. 18-30 year-olds felt almost exactly the opposite: in Figure 2.2 they frequently indicated Campania for region with the *least* beautiful dialect.

Figure 5.1 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample

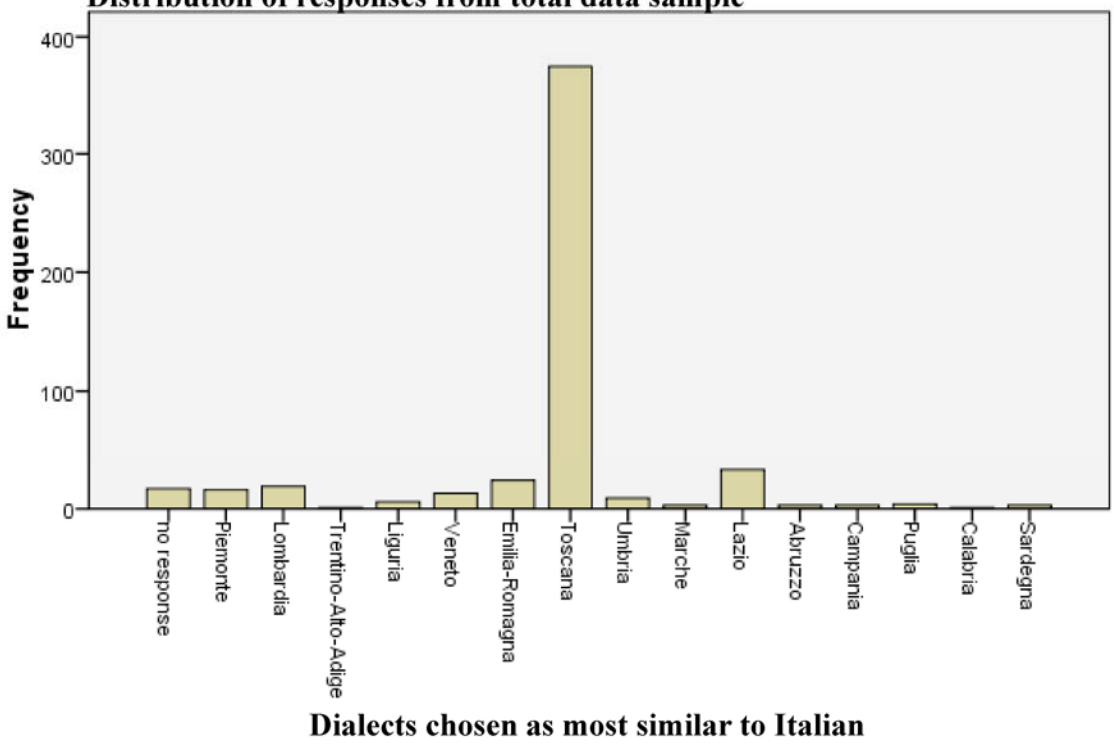


Table 5.1 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Tuscany	71%, CI ± 4%
Lazio	6%
Emilia-Romagna	5%
Lombardy	4%

The question "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" elicited unsurprising responses—Tuscany was by far the most frequently indicated region. Additionally, a full 90% of respondents gave single-region responses for this value judgment, indicating, once again, a certain consensus of opinion. There is a striking gap between the percentage of responses indicating Tuscany (71%) and the next most frequent choice, Lazio (6%).

Table 5.2 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of responses		
	Veneto	Toscana	Campania
No response	3%	0%	6%
Valle d'Aosta	0%	0%	0%
Piedmont	3%	1%	5%
Lombardy	5%	1%	5%
Trentino Alto Adige	0%	1%	0%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	0%	0%	0%
Liguria	0%	1%	2%
Veneto	7%	1%	0%
Emilia-Romagna	4%	2%	7%
Tuscany	68%	90%	55%
Umbria	1%	0%	4%
Marche	1%	1%	0%
Lazio	5%	3%	10%
Abruzzo	0%	1%	1%
Molise	0%	0%	0%
Campania	0%	0%	2%
Basilicata	0%	0%	0%
Puglia	1%	0%	1%
Calabria	0%	0%	1%
Sicily	0%	0%	0%
Sardinia	1%	1%	1%

Table 5.2 gives percentages that support what is visually obvious in Figure 5.1—the majority of respondents from each region indicated Tuscany as having the dialect closest to Italian. The percentage of Tuscans who chose the local region is particularly high and indicates that literally almost everyone surveyed in Tuscany believes the local dialect to be the most similar to Italian. The same consensus is not matched in either Veneto or Campania, and in fact, only 55% of Campagnoli believed Tuscan to be the dialect most similar to Italian. Instead, a number of Campagnoli chose the dialects of regions such as Lazio, Piedmont and Lombardy. Indication of the local dialect as being most similar to Italian was low in Campania (2% of responses) and slightly higher in Veneto (7% of responses).

Figure 5.2 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

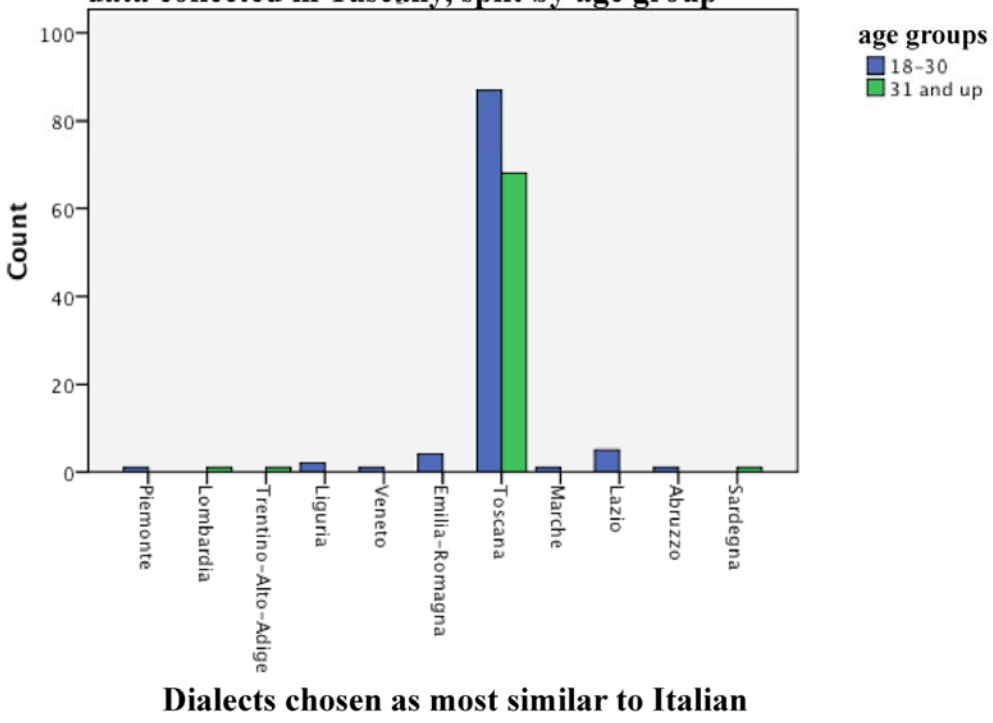


Table 5.3 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

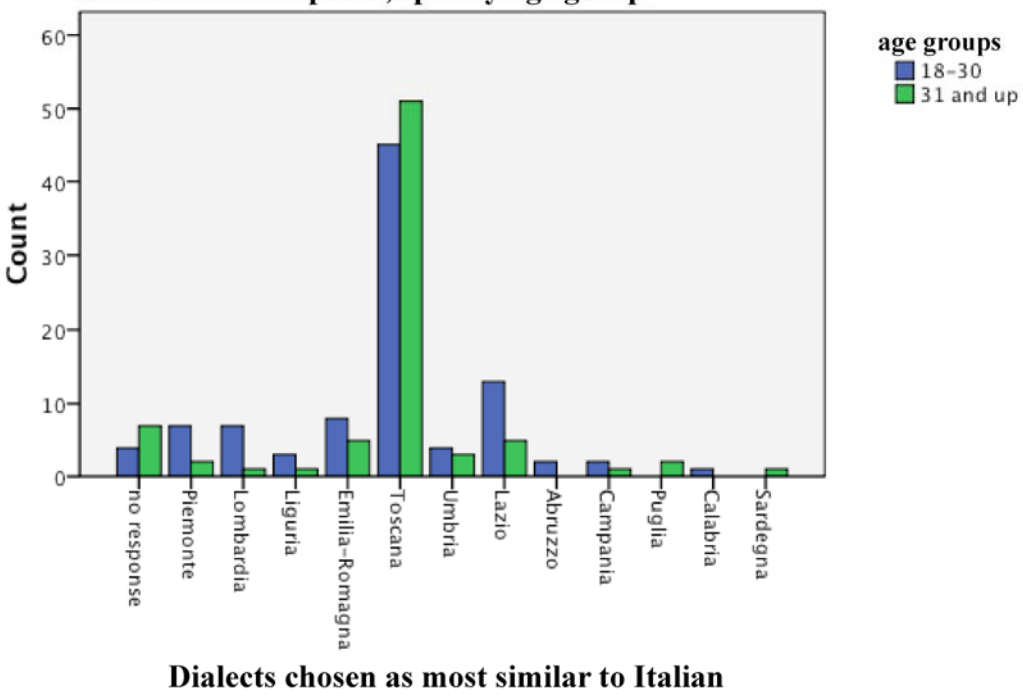
Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Tuscany	85%	96%
Lazio	5%	0%
Emilia-Romagna	4%	0%
Liguria	2%	0%

Data collected in Tuscany demonstrated significant differences in responses between age groups, and Figure 5.2 illustrates the distribution of these responses. Of note is the tendency of 18-30 year-olds to choose regions other than (or at least, in addition to) the local region for indications of where the dialect most similar to Italian is spoken. This trend may be hard to see in Figure 5.2 but is more readily obvious in Table 5.3, which shows the percentages of responses from each age group. Older respondents almost exclusively chose the local region; younger respondents, on the other hand, also indicated regions such as Lazio and Emilia-Romagna.

Table 5.4 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group

Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Tuscany	47%	65%
Lazio	14%	6%
Emilia-Romagna	8%	6%
No response	4%	9%

Figure 5.3 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group

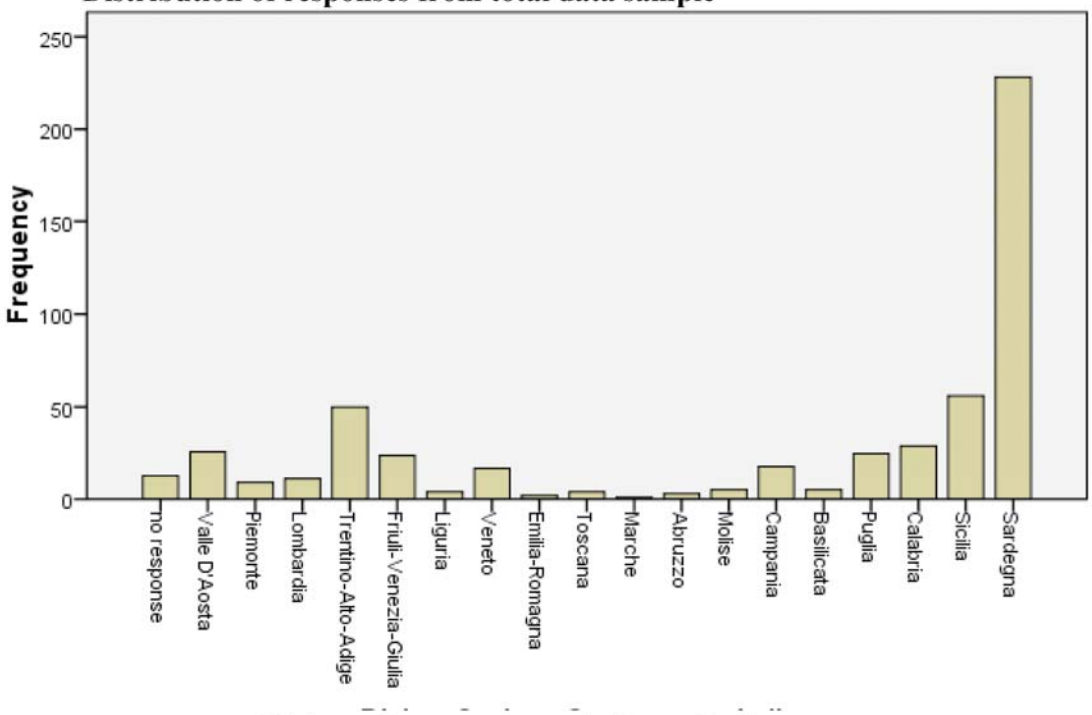


Statistically significant variation in responses by age was also evident in the data collected in Campania. Comparing Figure 5.3 to Figure 5.2, we can immediately see that responses from Campagnoli were distributed over more regions than the responses of Tuscans. The preference demonstrated for Lazio, Emilia-Romagna, Piedmont, and Lombardy by 18-30 year-olds of Campania was not matched by the 31+ year-olds of the same. Instead, Campagnoli aged 31+ showed a slightly higher preference for Tuscany, as well as higher frequency of "no response."

Table 6.1 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from total data sample

Region chosen	Percentage of total responses
Sardinia	43%, CI ± 4%
Sicily	11%
Trentino Alto Adige	9%
Calabria	6%

Figure 6.1 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from total data sample



Finally, in Figure 6.1 we see the distribution of responses for the last value judgment: "least similar to Italian." Single-region responses were given by 79% of the total data sample, and responses were primarily distributed among border regions, with the highest frequency of indication going to Sardinia. In Table 6.1, we see that the total percentage of responses indicating Sardinia was 43%. Both northern and southern

regions are in the top four choices for this value judgment, and preference of votes was given to those regions that have traditionally been viewed as speaking a language as opposed to a dialect (e.g. Sicily, Trentino Alto Adige, Calabria, and of course, Sardinia). The central regions did not receive frequent indications.

Table 6.2 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Percentage of responses indicating a given region, split by region of data collection

Region chosen	Percentage of responses		
	Veneto	Tuscany	Campania
No response	4%	2%	2%
Valle d'Aosta	3%	7%	5%
Piedmont	1%	1%	4%
Lombardy	2%	2%	2%
Trentino Alto Adige	7%	13%	9%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	5%	4%	4%
Liguria	2%	1%	0%
Veneto	2%	3%	5%
Emilia-Romagna	0%	1%	1%
Tuscany	0%	1%	1%
Umbria	0%	0%	0%
Marche	1%	0%	0%
Lazio	0%	0%	0%
Abruzzo	1%	1%	1%
Molise	2%	1%	0%
Campania	5%	2%	3%
Basilicata	1%	1%	1%
Puglia	4%	3%	6%
Calabria	5%	4%	7%
Sicily	11%	13%	8%
Sardinia	45%	42%	43%

Table 6.2 shows that the nearly identical percentages of Veneti, Campagnoli, and Tuscans chose Sardinia as the region with the dialect least similar to Italian.

Additionally, Table 6.2 indicates the low frequency of self-indication in each of the regions of data collection.

Figure 6.2 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

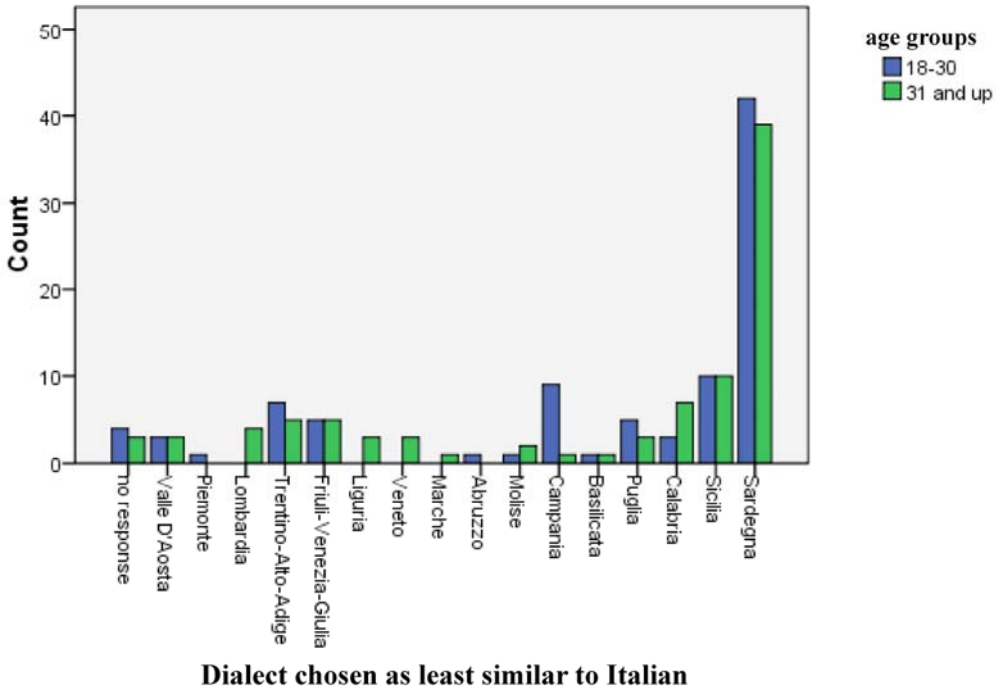


Table 6.3 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Four most frequent responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

Region chosen	Percentage of responses of 18-30 year-olds	Percentage of responses of 31+ year-olds
Sardinia	46%	43%
Sicily	11%	11%
Trentino Alto Adige	8%	6%
Campania	10%	1%

For Veneti, responses varied significantly by age, and Figure 6.2 shows the divergence in the responses of 18-30 and 31+ year-olds. Variation is generally only by a few percentage points, though for indications of Campania the difference is greater.

Discussion:

Methodological issues:

Although the majority of respondents were born and raised in the place where I collected their surveys, the one group for which this was not always the case was the 18-30 year-olds of Siena. The University of Siena traditionally attracts many students from the southern regions of Italy, and of the respondents who filled out the survey in Tuscany, 42% indicated a region other than Tuscany as their place of birth. Only 25% percent of the surveys collected in Veneto and 13% of the surveys collected in Campania were filled out by respondents born elsewhere. Although a total of 140 out of 530 respondents were not born in the region of data collection, it is important to remember that all of them were residents of that region.

The survey was for the most part easily understood and easily completed, but 31+ respondents in particular appeared to find the map-coloring task difficult, either because they felt overwhelmed by the range of dialects to choose from or because they were unsure of their ability to correctly identify all the regions of Italy (or both). Respondents aged 18-30 appeared to find the map-coloring task less difficult—perhaps because they were familiar with fewer dialects and so felt less overwhelmed by choice.

For both older and younger respondents, the multiple-choice questions proved unproductive. This was due to poor wording on my part, as well as the limitations

inherent in multiple-choice responses. For instance, the question, "Capisci un dialetto anche se non lo parli[21]" was meant to ask, "What dialect do you understand *even if* you don't speak it?" However, many respondents, having already indicated that they *did* speak a dialect, left this question blank, probably interpreting it as, "If *and only if* you don't speak a dialect, which one do you understand?"

Additionally, though respondents often gave me detailed verbal answers to the multiple-choice questions, on the survey itself they were forced to choose from written options that were much more limiting. Although a couple of respondents actually wrote free-response-style answers even for the multiple-choice section, in general, much was lost in translation.

There was sometimes a tendency of subjects to judge or take issue with my own language, either positively or negatively—comments ranged from "You speak so well for an American!" to "There are mistakes in this survey," and one middle school teacher corrected my survey even as she completed it. My lack of a readily identifiable regional accent usually worked in my favor, because it limited interference with subjects' judgments. Yet for some respondents my ambiguous accent was disconcerting—in Naples it was especially obvious that I was not local, and this created a certain amount of distance and distrust that I did not encounter in Tuscany or Veneto.

Also, my age alternately helped and hindered data collection, for though I was able to easily enter universities and collect data from peers, entering offices to bother adults at work was more difficult, and I had to exercise all my powers of persuasion to convince some of the older respondents to fill out the survey. An unexpected challenge

[21] "Do you understand a dialect even if you don't speak it?"

of the data collection process was the infrequency of undergraduate research in the Italian school system, which expressed itself as a general wariness among respondents of what I was doing and who I was doing it for.

I was also somewhat limited by the summer season, for by the end of the data collection period, almost all universities and offices had closed for *ferie*, or vacation. My limited success in certain environments (grocery stores, public streets, piazzas) and high success in others (universities, business offices, banks) skewed the data sample towards respondents with a relatively high level of education and/or with white-collar jobs. The advantage of data collection sites such as schools, offices, and banks was that they were closed environments with guaranteed groups of three or more respondents who were generally already sitting at a desk with the time and means to fill out the research survey.

An additional difficulty that arose was that some respondents appeared to labor under pressure to provide a "right" answer—I noticed a tendency to copy answers especially among 18-30 year-olds, who would turn to each other and ask, "What did you put?" as though the research were a test they might fail. Finally, lack of labeling may have compromised accuracy of responses—there were several comments in the free response section about the difficulty of differentiating between the unlabelled regions.

During the process of data collection I realized that the survey did not necessarily cater to how Italians think about dialects—based as it was on a methodology developed in the United States, the survey was understandably less suited to the linguistic situation of Italy. This was most apparent in the map-coloring task, during which respondents struggled mightily with (and sometimes against) the value judgments relating to prestige: there were those respondents who insisted to me that all dialects, as corruptions of Italian,

were equally non-prestigious, as well as those respondents who claimed dialects were an important cultural patrimony (and therefore all equally prestigious). There were also those respondents who simply did not understand what I meant by the term "prestigious" and so chose not to answer for that reason.

Additionally, I did not take into account the different forms of dialect spoken by older generations and younger generations—I realize now that younger respondents were just as likely to have been referring to urban *gerghi* in their survey responses, while older respondent, especially those 50 and older, are likely to have been referring to more traditional forms of the regional dialects; the forms their parents and grandparents may have spoken. These different connotations for the term "dialect" was evident in comments in the qualitative section; for instance, one 50 year-old respondent from Naples wrote that he spoke Neapolitan but "not the original," and many younger respondents specified that they spoke a "mix" of dialect and Italian.

Quantitative results:

The results of this research were expected to elicit the status vs. solidarity dichotomy familiar from past language attitude work (cf Preston 1999b), yet my methods of elicitation were poorly suited for the context of Italy. Issues of linguistic status and solidarity undoubtedly exist in Italy, but I was hampered in my attempts to draw them out by several assumptions: that features of dialect status and solidarity would distribute themselves along a North-South axis (because of the social differentiation that exists along the latter), that the same concepts of "correct" and "pleasant" that proved to be productive representations of dialect status and solidarity in the US would also accurately

represent the latter in Italy, and finally, that southern regions would be linguistically insecure and northern regions would not.

The value judgments I used for the map-coloring task of my survey were meant to imitate the value judgments of "correct" and "pleasant" used by Preston in 1989. However, my research showed that terms such as "correct" and "pleasant," when applied to Italian dialects, educed literal opinions about dialect beauty and similarity to the standard, instead of veiled attitudes about dialect status or solidarity.

The value judgment "most beautiful," was intended as a version of "pleasant," and I expected it to reveal attitudes relating to solidarity. "Most prestigious" and "closest to Italian" were both intended to reveal attitudes relating to status, and I expected to see these judgments applied primarily to northern dialects. The negative value judgments ("least beautiful," "least prestigious," and "least similar to Italian") were intended to reveal the stigma attached to certain dialects, and only corresponded to dialect status or solidarity as negative representations of the same.

Table 7.1 Comparison of presentation and representation of survey value judgments

Value judgment:	Corresponds to:	Represents:
Most beautiful Least beautiful	"pleasant" (un)"pleasant"	Solidarity Lack of solidarity, also low status
Most prestigious Least prestigious	"correct" (in)"correct"	Status[22] Lack of status
Most similar to Italian Least similar to Italian	"correct" (in)"correct"	Status. Lack of status, also low solidarity

[22] Actual data indicate that this may represent solidarity (in terms of covert prestige).

I expected to find that regions with high linguistic insecurity, which I assumed would be southern regions, would define local speech as primarily "most beautiful," reserving positive judgments of prestige and similarity to Italian for the northern dialects. However, the results of this research summarily challenged this and all of my other assumptions, forcing me to re-evaluate both my hypotheses as well as the universality of Preston's language attitude generalizations, and leading me to ask myself, "What is the new discourse about language and identity that can explain these results?"

Hypothesis 1: respondents will rate the local area most positively for beauty and/or prestige

The data show a trend not to distribute the value judgments "most beautiful" and "most similar to Italian" (as was the case for "correct" and "pleasant" in Preston's 1989 research) but rather to equate them with one another: Tuscan scored highest in all three regions and in both age groups for beauty *and* for similarity to Italian. The perception of beauty appears closely tied to that of correctness, and not, as I expected, to feelings of solidarity with the local region. If the latter were the case, then respondents from Campania and Veneto should have indicated their own dialect at least as frequently, if not more frequently, than that of Tuscany for the value judgment of "most beautiful." Campagnoli did in fact choose the local dialect almost as frequently as they did that of Tuscany, but Veneti deemed Tuscan the most beautiful dialect even more frequently than Tuscans themselves did.

According to my original hypothesis, if Campagnoli—speakers I assumed to have high linguistic insecurity—rated the dialect of Tuscany as uniquely correct (represented by frequent indications of "similar to Italian"), they should at least have given their local

dialect much higher ratings for pleasantness (represented by frequent indications of "most beautiful"). Along the same lines, respondents from Veneto—ostensibly, speakers with high linguistic security—should have indicated their local dialect as both correct and also as highly pleasant. Neither expected result was reproduced in the data; in fact, I found almost the exact opposite trends. Veneti appraised Venetian particularly poorly and Tuscan particularly highly, and Campagnoli rated *both* Neapolitan and Tuscan as high in prestige and in pleasantness (cf Figures 1.4 and 3.4 in Appendix E).

I believe this trend of especially positive judgments of Tuscan (even at the expense of the local speech variety) is indicative of a peculiar process of "backformation." As I described in the introduction, the relationship between the standard and the regional dialects alternates between convergence and divergence; at the time of its birth in the 14th century, Italian really *was* Tuscan—there was no difference between the regional dialect and the literary standard born of it. Yet the divergence of Italian from Tuscan in the 20th century was re-defined by the fascist regime and the educational system: regional dialects were illegitimated and framed as bastardizations of Italian as well as an indication of lower social class (Lepschy 2002). This shift in hierarchical perspective stigmatized all the regional dialects except for one: Tuscan. As the original template for the standard, Tuscan is still similar enough[23] to the same that many Italians now view Tuscany as a "dialectless" region.

Respondents from Tuscany were among the most adamant that they did not speak a dialect: "Il toscano non è un dialetto," they would explain, adding that if anything, they

[23] Respondents did distinguish between a Tuscan accent and a standard accent, but I believe the almost identical lexicons of Tuscan and Italian were what made it difficult for respondents to perceive the two varieties as separate.

might have a certain inflection to their speech—but that was all. Tuscans, in other words, speak Italian. Yet it is not Tuscans that speak Italian, but Italy that speaks Tuscan. Among younger respondents especially, the belief that Tuscan is not a dialect persists, and if the data is re-examined in light of this belief, then positive evaluations of Tuscan as "most beautiful" or "most pleasant" actually represent positive evaluations of the standard. Hypothesis 1 therefore does not hold, and the data demonstrate that the standard variety trumps regional varieties for positive evaluations of both beauty and prestige.

Hypothesis 2: the speech of southern regions will receive more frequent negative value judgments than that of northern regions

Although at first glance, patterns in the frequency figures for the value judgments of "least beautiful" and "least prestigious" are difficult to find, breaking the data down by region makes certain age-based trends more apparent. Younger respondents in both Veneto and Campania negatively evaluated the local dialect much more often than 31+ year olds in either region did. In fact, 18-30 year-old Veneti appeared to demonstrate a particularly high degree of linguistic insecurity, not only evaluating the local dialect poorly in terms of beauty, but also in terms of prestige *and* similarity to Italian. Veneti found the local dialect to be ugly as frequently, or even more frequently than they found the dialects of Campania and Sardinia to be ugly. Not only do these results designate a northern dialect as stigmatized, but they also show the stigmatization occurring among the dialect's own speakers—speakers whom I expected to be linguistically secure.

I expected northern regions such as Piedmont (the ancient seat of the Savoy dynasty) or Veneto (the seat of the Venetian trade empire) to have high linguistic security

based on their strong economies and historical prestige, yet it is exactly the socio-economic prestige of the northern regions that has influenced their negative attitudes toward dialect use. During the period of industrialization, there was considerable pressure in the North to become "citified," the first step of which entailed forgetting one's regional dialect and using Italian, the national standard (Telmon 2003). Speaking a dialect, especially for Italians of my grandmother's generation, symbolized peasant roots, and given the pressure felt by the new "piccola borghesia in ascesa[24]" (Eco 2003: 36) to forget those roots as quickly as possible, the apparent contradiction of a northern region with high linguistic insecurity does not seem so contradictory anymore.

On the other hand, in the southern regions of Italy there is a high degree of *amorproprio* for the local dialect (Chiara Stella, March 29 2009, personal communication). This roughly translates to "self-love" but really what the term connotes is "pride in" as well as "ownership of." This same pride and ownership of the local dialect is not reproduced in the northern regions, where dialects, post-industrialization, quickly became emblematic of a lower social class. Speaking a dialect indicated that one was a *contadino*—a farmer—whereas speaking Italian indicated money, education, and culture (C. Stella, personal communication). The immigration from the southern countryside into the cities of the North contributed to the transformation of dialects from the property of everyone (cf Stella 1974) to a sort of linguistic scarlet letter that immediately separated those of the fields from those of the city.

In fact, in light of this and of Veneto's consistently negative self-evaluations, it is high time I abandoned the assumption that northern dialects are any more prestigious

[24] "Little bourgeoisie [families] on the rise"

than southern. Although a North-South regional model of linguistic insecurity is appropriate for the United States, for Italy, the linguistic state of affairs is revealing itself to be much more complex. Italy does demonstrate North-South social and economic differentiation, but this divide was not reflected linguistically in the way I expected. Hypothesis 2 is therefore only partially supported by the data, and although southern dialects were generally indicated with more frequency for negative value judgments such as "least beautiful" and "least prestigious," the evidence from Veneto in particular shows that a clear-cut North-South distinction of dialect status cannot be made.

Hypothesis 3: Younger respondents will show a preference for Italian over their local dialect.

Here, I finally appear to find corroboration in the data for one of my hypotheses: Tuscan (which, at least in the minds of respondents, is a representation of Italian) was indeed rated especially positively by respondents aged 18-30, and I suggest the following factors as contributing to this trend:

1) If we extrapolate the pattern seen in the ISTAT data (cf Table 1.1), we can assume that the 18-30 year-olds surveyed are likely to have grown up speaking Italian at home as a first language. As such, they are probably more familiar with Italian than with their local dialect. Additionally, Italian, as the language taught in schools and broadcast over mass media, also has a certain amount of institutionalized prestige.
2) If Tuscan is equated with (and therefore elevated to) the status of Italian, it follows that all other regional dialects lose status, no matter whether they are in the North or South. A geographically-based national standard trumps any

North-South allocation of prestige: all prestige goes to the center, to Tuscany and to Italian—or rather, to Tuscan/Italian.

For younger respondents, what is correct, what is familiar, and what is standardized appears to also be what is most beautiful, as suggested by the high frequency of their indications of Tuscan/Italian for "most beautiful dialect." This theory of "correct = beautiful" is supported in the work of Imre (1963), who discovered, while conducting a linguistic atlas project to locate the most beautiful Hungarian, that respondents did not distinguish between conceptions of "correct" and "beautiful" speech (cited in Kontra 2002). If correctness is beauty, and Italian, as the standard, is perceived as the most correct variety, and if Tuscan represents Italian, then it follows naturally that Tuscan should receive the highest positive evaluations of any other dialect. It also makes sense that these positive evaluations should be especially apparent among younger respondents who are more familiar with the standard than with their regional dialect. It can therefore be concluded that hypothesis 3 is supported by the data.

The question of prestige:

I believe the results obtained by the value judgments "most prestigious" and "least prestigious" merit some additional discussion here, for they have proven to be the most difficult and also productive to analyze. One of the most salient features of the value judgment "least prestigious" is its apparent negative definition: as evidenced by Figure 4.1, many seemed to know what it was *not*—Tuscany—but there was not a clear consensus on what it *was*. Each region presented a different mode in responses, and the highest frequency in Tuscany was not a region at all, but "no response." A full 14% of all Tuscan respondents did not choose *any* region as having the least prestigious dialect: the

highest incidence of "no response" in any region for any value judgment. This trend was surprising to me considering my assumption of Tuscany's high degree of linguistic security. I would have thought that as the region with the most linguistic capital (cf Figures 1.1, 3.1, and 5.1) Tuscany would not have difficulties in pointing out stigmatized varieties; after all, the clearest view is from the top.

Yet respondents from Tuscany either did not know how to answer the question or simply did not want to—many of the surveys had notes asking what I meant by "prestigious" and complaining that it had been hard to judge dialects along that parameter. Other surveys stated that there was no dialect less or more prestigious than any other. It was not only respondents from Tuscany that struggled with the meaning of "prestigious" as it related to dialects—a considerable number of Campagnoli also gave no response for this value judgment. For some, the request to indicate the prestige or lack thereof of a dialect felt too judgmental, and one woman in particular took such offense at the question that she accused me of racism and refused to finish the survey.

As respondents grappled with the question of prestige, I began to notice that definitions of that value judgment varied according to where I was collecting the data. Although overall, prestige was clearly associated with the standard (cf Figure 3.1), some respondents (almost exclusively those surveyed in Campania) seized on a dialect's history as a feature of its prestige. More than once, I heard arguments for Neapolitan's exclusive claim to prestige that were based entirely on "la tradizione della canzone Napoletana[25]."

[25] "The tradition of Neapolitan song"

This interpretation of "prestige" was both unexpected and intriguing, for it highlighted an important dichotomy between outsider and insider perceptions of language stereotypes. I personally expected socio-economic factors to influence linguistic judgments in a way that would favor the industrialized North; instead, it was precisely the industrialized North that demonstrated more shame in its own dialect and that more frequently deemed it unprestigious and ugly. The South, on the other hand, though it recognized the institutionalized prestige of the Tuscan dialect, also demonstrated a definite degree of pride in the local dialect as well. Given these trends, I postulate that the value judgment of "prestige," though intended to elicit overarching attitudes relating to status, only did so for the North—in the South, "prestige" was interpreted as a feature of solidarity, based in cultural pride and historical roots.

Conclusions:

The effect of region of origin:

Long & Yim (2002), in a language attitude study of Korean dialects, examined the extent to which respondents' region of origin influenced their perception of dialect areas, and discovered that the majority of respondents perceived a dialect boundary between North and South Korea that was not supported by linguistic data. This phenomenon may be similar to the "wall in the mind" that Dailey-O'Cain (1999) discovered in German speakers' perceptions of dialects, and South Koreans may perceive the speech of North Koreans to be more different than it actually is because of strong political and social distance (Long & Yim 2002).

When I began this research, I intended to examine the data along similar social-geographical axes, asking how the already-existing cultural and economic differences between the northern and southern regions would influence the way in which northern vs. southern dialects were perceived. This paradigm had been fruitful in the United States (cf Preston 1989; Preston 1999b) and elsewhere, (cf Long & Yim 2002; Dailey-O'Cain 2002) but I soon discovered it was not suited to the linguistic or socio-cultural situation of Italy. The duality of "correct vs. pleasant" as a stand-in for status vs. solidarity is not applicable in Italy, and though region was indeed highly significant for assigning value judgments to dialects, this significance did not fall along the North-South axis I expected.

The effect of age:

Diercks (2002), in a study of "mental maps," attempted to understand how near or far speakers perceived other dialect areas to exist in relation to their own "linguistic homeland" (51). In Diercks' study, perceived distances rarely matched actual geographical distances, and he found that the greatest influencing factor in respondent's perception of other dialect areas was age: younger respondents had significantly smaller and less detailed mental maps of dialect areas, partly as a result of dialect leveling (Diercks 2002).

As part of another language attitude study conducted in Montreal, Evans (2002) found that younger respondents rated Montreal French as highly as Parisian French in terms of standardness, a result that deviated greatly from previous surveys conducted with older respondents and that implied that linguistic insecurity may lessen as linguistic differentiation decreases and dialects are leveled. Additionally, Kerswill & Williams (2002) found that age was the most significant variable not only in perceptions of

leveling, but also in the act of leveling. The new varieties created by adolescents contain older forms, new forms, and standard forms, and as such are hybrids that are not strongly regionally based (Kerswill & Williams 2002).

Inoue's (1999) concept of "collective vs. individual experience" is also relevant to the results of this research: older respondents in Italy are more likely to have had individual linguistic experience since they grew up speaking a dialect (or at least hearing it spoken). The younger respondents, however, are more likely to have only had collective linguistic experiences that emphasize stereotypes and make generalizations. Therefore, given the leveling occurring in Italy, as well as the decreased exposure to and use of dialect among younger speakers, it may be that as dialects continue to level and Italian continues to become more regionally inflected, speech communities in Italy will become defined primarily by age and secondarily by region.

The research questions, once again:

My hypotheses, as stated in the introduction, were:

1) Respondents will *most* frequently indicate their local region for positive values judgments (whether correct OR pleasant)

This was not summarily supported by the data—Tuscany monopolized positive value judgments from all three regions and both age groups.

2) Language attitudes will reflect regional stereotypes; therefore southern regions will be judged negatively more frequently than northern regions.

Language attitudes did indeed reflect North-South dichotomies in the distribution of negative vs. positive value judgments, but not for the reasons or in the patterns that I expected.

3) Younger respondents (age 18-30) will show a preference for Italian over the local dialect

I believe the data supported this hypothesis, as evidenced by the high frequency of positive value judgments afforded by 18-30 year olds in all regions for the dialect to Tuscany, even at the expense of the local dialect.

In his own research, Preston found that local areas rated high for correctness when respondents were linguistically secure (Preston 1999b). For this research, given the existence of a standard geographically based in Tuscany, the overwhelming majority of respondents accordingly indicated Tuscany (and not the local area) as the region with the most correct dialect[26]. This might seem to indicate that all respondents were insecure about the status of their local dialect; however, even if all the Italians surveyed were overwhelmingly insecure about the correctness of their speech, we might at least have expected them to rate it highly for features of beauty—at least, based on Preston's generalizations.

Yet though Tuscany clearly owns every last cent of linguistic capital for standardness or "correctness," Veneti could not seem to find anything beautiful in their speech, and Campagnoli found Tuscan speech at least as beautiful as their own. The positive evaluations that were given almost exclusively to Tuscan by the majority of all respondents indicates what appears to be an overarching tendency of *regression towards the mean* in Italian language attitudes: as dialects level and Italian becomes more regionalized, Tuscan is once again converging with the standard to form a variety of "average" Italian (Sobrero 2003).

[26] Based on the value judgments for "most similar to Italian"

Italian (or Tuscan, for that matter) is nothing if not an ideal: no single, static version of a living language is possible, for, simply by virtue of being spoken, a variety is necessarily and constantly in flux. Yet these data nevertheless indicate a regression in Italy towards an ideology of standardness that is expressed in the superior appraisal of Tuscan, the dialect deemed "most similar to Italian." The overwhelmingly positive evaluations of Tuscan are evidence of how inseparable it is geographically, culturally and historically to the definition of Italian.

I dove into this research full of enthusiasm but without a good idea either of language attitudes or of the linguistic situation in Italy. Subsequently, the questions I asked were not as finely calibrated as they could have been to the context in which I asked them. On the other hand, it was partly by going in "blind" that I discovered so much, for in addition to a few stubbed toes and a few wrong turns, my stumbling and wanderings off the path led me right into new discoveries.

Probably the most fruitful misapplication of Preston's methodology that I made was in the labeling of my value judgments: Preston used "correct" and "pleasant" as representative terms for status and solidarity that obscured the point of his inquiry but still elicited judgments relating to the relevant concepts. In my survey, I asked respondents *outright* where they thought the most prestigious dialect was spoken. In doing so, my intention was to elicit judgments of status, but I lacked a comparable smoke-screen as that provided by the term "correct" for Preston in his research. I therefore alienated some respondents (evidenced by the high frequency of "no response"

for both the positive and negative value judgments relating to prestige) but also found that the term “prestige” did not mean the same thing to respondents as it did to me.

The fact that respondents from Campania so readily applied the label “most prestigious” to their own dialect made me realize that the definition of linguistic prestige is not the same for Italian and American language attitudes, and even more specifically, it is not the same for Italians living in the North vs. Italians living in the South. In the North, linguistic prestige is strongly associated with the national language, but in the South, it is associated with dialect history and culture. In the North, prestige is defined in association with the standard; in the South, in opposition to it.

My second most fruitful mistake was the use of the value judgment “most similar to Italian” as another stand-in for a judgment of status. I was both asking respondents about prestige outright (with the value judgment “most prestigious”) and also asking about it through a screen (with the value judgment “most similar to Italian”). In neither instance did results match my expectations. When I asked about prestige outright, Campania indicated the local region more frequently than Veneto, and when I asked about it through the screen of “correctness,” with the question, “where do you think the dialect most similar to Italian is spoken,” no one indicated the local region as often as Tuscany, and on top of that, almost no one indicated any region *other* than Tuscany. I discovered that the concepts of prestige/correctness/status are not only different for different regions, but they are not synonymous as they might be in the United States.

I did not know, when I designed this project, if perceived similarity to Italian would necessarily entail status for a dialect, and yet, based on my results, this appears to be the case: perceived similarity to the standard seemed to indicate overt prestige *even*

more than the value judgment of "most prestigious," which for Campania especially elicited attitudes that are traditionally associated with solidarity[27] or covert prestige.

Thus, thanks wholly to my methodological blunders, I have come to realize that in Italy, the concepts of prestige/correctness/status are most salient when applied to the relationship between a regional dialect and the standard variety, *not* the relationship between one regional dialect and another. I set up my research and designed the survey's value judgments always with the dichotomy of North vs. South in mind and never once thinking of the dichotomy between the standard and the dialects. In a way, issues of North and South were indeed relevant to this study, but not in the way I initially imagined: more important than how the North and South relate to each other is the unique way the North and South each have of relating to the ideology of the standard.

[27] In conversation, respondents from Campania often cited their dialect's history and/or cultural richness as lending it prestige. Mentions of correctness were totally absent from their verbal/anecdotal definition of prestige.

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Appendix A: Maps of Italy

Figure 8.1 Italy (from Izzo 1972: 7)

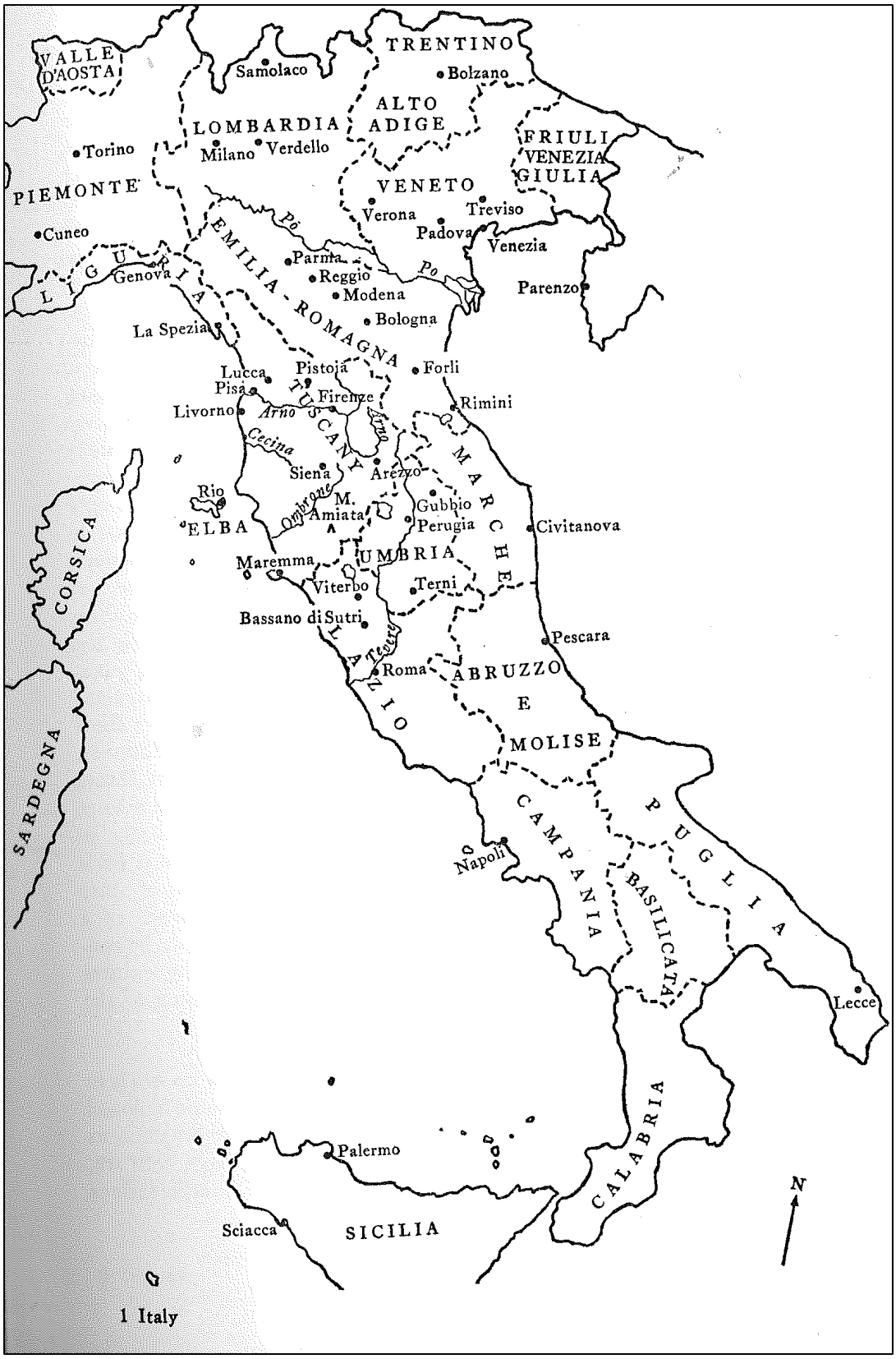
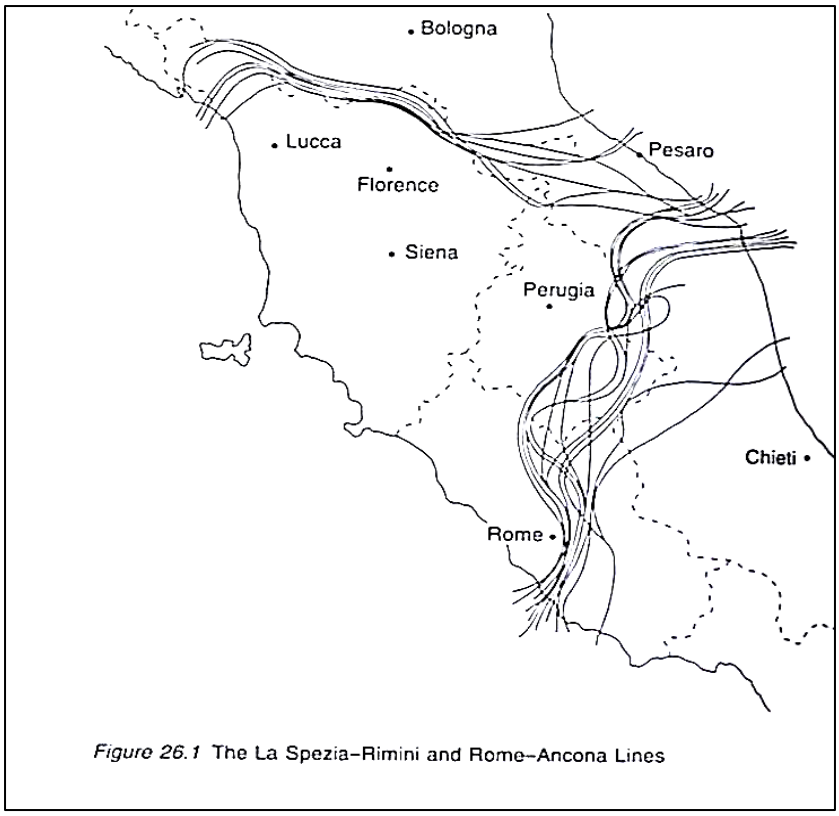


Figure 8.2 The La Spezia-Rimini and Rome-Ancona lines (from Savoia 1997: 226)



Appendix B: The research survey (and English translation)

I.Divida la carta geografica nelle seguenti regioni:

Indica con un cerchio VERDE dove secondo te si parla il dialetto più melodioso, piacevole all'orecchio.

Indica con un cerchio ROSSO dove secondo te si parla il dialetto meno melodioso, piacevole all'orecchio.

Indica con un cerchio BLU dove secondo te si parla il dialetto più prestigioso.

Indica con un cerchio GIALLO dove secondo te si parla il dialetto meno prestigioso.

Indica con un cerchio NERO dove secondo te si trova il dialetto più simile all'Italiano corrente.

Indica con un cerchio VIOLA, dove secondo te si trova il dialetto meno simile all'Italiano corrente

http://www.caropepe.com/italy/italy-info/italy.gif

II. Fornire prego le seguenti informazioni:

Età_____ Sesso_____

Occupazione_____

Luogo di nascita:_____

Luogo di crescita, se diversa:_____

Luogo di residenza, se diversa:_____

Anni vissuti in Italia:_____

Luogo di nascita dei genitori:_____

_____

Istruzione:

Scuole medie Scuole superiori Università Dottorato

1. Parli un dialetto? Quale/i? Se “no,” capisci un dialetto anche se non lo parli? Quale/i?

2. Se parli un dialetto, ti ritrovi ad usarlo:

Sempre Qualche volta al giorno Qualche volta alla settimana

Qualche volta al mese Qualche volta all’anno Mai

3. Se parli un dialetto, qualè la sua importanza nella stabilizzazione della tua identità?

Moltissimo Molto Un Po’ Non Molto Per Niente

4. Secondo te, il dialetto ti aiuterebbe a comunicare meglio con un tuo amico/a?

Moltissimo Molto Un Po' Non Molto Per Niente

5. Se dovessi sostenere un colloquio di lavoro, è importante far capire che conosci il dialetto della regione in cui devi lavorare?

Moltissimo Molto Un Po' Non Molto Per Niente

6. Hai qualcos'altro da dire su i dialetti in Italia? Hai trovato qualche parte dell'indagine difficile a completare? Ti è venuto in mente qualcos'altro che vorresti aggiungere? (usa il retro della pagina se necessario)

English translation:

I. Divide the map into the following regions:

Indicate with a GREEN circle where you believe the most beautiful dialect is spoken.

Indicate with a RED circle where you believe the least beautiful dialect is spoken.

Indicate with a BLUE circle where you believe the most prestigious dialect is spoken.

Indicate with a YELLOW circle where you believe the least prestigious dialect is spoken.

Indicate with a BLACK circle where you believe the dialect most similar to current

Italian is spoken.

Indicate with a PURPLE circle where you believe the dialect least similar to current

Italian is spoken.

II. Please provide the following information about yourself:

Age: Sex: Occupation:

Place of birth:

Place where you grew up, if different:

Place of residence, if different:

Number of years lived in Italy:

Parents' place of birth:

Education:

Middle School High School University Graduate School

1. Do you speak a dialect? Which one(s)? If not, do you understand a dialect even though you don't speak it? Which one(s)?

2. If you speak a dialect, how often do you use it? (circle one)

Always Several times a day Several times a week Several times a month

Several times a year Never

3. If you speak a dialect, how important is it in determining your identity? (circle one)

Incredibly important Important Somewhat important

Not very important Not at all important

4. How much do you believe a dialect would help in comunicating with a friend? (circle one)

A whole lot A lot Some Not much Not at all

5. If you had to interview for a job, how important would it be to indicate that you speak the dialect of the region in which you would work? (circle one)

A whole lot A lot Some Not much Not at all

6. Do you have something else to say about dialects in Italy? Did you find some part of the survey difficult to complete? Did anything else occur to you that you would like to add? (you may use the back of the page if necessary)

Appendix C: Respondent demographics

Table 8.1 Breakdown of data sample by age

Age	Number of respondents
18-30	290
31+	240

Table 8.2 Breakdown of total data sample by sex

Sex	Number of respondents
Female	306
Male	221

Table 8.3 Breakdown of total data sample by reported occupation

Reported Occupation	Number of respondents	Percent of total data sample
No response	14	2.6
Student	262	49.4
Impiegato/a	111	20.9
Education professional	50	9.4
Commerce/business	17	3.2
Self-Employed	15	2.8
Manual labor/industry	12	2.3
Intellectual labor/white collar	30	5.7
Unemployed	19	3.6

Table 8.4 Breakdown of total data sample by reported level of education completed

Reported level of completed education	Number of respondents	Percent of total data sample
No response	9	1.7
Elementary school	5	.9
Middle school	25	4.7
High school	233	4.4
University	230	43.4
Graduate school	28	5.3

Appendix D: Completed examples of respondent surveys

Figure 9.1 Respondent map from Tuscany

Figure 9.2 Respondent map from Tuscany

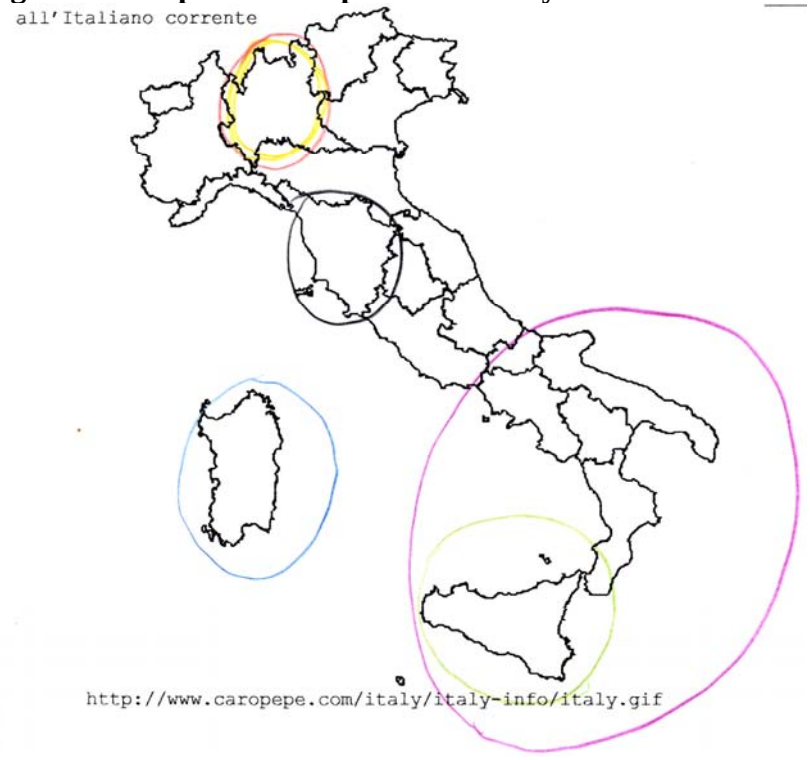


Figure 9.3 Respondent map from Tuscany

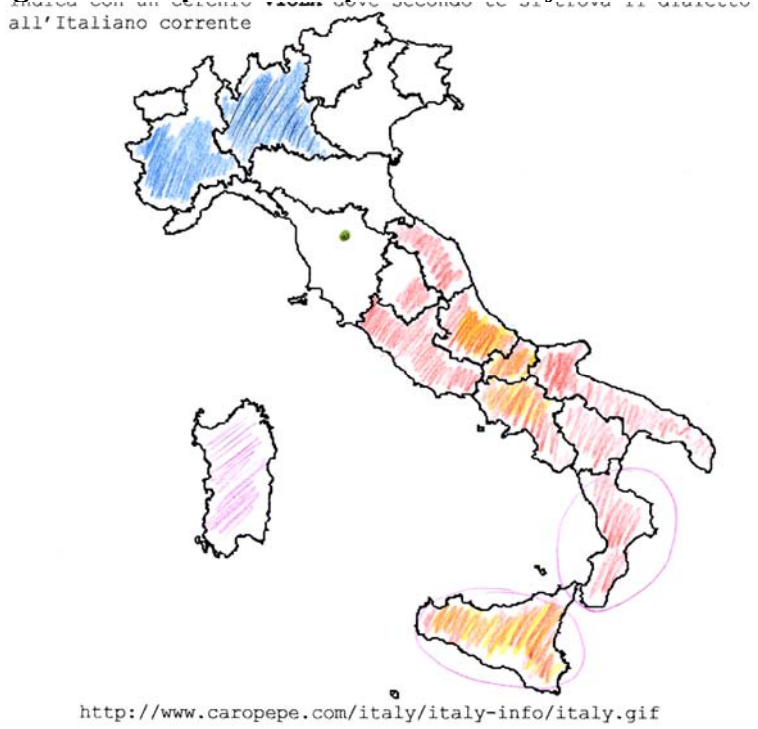


Figure 9.4 Respondent map from Veneto

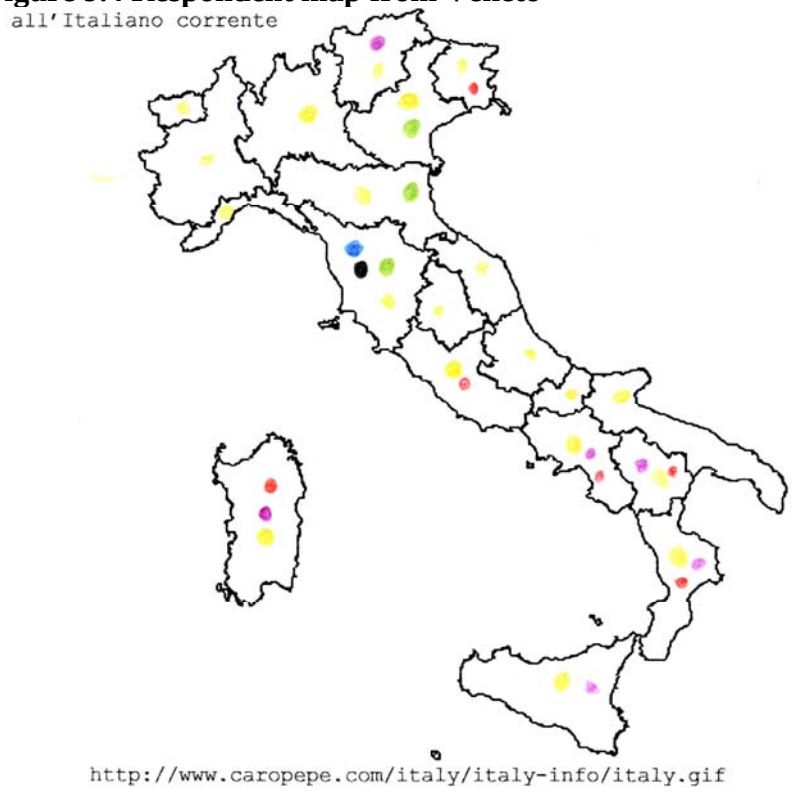


Figure 9.5 Respondent map from Campania

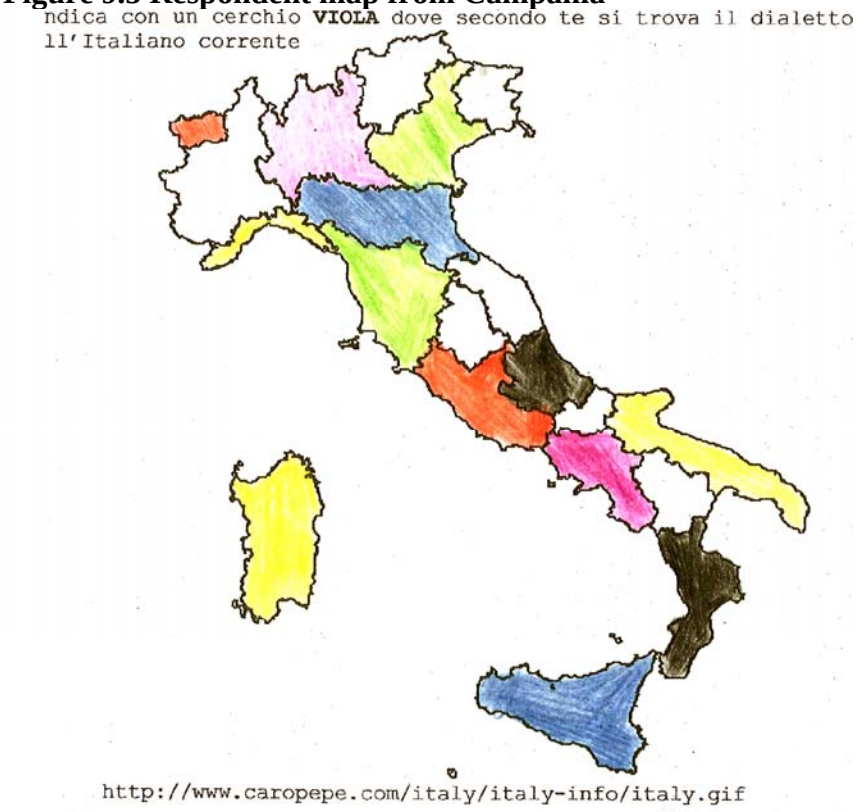
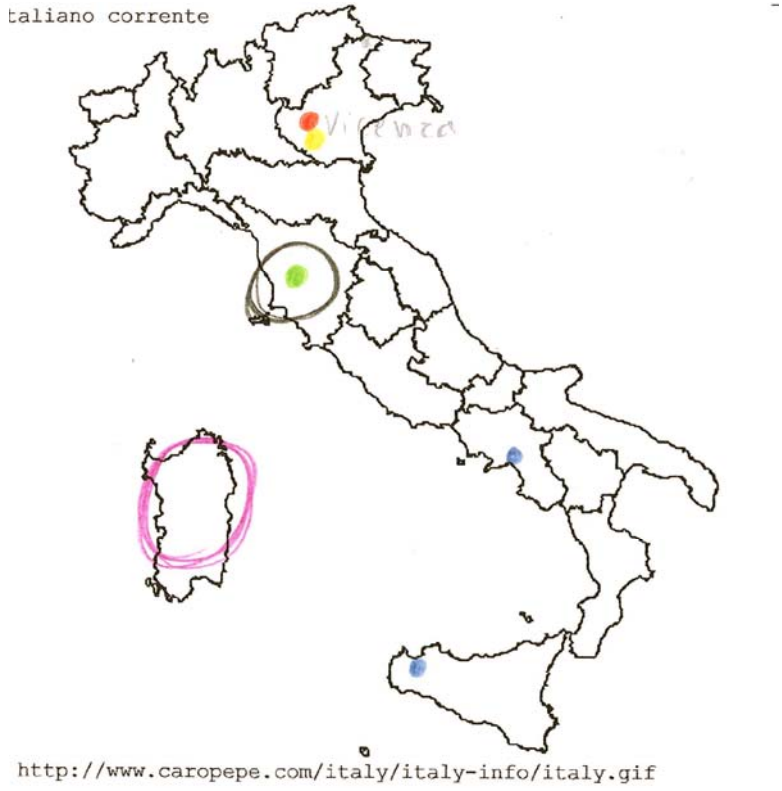


Figure 9.6 Respondent map from Veneto



Appendix E: Additional results charts; subsets of the data that did not show significant correlation between age and choice of region

Figure 1.3 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

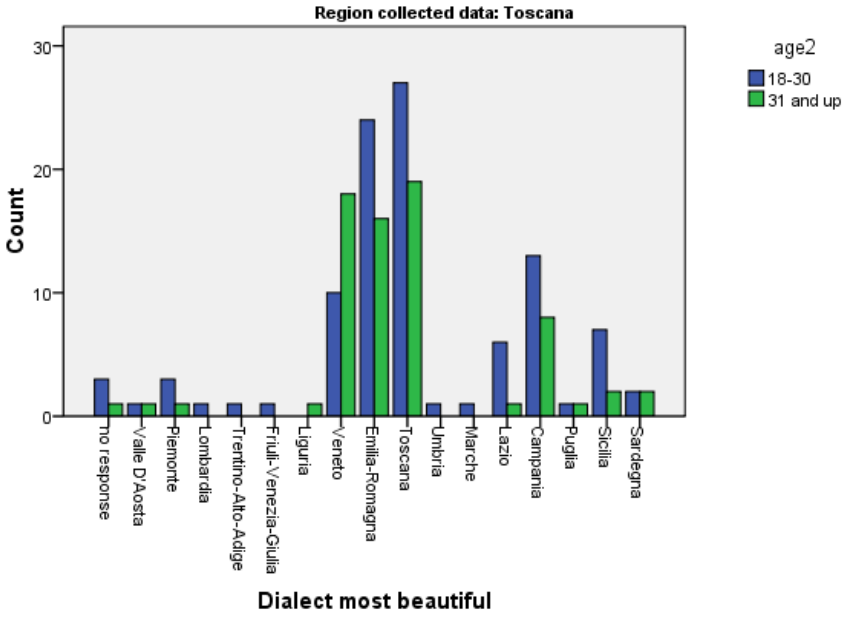


Figure 1.4 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group

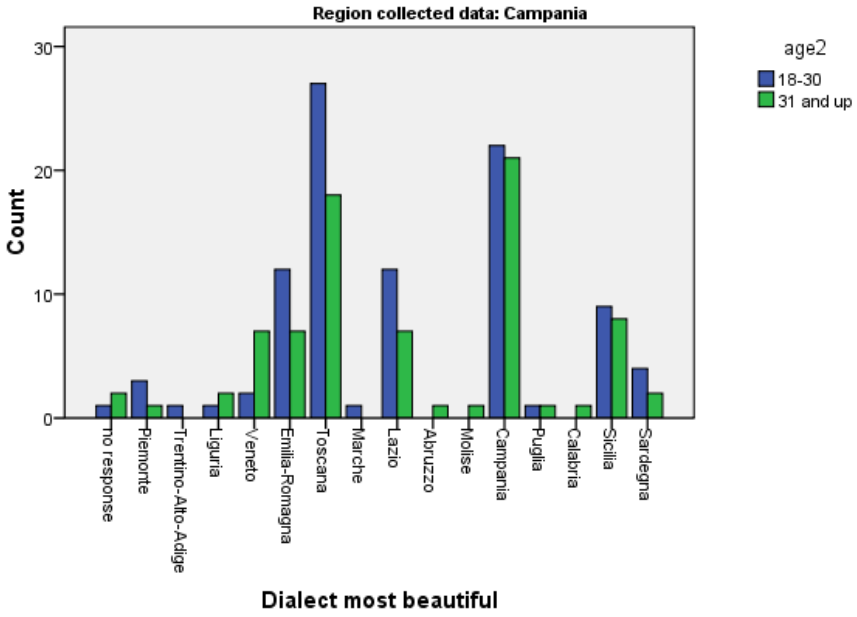


Figure 2.4 "Where is the least beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group

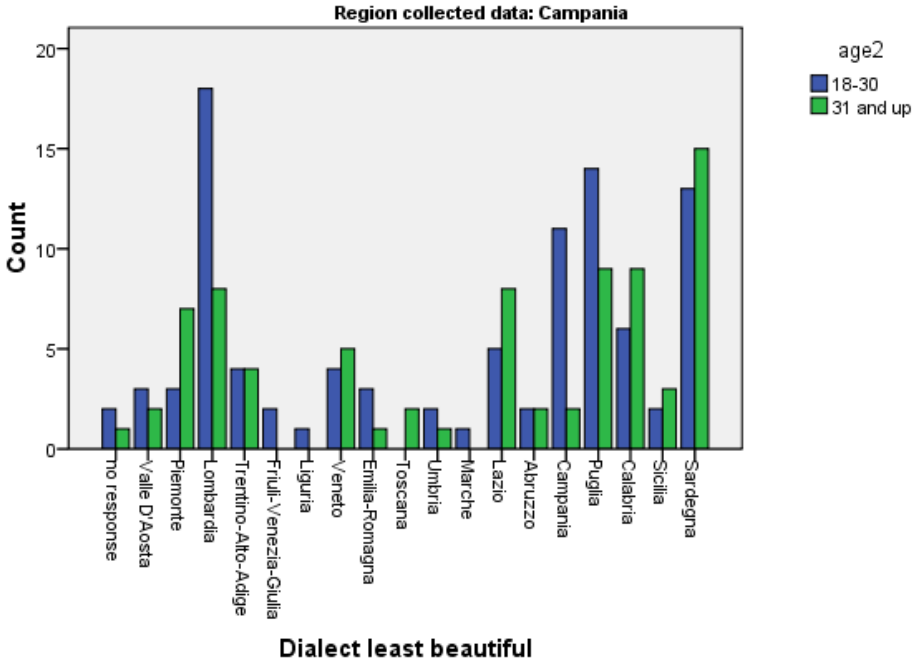


Figure 3.2 "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

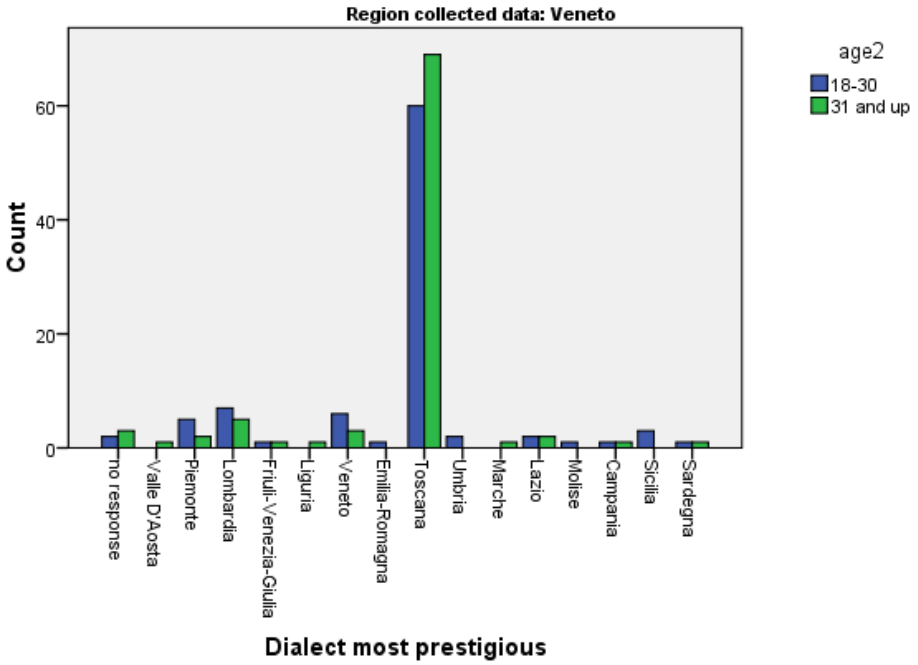


Figure 3.3. "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

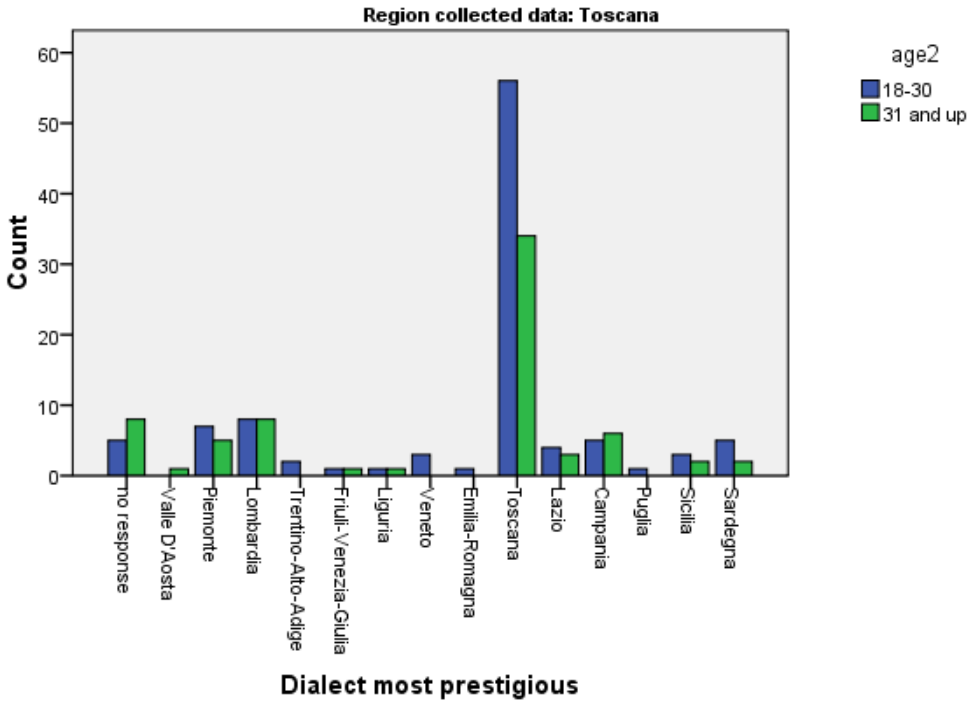


Figure 3.4 "Where is the most prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group

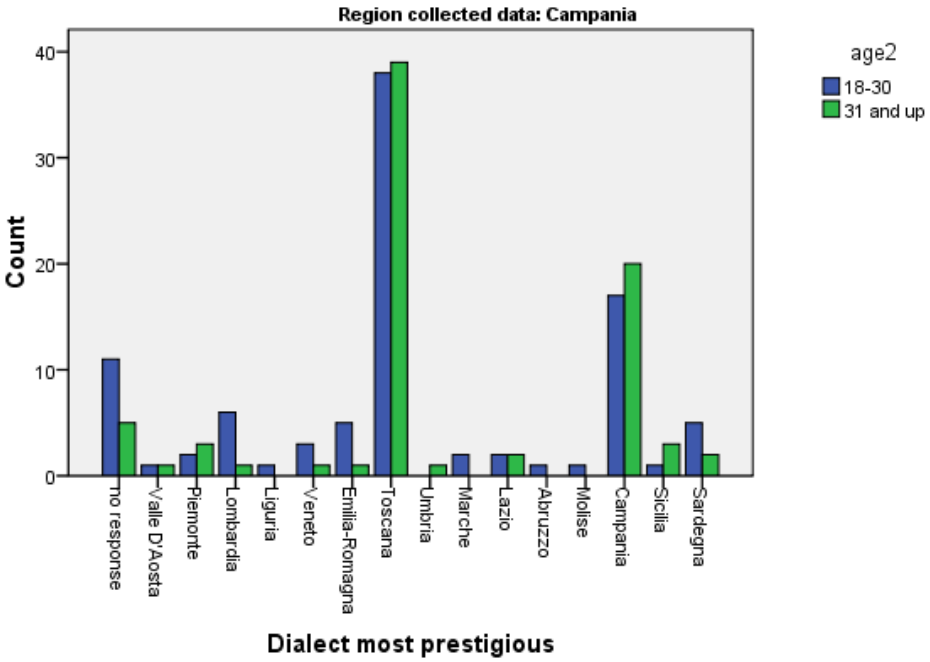


Figure 4.3 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

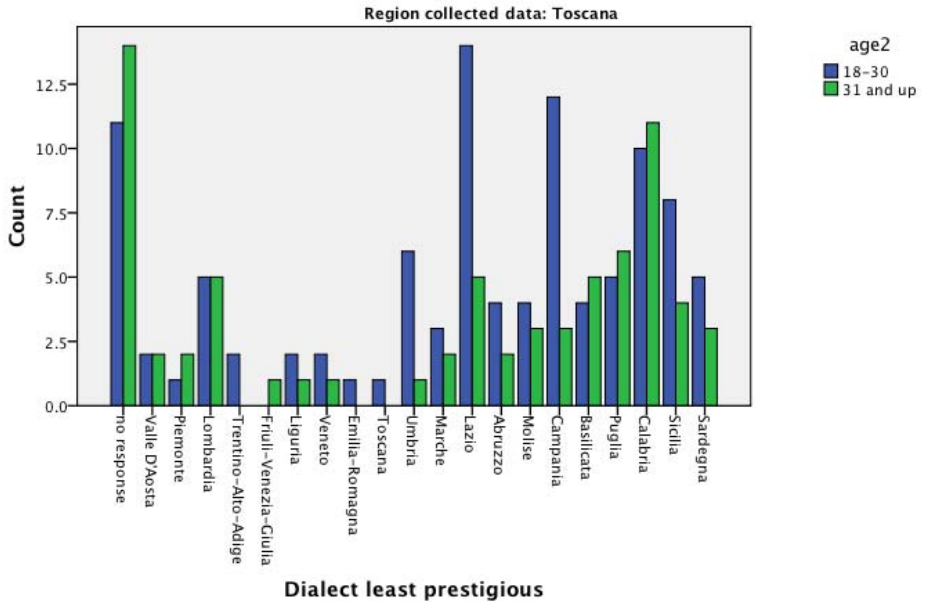


Figure 4.4 "Where is the least prestigious dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group"

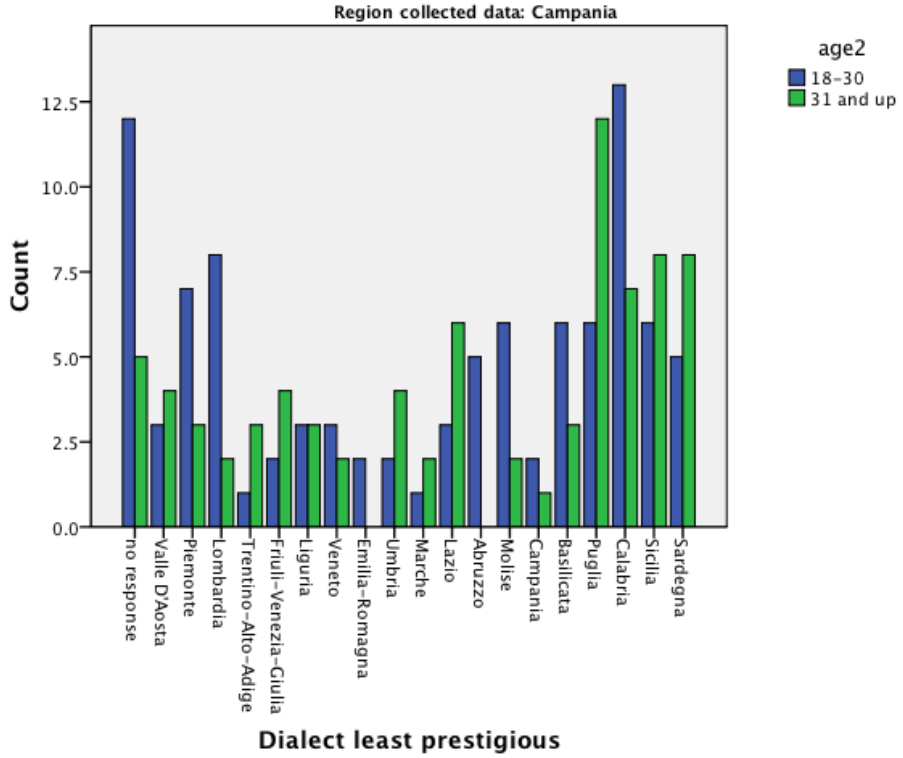


Figure 5.4 "Where is the dialect most similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

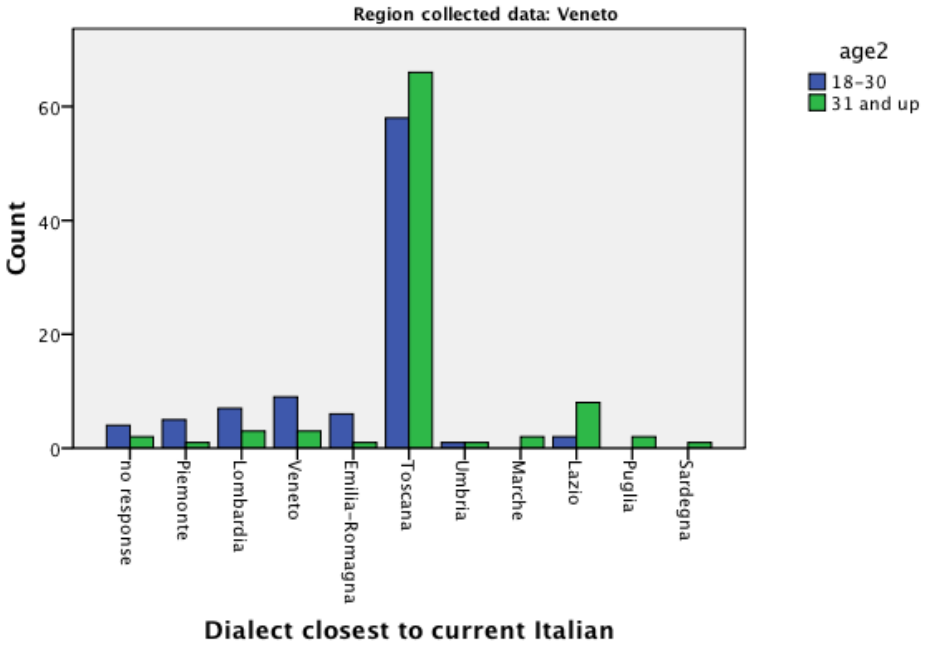


Figure 6.3 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Tuscany, split by age group

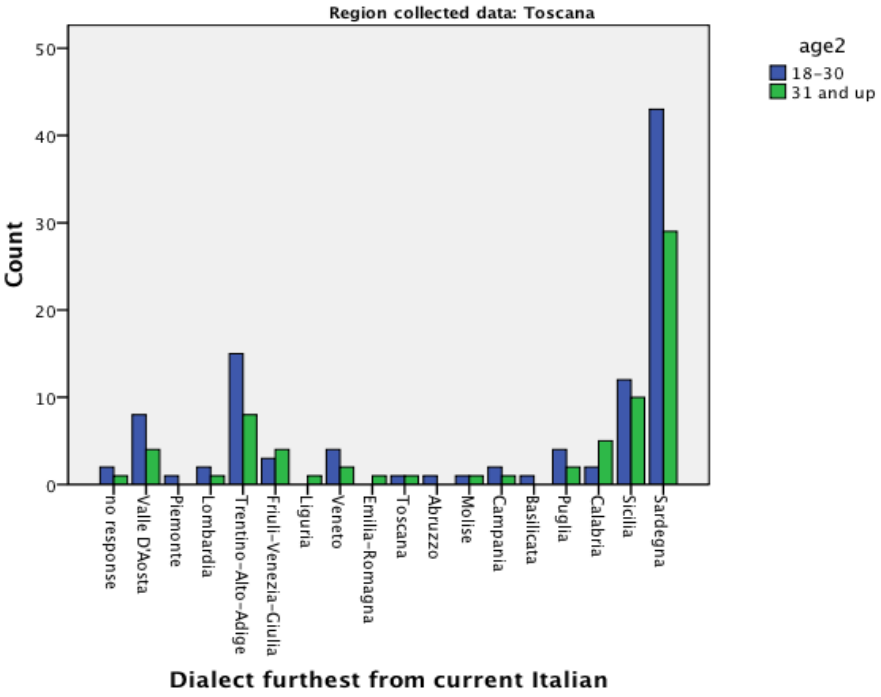
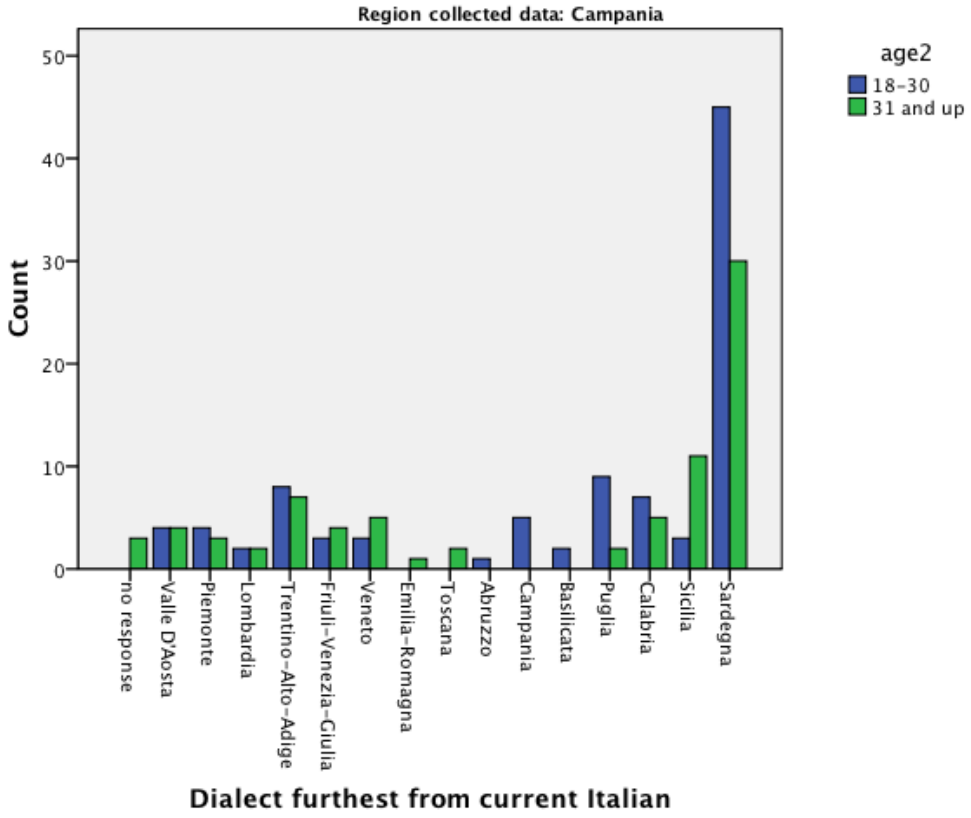


Figure 6.4 "Where is the dialect least similar to Italian spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Campania, split by age group



Appendix F: control graphs testing robustness of the results trends

As I mentioned in the results section, some respondents indicated more than one region for the same value judgment. During data entry, I could have chosen to eliminate these additional choices by not entering them into the database. However, this would not have done justice to the data. On the other hand, by including the multi-region responses, I risked diluting the significance of the data from those respondents who did only choose a single region for each value judgment.

To set my mind at ease (as well as to forestall possible criticism about internal discrepancies in the data set) I isolated a subset of respondents from Veneto who had only indicated a single region for the value judgment of "most beautiful." I decided to subject this "cleaned-up" subset of the data to the same tests I was using to analyze the entire data sample. If I found significance in the control subset *and* still found significance in the larger data sample, I could assume that the trends indicated by my results were sufficiently robust to resist dilution from internal discrepancies.

Excluding all those respondents who had chosen more than one region for the value judgment of "most beautiful" limited the data from Veneto to 153 respondents. I used a chi-square analysis to see if the frequency of preference of those 153 respondents for a certain region was skewed from the predicted values based on the age of the respondent. Results indicated that preference was indeed significantly affected by age, and these results were similar for both the control subset and the total data set. Therefore, I was able to extrapolate that the diluting effect of including respondents who made multiple choices for each value judgment is not significant:

Figure 7.1 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of single-region responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group

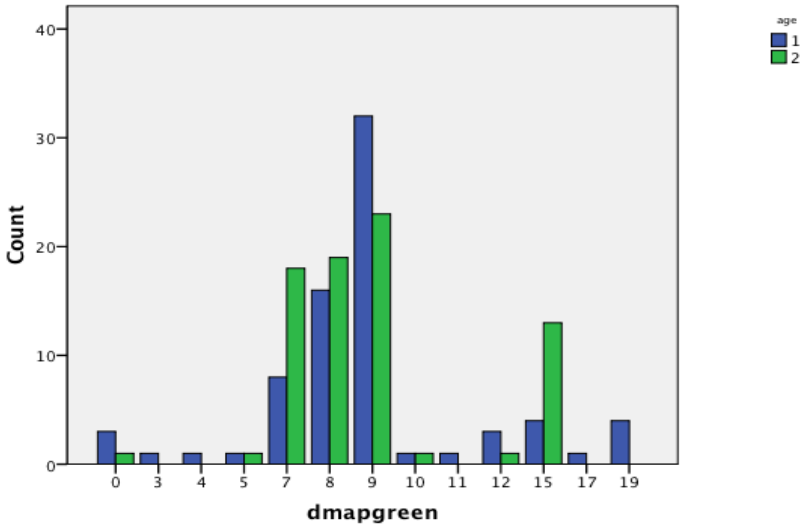
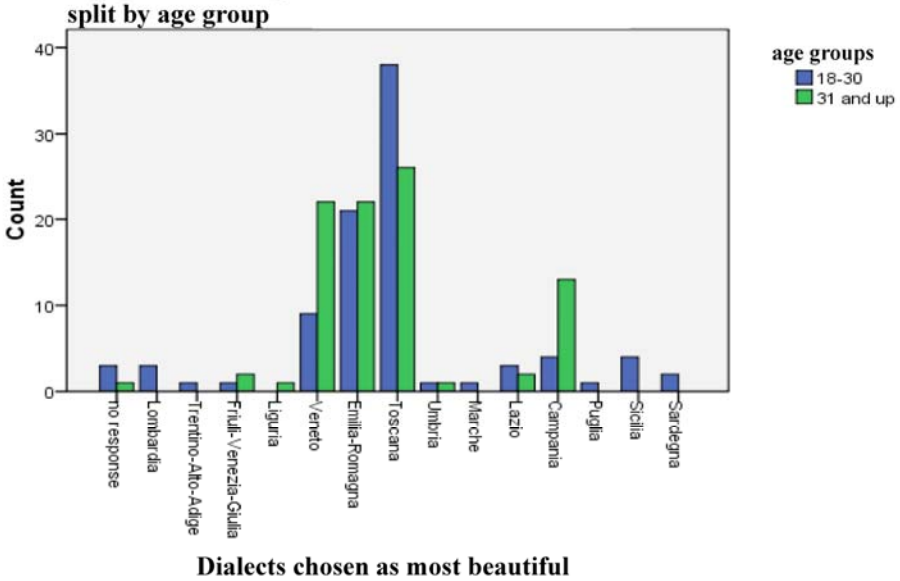


Figure 1.2 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group



A quick visual comparison of the two graphs indicates that the overall trend of responses for both the "cleaned-up" subset and the total data sample from Veneto is the same. Assuming that results trends for other regions and other value judgments are equally robust, I am satisfied that the differences seen here are not great enough to warrant throwing out all the responses that indicate more than one region.

This data might also be criticized because though the variable "region of data collection" was used as a stand-in for respondents' region of birth, there was not always a perfect correspondence between the two. This was particularly true for Tuscany, where 42% of respondents indicated a region other than Tuscany as their place of birth. In Veneto and Campania the percentages were lower (25 and 13% respectively). Out of 530 respondents, a total of 140 were not born in the region where they filled out the survey.

Therefore, as another test of data robustness, I isolated a different subset of the data sample from Veneto, this time by region of birth. I then compared the results from analyses of this subset to those from analyses of the larger set of data collected from Veneto. Once again, I found that not only was statistical significance reproduced, but that the major patterns of responses were similar for both the "clean" and "messy" data sets, and thus I was once again satisfied as to the data's ability to withstand the diluting effects of its internal discrepancies.

Figure 7.2 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from respondents born in Veneto, split by age group

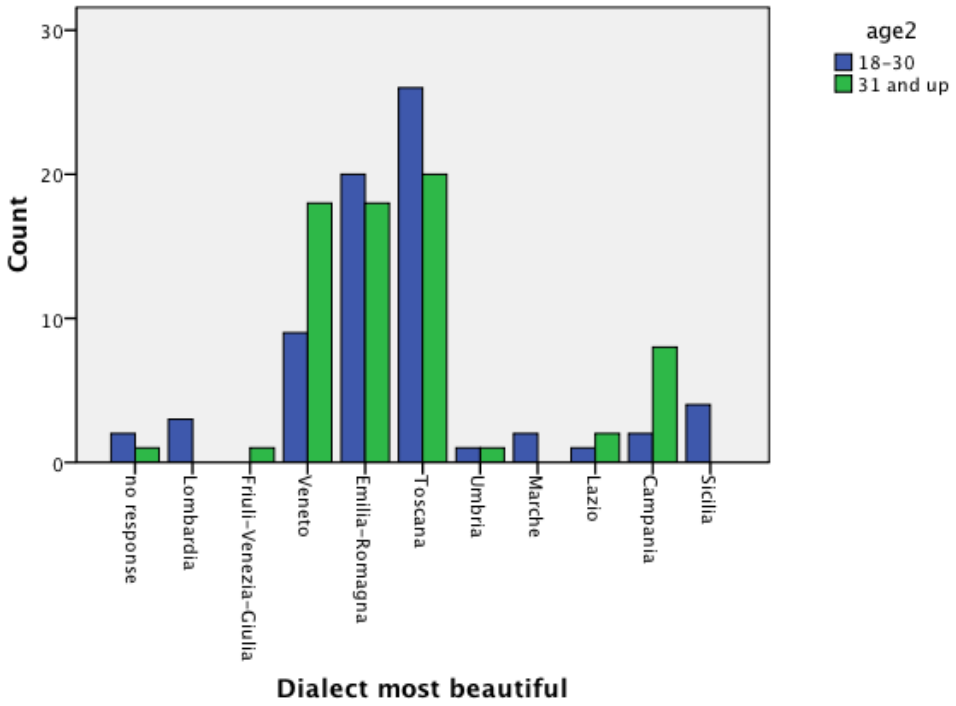


Figure 1.2 "Where is the most beautiful dialect spoken?" : Distribution of responses from data collected in Veneto, split by age group