UNIVERSIDADE DO VALE DO RIO DOS SINOS - UNISINOS

UNIDADE ACADÊMICA DE GRADUAÇÃO

CURSO DE LETRAS INGLÊS

AMANDA SEIMETZ

PORTUGUESE AND TALIAN:

A Case Study of Three Generations' Perceptions and Realities

São Leopoldo

2019

AMANDA SEIMETZ

PORTUGUESE AND TALIAN:

A Case Study of Three Generations' Perceptions and Realities

> Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso apresentado como requisito parcial para obtenção do título de Licenciada em Letras – Inglês, pelo Curso de Letras da Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos - UNISINOS

> Orientadora: Profa. Me. Aline Jaeger

São Leopoldo

2019

To the best people life could have given me, my friends, family, my wonderful partner, and my professor. I could not have come this far without your support.

RESUMO

Oficialmente, o Brasil é reconhecido como um país bilíngue, tendo Português e LIBRAS como suas línguas nacionais. Entretanto, diversas outras línguas são faladas em seu território nacional, uma delas sendo Talian. Esta pesquisa busca apresentar as percepções de falantes de Talian quanto ao uso, relevância e necessidade de passar a língua em diante. O objetivo também é compreender se o Talian é visto como uma língua ou variação do Italiano, podendo assim determinar um possível futuro da língua dentro da comunidade, baseando-se no ponto de vista dos participantes. Foram aplicados questionários e foram realizadas entrevistas com três membros de uma família bilíngue em Português-Talian. Busca-se através dos dados coletados com questionários e entrevistas obter uma clara visão de como cada participante vê e interage com o Talian. As pesquisas e trabalhos desenvolvidos por Harding-Esch, E., Riley, P. (2003), Bloomfield (1933), Romaine (1995), Baker (2001), Myers - Scotton (2006), Grosjean (1996), De Fina (2007), King e Mackey (2007), Lambert (1980), Poplack (1980), Spolsky (2004) e Ferguson (1949) foram de grande valia para embasar a pesquisa e auxiliar na análise dos dados coletados. Com base no ponto de vista dos participantes, os resultados apontam que o Talian é visto como uma língua que é majoritariamente oral.

Palavras-chave: Bilinguismo. Língua Minoritária. Política Linguistica. Talian.

ABSTRACT

Officially, Brazil is recognized as a bilingual country, having Portuguese and LIBRAS as its two national languages. However, many other languages being spoken in the country, one of them being Talian. This research has the objective of presenting the perceptions of three generations of the same family of Talian speakers, surrounding its usage, relevance, and the need for the language to be passed on along. The intent is to describe how these speakers see Talian, either as a language or variety of Italian, and to develop a better knowledge around the possible future of the language in the community, based on the participant's views. The three participants are members of a Portuguese-Talian bilingual family; they answered questionnaires and were invited to take part in interviews. The aim is to describe, based on the data collected, how each participant sees and interacts with Talian. The research and works developed by Harding-Esch, E., Riley, P. (2003), Bloomfield (1933), Romaine (1995), Baker (2001), Myers - Scotton (2006), Grosjean (1996), De Fina (2007), King and Mackey (2007), Lambert (1980), Poplack (1980), Spolsky (2004) and Ferguson (1949) were of great value in helping develop the theoretical basis and the data analysis of what was collected. According to the viewpoint of the participants, it is possible to affirm that Talian is seen as a language and that it is predominantly an oral language.

Key Words: Bilingualism. Linguistic Policy. Minority Language. Talian.

LIST OF PICTURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Portugal colonized Brazil in the 1500s, which meant that Portuguese was from that point onward the official language of the country. Regardless of the languages spoken within the abundant number of indigenous tribes throughout Brazil at the time, the Portuguese monarchy imposed their language, and for long decades Brazilian Portuguese was the single official language of the nation. This imposed monolingual reality changed in April 2002 when LIBRAS (Língua Brasileira de Sinais) was recognized as Brazil's second official language, through law number 10.436/2002.

According to IPOL[1], since 2002, efforts from the Brazilian government have been enabling municipal co-officialization of languages. Although Brazil has been home to 237 languages[2], from the beginning of the decade until now, only 11 languages have been co-officiated by 28 different municipalities. One of these languages is the Venetian variety, Talian.

Brazilian government recognized Talian as a national heritage due to numerous speakers spread throughout Rio Grande do Sul and other states. Additionally, it was co-officiated as a second language in 9 cities in Rio Grande do Sul and one city in Santa Catarina. As reported by IPOL, the following towns of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina have Talian as one of their official languages: Serafina Corrêa; Flores da Cunha; Bento Gonçalves; Paraí; Nova Roma do Sul; Fagundes Varela; Caxias do Sul; Nova Erechim.

The choice to work with the topic of bilingualism inside a small community in an area known as Serra Gaúcha came from my own experience of growing up in a city in this region, called Farroupilha. I was brought up inside a community where being bilingual is an unspoken rule, making this subject highly crucial on a personal level. Although it is popularly accepted that many Portuguese-Talian bilinguals inhabit the city, there are no exact numbers that illustrate the percentage of residents of Farroupilha who are Portuguese-Talian bilinguals. Additionally, there is a scarcity in studies in this particular area of Brazilian bilingualism, regarding Portuguese-Talian bilinguals.

My decision to work with Talian was not only based on my relationship with the language. Although I was raised interacting with people who spoke Talian, I did not

---

[1] Instituto de Investigação e Desenvolvimento em Política Linguística

[2] Ethnologue Languages of the world. Available at <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/br>. Accessed on 10 March 2019.

learn to speak the language. Since the only people who spoke Talian in my family are the older generations, I did not have enough contact with the language. In this context, I decided to research Talian as a means to honor the language and its speakers.

Farroupilha is considered the city which was not only founded by Italian families but also one of the first areas where they arrived during their immigration to Brazil. According to the official municipal website[3], Farroupilha is the birthplace of Italian migration in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The former fact endorses the bilingualism and biculturalism present in this region.

Most people in this region learn how to speak and interact with Talian during childhood, resulting in a significant number of adults that are either passive bilinguals[4] or proficient[5] in the language and manage to keep it alive. The longevity of Talian relies on how its speakers see and interact with the language. The objective of this paper is to present what the perceptions of three generations of the same family of Talian speakers are, surrounding its usage, relevance, and the need for the language to be passed along. The intent is to describe how these speakers see Talian, either as a language or variety of Italian, and to develop a better knowledge around the possible future of the language in the community, based on the participant's views.

Six chapters compose this paper: firstly a section on bilingualism and other pertinent aspects of the area such as multilingualism, biculturalism, and identity; secondly a chapter on linguistic policies and their social implications; after that, a chapter on the methodological approach chosen and the details of data collection; followed by a section regarding an analysis of the data collected; the last two sections, 6 Discussion and 7 Final Considerations deal with the most relevant data collected, its impact on the investigative field and possible future implications.

---

3 Portal Prefeitura de Farroupilha. A Cidade e a História. Available at: <http://farroupilha.rs.gov.br/cidade/historia/>. Accessed on 27 Sep. 2019.

4 The concept will be further explored in chapter 2 Bilingualism.

5 The concept will be further explored in chapter 2 Bilingualism.

2 BILINGUALISM

While the popular opinion of bilingualism is to comprehend and apply every aspect that there is of two languages, the authors of "The Bilingual Family" Edith Harding-Esch and Philip Riley disagree with this belief when they assert that "Each one of us speaks part of our mother tongue" (2003, p. 22). In this context, each member of a bilingual society only comprehends and applies part of their mother tongue and, therefore, part of a second language. The previous statement can be easily understood when considering that each language will be used for different purposes in individuals' daily lives. The central dilemma, when describing bilingualism, is that the majority of definitions fall into a romanticized perspective of what this phenomenon is (Harding-Esch and Riley, p. 2003 p. 33).

According to Bloomfield (1933, p. 56), bilingualism is "native-like control of two languages." However, considering that no aspect of life is as simple and forthright as Bloomfield's description, it is necessary to develop a lesser strict portrayal of the word. Throughout the field of linguistics, each professor, researcher, or student may have a different yet valid explanation for what bilingualism is and how it can be identified. In this perspective, Romaine (1995, p. 22) maintains that the concept is relative to the notion and that factors other than proficiency must be taken into account.

Proficiency is one of the highly discussed terms in language teaching and learning since each person can develop their understanding of what it means to be proficient. Baker (2001 p.8) argued that "One expectation from this fractional viewpoint will be for bilinguals to show a proficiency comparable to that of a monolingual in both their two languages." Nevertheless, it is relevant to state that proficiency should not be taken as a *native-like* bilingual quality but, as a stage in which the speaker can communicate with others. In other words, the speaker is competent enough to perform tasks related to his or her needs and desires.

A further outlook on bilingualism from a lay perspective is that it is something exotic and rare. Notwithstanding, over 50% of the population of the world is bilingual (HARDING-ESCH AND RILEY, 2003 p. 28), this fact strongly contradicts the popular belief.

Interestingly enough, the reason why the exotic or rareness features of bilingualism seem so admissible comes from our definitions of bilingualism. Several individuals do not identify themselves as bilinguals because they have not developed their productive skills (speaking and writing); however, these people can understand spoken and written texts, receptive skills (listening and reading). These individuals are passive or receptive bilinguals, according to Myers - Scotton (2006 p. 9) "(…) the addressee only develops a receptive ability in the other speaker's language (meaning he or she can understand, but not speak the language)." For example, in Brazil, part of the deaf community whose first language is Libras can understand spoken and written Portuguese.

Although no bilingual, nor monolingual for that matter, has the complete domain of both languages, one question remains unanswered, as to the reason why people, and sometimes entire communities, become bilingual. The answer is quite straightforward; bilingualism is stimulated by our need to communicate between different groups either for the exchange of goods or information. Therefore, for two people, who do not share an L1 (first language), to communicate, one of them must be able to speak the other's language, or perhaps a third language that both speakers are familiar with (MYERS - SCOTTON, 2006 p. 6).

Regarding that individuals might not be equally proficient in one or two languages, it is reasonable to affirm that members of an officially declared bilingual or multilingual society might also not be able to speak all official languages.

Brazil is a perfectly fitting example for the matter; Brazil is officially a bilingual country, where Portuguese and LIBRAS are its official languages; however, according to the 2010 IBGE[6] study, roughly 5% of the population is deaf, hard of hearing or has been affected by some hearing impairment. Even though this data does not reveal the exact number of people who are Portuguese-Libra bilinguals, it is possible to assume that it would not be a higher figure than 5%, based on the fact that the majority of the population does not identify the need to use Libras in their daily affairs.

Brazil's bilingual state happened as LIBRAS became an official language due to the need for socio-political acknowledgment of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. This group of people does not necessarily acquire LIBRAS as their mother tongue because, in most cases, their parents as listeners and speak Portuguese, not

---

6 Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. </https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/apps/mapa/>. Accessed on: 12 April 2019

LIBRAS. As explained by Lima (2004) and Muck (2009), LIBRAS is not their mother tongue; it is language learned once they start going to school.

2.1 Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Having established that, it is sporadic for a community to be monolingual, as proposed by Myers-Scotton (2006, p.17), "The idea then, that each country has one language, spoken uniformly by all the people within its borders, is both naive and inaccurate (…)". It is reasonable to postulate that the likeliest outcome of our social needs is building a commonwealth where more than one language is accepted and used.

Bilingualism and multilingualism are manifestations of our need to communicate in different social atmospheres; furthermore, bilingual societies are established on the aforementioned need to communicate. In particular, Harding-Esch and Riley (2003) remark that when two monolingual societies must interact with one another for economic and commercial reasons, both groups may identify new linguistic means to communicate. Therefore, having the ability to interact in a wide range of groups is a highly regarded feature, socially speaking. The authors MarcDewaele et. all (2003) affirmed that this competence goes beyond the matter of choice,

> "(…) the majority of people who manipulate two languages do so because, to them, it is a natural corollary to functioning efficiently as a human being, be it because of residence patterns, family circumstances, employment opportunities, or intellectual needs." (MARCDEWAELE ET. ALL, 2003, p. 10)

Although speaking two or more languages can be seen as something few people can do, researchers and language specialists argue otherwise. According to Harding-Esch and Riley. (2003 p. 26) "Over half the world's population is bilingual." From this perspective, bilingualism and multilingualism should be understood as the standard, in this case, notes an imposed standard, but as natural social phenomena. Bilingualism, and therefore multilingualism are spontaneous processes, as indicated by Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 9) "bilingualism is a natural outcome of the socio-political forces that create groups and their boundaries."

The concept of spontaneous socio-political processes seems generic, to say the least. Understanding that bilingualism and multilingualism are generated from the need of two groups to communicate comes easily; however, knowing the reasons why these

groups were either forced or amicably made to coexist goes into the realms of migration, political interference, and, therefore geographical issues. Authors such as Romaine (1994), Mota (1996), Baker (1997), and Mello (1999) have suggested that migration fosters the existence of bilingualism. In this context, Grosjean (1996) identified the most frequent types of migration,

> (…) migrations of various kinds (economic, educational, political, religious), nationalism and federalism, education and culture, trade and commerce, intermarriage, etc. These factors create various linguistic needs in people who are in contact with two or more languages and who develop competencies in their languages to the extent required by these needs. (GROSJEAN, 1996, p.2)

Additionally, this perception reinforces the idea that no bilingual or multilingual individual is fluent in all languages they may use, since that each person develops the competencies needed in each language according to the social sphere this competence is necessary.

2.2 Bilingualism and Biculturalism

Technological advancements over the past few decades have allowed humans to communicate, travel, visit, and work with people from various cultural backgrounds. Interacting with many different cultures, even those that may share the same language (e.g., the USA and the UK), plays a vital role in shaping people's habits and cultural realities. Moreover, culture is deeply connected to language, when people are exposed to two different cultures and perhaps languages, it is reasonable to assume that these will interfere in the individual's life.

Being exposed to two languages or two cultures can shape human beings in many different ways, even if these are not taking place at the same time. Bilingualism and biculturalism are not necessarily reliant on one another. Although both bear a dual quality to them, one does not depend on nor directly affects the other. According to Harding-Esch and Riley (2003, p.46), "Biculturalism refers to the co-existence of two cultures in the same individual. Bilingualism and biculturalism do not necessarily coincide."

Exposing people to two different cultures may allow them to embody some aspects of both cultures. The authors Harding-Esch and Riley (2003 p.45) acknowledge that "Most aspects of culture are assimilated unconsciously, simply by

living in a particular society, and most of them are directly related to language in some way." Therefore, a person may not be bilingual while being bicultural and still accept that these bicultural aspects derive from language attributes.

To comprehend how a person could be bilingual but not bicultural and vice versa, it is relevant to discuss what are the possible social realities that can foster each variety. According to Grosjean (1996, p.7), an individual who inhabits an area which uses a Lingua Franca, for example, might be forced into adopting a second language, while not embracing any cultural aspect of it. On the other hand, there may be people who are part of a minority community who were not able to keep their minority language alive but have retained other cultural aspects of it; hence, these individuals are bicultural, but no longer bilingual.

2.3 Bilingualism and Identity

Human societies were founded on common behaviors; groups of people have gathered and scattered based on what was acceptable within human-made boundaries. Each group developed tools to meet their needs to identify themselves as different from one another. Typically, this need is expressed through various clothing, habits, food, and religion. All groups cultivate their own ever-changing set of guidelines, and these turn out to describe their collective identity, according to De Fina (2007, p. 377) "Collective identities (…) represent the image that a community has and projects about itself. They have to do with what people think characterizes them as a group that is different from others."

From a young age, individuals start to develop their awareness of the languages that surround them and the identity that each language infers on who speaks it. Speaking a particular language is connected to taking on individual identity. (KING; MACKEY, 2007, p. 72). In cases where individuals live in bilingual or multilingual societies, the choice to maintain the accent from one language to the other imposes a highly personal and social conundrum due to the conscious choice of identifying as a member of both groups or not. Furthermore, the author Anna De Fina (2007, p. 372) acknowledged that "identity claims and displays are embedded in social practices and respond to a complex interplay of local and global factors."

Although numerous individuals might not burden themselves with the social prestige of the language they use, choosing what language a person rather be

identified with may relate to the social value of the language. As emphasized by Baker (2001, p.69), the prestige of a certain language may come from its economic status. Additionally, socially highly regarded languages tend to be the target for many groups due to it "(…) giving higher social status and more political power (…)" (BAKER, 2001). In other words, a language shift may happen when a group of people identifies the need to be part of the majority language, due to its connections to power and economic success. In some cases, individuals may put in an extra effort to be part of a specific group. King and Mackey (2007) reported that some people might focus on

> (…) highlighting aspects of our identity through use of language (or languages) in particular ways (with word choice—for example, using powder room, toilet, bathroom, loo, little girls' room—or with language choice—for example, trying to use a tiny bit of Japanese at a local sushi place to seem more with it). (KING AND MACKEY, 2007, p. 72)

The vitality of a language is also connected to the status and economic value it bears. For example, a minority language that, in a specific society, is linked to poverty and unemployment may be exchanged by a majority language, even though, in some cases, there might not be a complete shift. Another example is when individuals of a group which is already part of the majority decide to add a new language to their collection, due to the social status of being bilingual.

Researchers have coined two terms that define the phenomena mentioned above: subtractive bilingualism, and additive bilingualism. The first refers to a lower status language and culture being undermined and giving place to a majority language; Lambert (1980) defines,

> "subtractive" form of bilingualism wherein an ethnolinguistic minority group, in attempting to master a prestigious national or international language, may actually set aside or "subtract out" for good the home language (…). (LAMBERT, 1980)

The second refers to individuals who are speakers of a highly valued language and learn a new language without abandoning their mother tongue. Lambert (1980) defines,

> "additive" form wherein members of a high prestige linguistic community can easily, and with no fear of jeopardizing home language competence, one or more other languages to their repertoire of skills, reaping benefits of various sorts from their bilinguality. (LAMBERT, 1980)

Notwithstanding, in recent decades, some societies have been working towards saving fewer prestige languages through social and legal means. For example, Ireland has created laws that impose Gaelic[7] teaching in regular schools and the usage of English and Gaelic on road signs, public announcements, and so on. The author Paulston (1974, p. 13) argues that "In societies when ethnic groups (…) want to maintain their language in a situation of rapid language shift, toward another language, they typically take measures to protect their language by legal measures."

Recognizing the social value of a language officially may help with its longevity. For instance, the co-officialization of Talian as a second language in 9 Brazilian cities has been the result of efforts from the members of these communities who are fighting to raise the social prestige of the language. Nevertheless, the vitality of a language relies on further than the bureaucracy that may have allowed it to be official upon. The vitality of a language is also dependent on its daily usage, on its teaching and learning, on publications being written about it and using it. The longevity of a language relies on its people.

2.4 Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

Code-switching and code-mixing are phenomena that occur mostly in spoken communication, typically within the bilingual or multilingual communities. These two concepts are just as challenging to be described as bilingualism. The majority of linguists agree on the understanding that code-switching and code-mixing are opportunities in spoken language where the speaker may go back and forth on the usage of two languages. The author Toribio (2001, p. 203) describes these concepts as "(…) the alternating usage of two or more linguistic codes in a single conversational event." In this context, it becomes vital for the participants of the interaction to be bilingual or multilingual on both, or more, languages; otherwise, participants are bound to a misunderstanding.

Numerous studies have been conducted on code-switching in the field of language acquisition and on the impacts of the usage of this tool from the teacher's part. Authors such as Hall and Cook (2012), Amir (2013), Slotte (2007), García and Lin (2016) have conducted extensive works in this area. Additionally, researchers who

---

7 Gov.ie, Policies. Available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/policies/>. Accessed on 16 Oct. 2019

focus mainly on CA (Conversation Analysis) have also carried out a fair share of research regarding many facets of code-switching.

Although code-switching and code-mixing are topics that may have been widely studied within the fields of language acquisition and CA when it comes to bilingualism, the spectrum of research widens significantly. Indeed, since these phenomena are easily observed in communities where two or more languages exist, and consequently, different culturally identified groups coexist. Moreover, the author Alexia Panayiotou (2004, p. 134) acknowledges, "a change in codes (languages) implies, at least to a certain extent, a change in the cultural or social code used (…)". In this context, there is no denying that code-switching and code-mixing are deeply connected to culture and identity.

Code-switching and code-mixing define the alternation of code; from the viewpoint of some linguists and language researchers, the main difference between them is the intention and self-awareness of the speaker. Code-switching refers to moments in which the speaker changes from one language to another by choice or need, having made the decision consciously. On the other hand, code-mixing is referred to as moments in which the speaker unintentionally mixes languages within a discourse or sentence.

From a social perspective, it is believed that changing codes in discourse may be a sign of low proficiency in one of the languages. Although this might be the case for code-mixing, code-switching, au contraire, indicates a higher understanding and finer use of the languages being spoken. According to Poplack (1980, p. 581), "(…) code-switching, rather than representing debasement of linguistic skill, is actually a sensitive indicator of bilingual ability". Therefore, being able to alternate between two languages knowingly may indicate a higher level of proficiency.

According to Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 239), "(…), a general definition of codeswitching is this: the use of two language varieties in the same conversation". The author continues to explain the possible structures of code-switching by defining the existence of inter-sentential switching and intra-sentential switching. Inter-sentential switching refers to the usage of complete a sentence in one code, followed by another complete sentence in the other code. Myers-Scotton (2006, p.239) clarifies that "Within each sentence, there is no switching of languages, but there is switching between the languages." On the other hand, intra-sentential switching refers to the change in code within a sentence or clauses.

Alternating between two languages may be a choice connected to an emotional or identity-related factor. In the field of linguistics, it is clear that spoken, and signalized languages are extraordinary tools in human interaction, they allow people to connect. This connection may be intensified when people share more than one language in common. In this context, making use of code-switching or code-mixing is distant from lacking the knowledge to express something in one single language, it is a choice to connect emotionally to those who are participating in the interaction.

The complexity of these two phenomena goes further than what has been presented thus far. There are groups of linguists that consider code-mixing to be something that happens within a single sentence that is uttered, whilst code-switching would refer to the entire utterance. For instance, "Code switching is the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" (POPLACK, 1980, p. 583).

Notwithstanding, while researching the process of language acquisition by bilingual children, the authors King and Mackey (2007, p. 186) asserted that "[code-mixing] is often unsettling to parents, the code-mixing phase is typically short-lived and finishes long before formal schooling begins. It is not problematic in any way in the long run." In other words, studies with bilingual children have shown that code-mixing is simply a short-lived phase of bilingual development and that the likelihood of it presenting for long periods is low.

To conclude, a generally accepted definition for each of the phenomena explained in this chapter was entitled to discuss, is as follows "Code-switching is what proficient bilinguals do to express themselves and complex ideas. In contrast, code-mixing is what learners do when they are acquiring two languages." (KING AND MACKEY, 2007, p. 190). Although there are many perspectives to consider, the definition above incorporates the broad understanding of what are code-mixing and code-switching.

3 LINGUISTIC POLICY

Language policies are part of our lives, whether we choose it or not. Each social group has developed and will continue to shape the languages and varieties spoken within. Spolsky (2004) suggested that there are three main components of a speech community's language policy: language practices; its language beliefs and ideology, and efforts to modify or influence the language practices that are in place.

Firstly, language practices are the constant selections that each member of a community makes when communicating, as Spolsky (2004, p.5) puts it "(…) varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire (…)". Secondly, the author emphasizes the power of a community's beliefs surrounding the language spoken and its use. The higher the value this group bestows upon a language, the higher are the chances of it withstanding the changes in the community and its neighboring areas. Lastly, the language practices mentioned above may be modified by the members of the community through planned interventions to acquire desired modifications on language practices.

Considering the influence that languages entrust in daily affairs, it is reasonable to suggest that the opposite is also true. How each member of a community decides to live directly interferes with the language(s) they may use. The former might not be visible in the short term; nonetheless, slow changes in people's vocabulary, for example, might have reshaped languages. According to Spolsky (2004),

> "(…) language policy exists even where it has not been made explicit or established by authority. Many countries and institutions and social groups do not have formal or written language policies so that the nature of their language policy must be derived from a study of their language practice or beliefs. Even where there is a formal, written language policy, its effect on language practices is neither guaranteed nor consistent." (SPOLSKY, 2004, p. 5)

Furthermore, these ever-changing linguistic habits and behaviors have a sizable effect on what makes a language or variety to be considered such. Societies determine which varieties of a language should thrive and which would be regarded as unworthy and less privileged.

Thus far, the linguistic policy has been acknowledged as socially necessary or natural changes in language use. However, throughout history, there have been several cases in which impositions on language use have profoundly modified

societies. For example, at the beginning of the Second World War, Brazil had remained neutral, yet, due to political interference, the country had to choose to cut ties with the countries known as the Axis Powers (Germany, Japan, and Italy) (STONE, 2012, p. 137-159). As a consequence, cultural aspects related to these countries were forbidden to be expressed in the regions where people migrated to. In other words, people who had migrated to Brazil from those countries could no longer speak their languages, sing their anthem, or read books written in their mother tongues. In fact, according to an edition of a newspaper from the year of 1942, people should not discuss ideas in public about the international situation nor greet one another in a manner that may remind the Axis Powers (BEHREND, 1942, O 05 de Abril).

The fact that entire communities could not speak their mother tongues is troublesome historically and socially speaking. Although some may try to erase pieces of history, a documentary called "Speechless" by Kátia Klock[8] made sure to keep the experiences lived by a speech community in the south of Brazil alive. The documentary was developed around a community that spoke a variety of German during the time of the Second World War. This community was forced to no longer speak their language; it came to a point in which elderly people could not leave their houses because they did not speak Portuguese, which was the only language accepted at the time. Furthermore, the documentary portrays the severity of the situation by mentioning a series of inhumane events. One vivid example is a moment in which an entire family was arrested for listening to the radio.

The impact of imposed linguistic policies, such as the previously mentioned, can have ever-lasting aftermath. In fact, varieties of Italian, German, and Japanese that were spoken before the prohibition have significantly suffered and have had their vitality drastically reduced. In the South of Brazil, there have been movements towards revitalizing these suppressed varieties. An example is a previously mentioned movement that has been materializing since 2002, of municipal co-officialization of languages, which was shown by IPOL[9].

---

8 KLOCK, Kátia. Speechless: Documentary. Rermesehenato, 2011. (52min06s). Available at:< https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WMUGVvRdQA>. Accessed on: 26 July 2019.

9 Instituto de Investigação e Desenvolvimento em Política Linguística

3.1 Language and Variety

Differentiating a language from a variety[10] might be, linguistically speaking, a challenging task. At the moment, there is no common understanding in the field of linguistics of what traits instinctively separate them. However, from a social viewpoint, it is possible to find a clearer division, given that languages tend to receive more prestige than varieties. The authors Harding-Esch, and Riley (2003, p.10) remark, "Certain dialects, or groups of dialects, have greater prestige than others, and it is these which we usually refer to as 'languages.'" In other words, languages and dialects, and therefore, varieties, are inherently equivalent, understanding that the contrast comes from social construct.

The aspects that define what a language is and what differentiates it from a variety can vary according to linguistic structure, geographical, political, and even religious circumstances. According to Myers-Scotton (2006, p.17), "(…) if two languages are being defined by structural criteria (…) variety X has very different rules than those in a similar system (…) the two are called two different languages." On the other hand, when considering the other aspects mentioned above, the discussion becomes additionally sophisticated.

This complexity comes from social practices and linguistic policy. Socially, varieties are seen as insufficient or incomplete, although they might be just as structurally and phonologically complex as any other language. Therefore, what determines if a language variety is identified as a language or as a variety relies on the social status of the speech community and the political measures taken upon these varieties. Spolsky (2004, p. 14) argues that "Language ideology or beliefs designate a speech community's consensus on what value to apply to each of the language variables or named language varieties that make up its repertoire."

In some cases, codes that come from the same background and have a similar structure and complexity are considered to be two different languages due to man-made borders. The author Spolsky (2004) emphasizes,

> Often, neighboring dialects are close enough to their neighbors to be mutually intelligible. Sometimes political borders divide this chain so that mutually

---

10 It was chosen to use the word *variety* when talking about the less privileged variaties of languages; although the word dialect had been the previous choice, and it is used in most articles used in this research, the word caries a negative connotation to it.

> intelligible bordering dialects might be classified as belonging to two different languages (…). (SPOLSKY 2004, p. 10)

Circumstances such as the one described only strengthens the notion that varieties and languages are social constructs.

Furthermore, one of the most significant examples of this dichotomy between languages and varieties is the relationship between British English and America English share. It is a known fact that what we currently know as the USA, was a British colony for many years. During the colonization process, the British took their language with them to America, thus allowing a new variety of the language to be born. At that time, Britain had English as its official and language, and British English was the esteemed variety. However, this reality changed once America began to gain international recognition and English became a world language. According to the authors Davies and Elder (2004),

> The current international importance of teaching and learning English as an additional language means that the pedagogical lexicography of English has become a worldwide issue and has been able to sustain a level of activity not matched by other language communities, either quantitatively or qualitatively. The same is true of the very extensive literature on English learners' dictionaries by international scholars. Standard English is a pluricentric language, and it has become common, indeed necessary, to talk about Englishes or the English languages. British English and now American English are the leading varieties (…). DAVIES; ELDER, 2004, p. 68)

It is clear that one American English was considered a variety but is now seen as a language that has the same social and international value of British English.

3.2 Minority Languages and Languages of Prestige

The geographical and historical predicaments each community has been affected by throughout the decades have deeply interfered with how specific varieties of languages are seen and respected. Minority languages are those which have fallen into the low end of social prestige. Although some may argue that these are varieties spoken by a small percentage of the population of a territory, this is not the only factor that sustains the "minority" status. In some cases, the speech community of a particular language is sizable in number; however, this community lacks political and economic power. (MEYERS-SCOTTON 2006, p. 47)

Due to their lack of power, minority speech communities tend to seek a dominant language that they may be able to become bilingual in and gain the social recognition that comes along with it. For instance, according to Baker (1991), in cases where immigrants who belong to a minority group and whose language is not taught in written form are likely to use their language less because it has fewer functions. Being a member of a minority speech community forces its members to learn a second language in most social environments. According to Harding-Esch and Riley (2003 p.35), "In those cases where the bilingual is not absolutely balanced, one language is said to be dominant."

The authors Davies and Elder (2004 p. 196) give emphasis to the concept of language attitude, regarding the fact that the attitude a specific group has towards the language of another profoundly affects the usage of said language "Language attitudes are, of course, sensitive to local conditions and changes in the sociopolitical milieu (…)". They also point out that "(…) negative language attitudes are not as prevalent when there is a clear in-group and out-group". (DAVIES AND ELDER 2004, p. 196)

Minority languages have also been defined as a group of languages that are in constant risk of ceasing to exist. As Davies and Elder (2004) put it

> It is also necessary to bear in mind that minority communities and, more particularly, minority languages and identities – however defined – are, by definition always at least at a *potential* risk. This is, perhaps, the one unifying feature, the one constant, across contexts. Because of the importance of power and status (…), minority-group stability cannot simply be assured through official recognition. (DAVIES AND ELDER, 2004, p. 457)

This reinforces the idea previously mentioned that a language or variety can only continue to exist if its speakers are determined to ensure that. Although official recognition may help, it is simply not enough.

Considering that at one end of the spectrum, we may find minority languages, the opposite stance is taken by languages of prestige. Languages of prestige are the languages of the majority, the ones which have been given power and status, the ones which are determined to be the standards or the official. The term language of prestige may also refer to the high variety of a certain language of the dominant language.

Another fundamental term to be discussed when considering what determines the prestige of a language comes from Ferguson (1949), he initially explained diglossia as follows:

> DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any section of the community for ordinary conversation. (FERGUSON, 1949, p. 435)

The idea that diglossia could also refer to not only varieties of one language but also to languages that are not genetically connected came from Fishman (1967). He summarized that the H (high) variety and the (L) low variety could be applied to other multilingual situations.

4 METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapters, the theoretical background that was the foundation for this paper was laid out and discussed, always focusing on the relevant aspects for the understanding of the data analysis. This chapter describes the manners in which the research was conducted, the participants involved and the region in which the research was conducted.

The methodological approach chosen for this research was a qualitative one, due to its potential for better connecting the participants involved to the theoretical background discussed. The qualitative approach draws on from the complexity of human nature and exhibits meaningful aspects that social life ignores (Chizzotti, 1998, p. 77).

According to what was previously mentioned, the purpose of this research was to comprehend better how three generations of the same family of Portuguese-Talian speakers identify the language surrounding its usage, relevance, and the need for the language to be passed on through generations. To achieve this objective, a bilingual family who lives in the countryside of Farroupilha was chosen to be interviewed.

Choosing this specific family was not easy, although Farroupilha is exceptionally open about its Italian heritage, not many people from the younger generations have learned Talian and therefore are not able to speak or understand Talian. I had access to a family in which all generations speak Talian. This family happens to live in a rural area of Farroupilha. This choice was made based on the common knowledge shared by people who live in Farroupilha, such as I, that there are communities in the rural areas who have a solid tradition of speaking Talian and reinforcing their bicultural heritage.

4.1 Participants

As previously explained, three members of the same family were chosen to participate in this research. The choice of the family was based on my relationship with one of its members. The youngest participant has been a friend of mine for many years and she mentioned her bilingual family to me a number of times.

In order to preserve each participant's identity, a fictional name was assigned to them, and they shall be referred to by these names hereafter. The participants are

Anna, who is part of the first generation; Angela, who is Anna's daughter; and Cristina, who is Angela's daughter. This can be better understood by analysing Picture 1 – Family Tree below.

Picture 1 – Family Tree
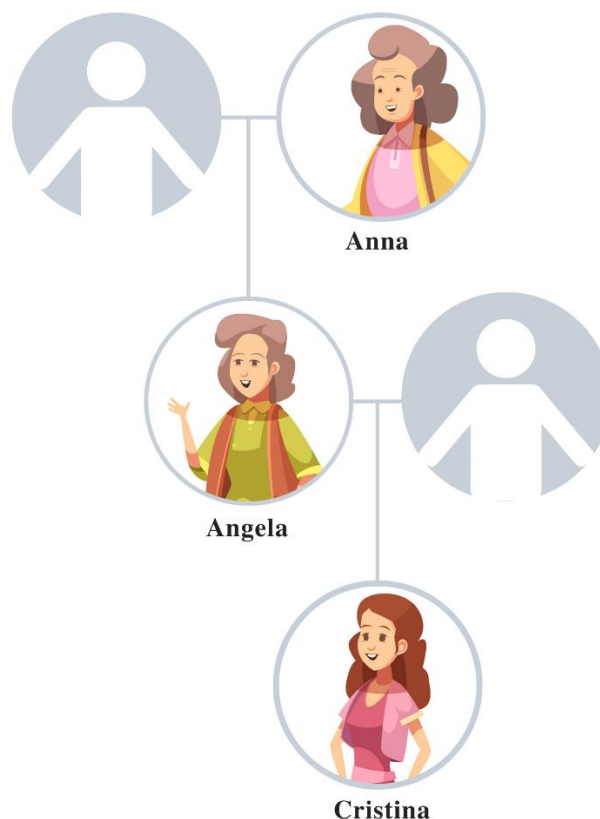
The first participant is Anna. She is 85 years old, she was also born and raised in Farroupilha, more specifically in a small district called Monte Bérico. Although Anna's husband is no longer alive, they were married for many decades and had seven children. Due to her advanced age, Anna has been presenting a series of health issues; however, this does not invalidate her participation in the research.

Angela, who is the second participant, is part of the second generation of Portuguese-Talian speakers. She is 60 years old and was also born and raised in Farroupilha, around the same area where they currently live. She has been married to Cristina's father since they were both in their late twenties. Angela left school in her pre-teenage years, she was formally educated until the elementary level and did not follow on her studies.

The last participant, Cristina, is part of the youngest generation of Portuguese-Talian speakers. Cristina is 30 years old and recently graduated in Advertising. She

was born and raised in Farroupilha, and she is the only daughter of Angela and her husband. It is relevant to mention that she does not have children of her own, and that is why there was not the inclusion of a fourth generation.

4.2 Place

This research took place in the city of Farroupilha, Rio Grande do Sul state in southern Brazil. The city is located on an area known as *Serra Gaúcha,* which includes cities that are in the mountainous region in the north-eastern portion of the state. Farroupilha shares its borders with Caxias do Sul, Bento Gonçalves, Garibaldi, and Carlos Barbosa. These cities are all known for their economic growth and the significant increase in their population number over the past decades.

Farroupilha was the area to which many Italian and few German immigrants chose to settle in. According to historical data collected by the municipal city hall, Farroupilha was a city founded on the 11th of December of 1934, by Italian people and had originally been called Nova Milano (FARROUPILHA, 2017). These Italian families came to Brazil in May of 1875 to populate areas previously untouched by humans.

Farroupilha is divided into districts which are: Main District, Second District (Vila Jansen), Third District (Nova Sardenha), and Fourth District (Nova Milano). It is relevant to point out that, except for the Main District, all of them are located in rural areas. This research was conducted in the Second District, in a neighborhood called *Capela de Todos os Santos*, but know by those who live there as *Busa*.

Picture 2 – Farroupilha's Location
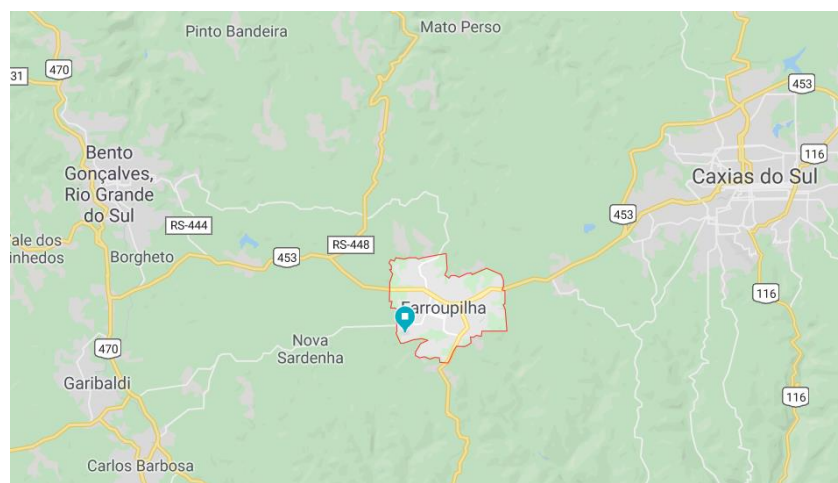
Source: Farroupilha… (2019).

4.3 Data Collection

The process of data collection was divided into two segments. The first one consisted of a written questionnaire that each participant was invited to answer. This questionnaire had the purpose of creating a profile of each participant and their experiences with both languages. The participants were asked questions about their knowledge of Talian, how they learned both Talian and Portuguese, what their perceptions of Talian is and other pertinent questions. A copy of the questionnaire is available in the appendixes B – Anna's Questionnaire, C – Angela's Questionnaire, and D – Cristina's Questionnaire.

Secondly, participants took part in a semi-structured interview, in which they were asked to talk more about their bilingual and bicultural heritage, language acquisition, and their perceptions of Talian in their community. Both interviews were conducted in informal settings in the houses of the participants. The first interview, with Cristina and Angela, was conducted on the home they both live in, while the second interview was conducted on Anna's house. The questions asked during the interview are available in appendix E – Interview Questions.

According to Dencker (2000), one essential characteristic of qualitative research is the usage of different techniques for data collection, such as interviews and observations. Furthermore, Lüdke e André (1986) highlight the importance of interviews while collecting data with people. Firstly, due to the intimacy, which is nourished by the direct contact between the interviewer and interviewees. Secondly, the authors point out that during an interview, there is no hierarchical role; both sides of the interaction should create an atmosphere of mutual influence.

The choice of conducting a two folded data collection for this research was mainly for these intrinsic features of qualitative research. When working with people and their life experiences, it is necessary to open a space where they feel comfortable with sharing their lives.

As mentioned earlier, Anna, the elderly participant, has been presenting a series of health issues due to her advanced age. Consequently, it was necessary to undertake two separate interviews — the first one with Cristina and Angela and the second one with Cristina and Anna. Cristina's presence in both interviews was important because she was able to translate terms in Talian that the two other participants used.

It is vital to explain that the questionnaire and the interview were carried out in Portuguese. This means that throughout the following chapter (Data Analysis), there will be excerpts in Portuguese taken from the spoken section of the data collection. I have chosen to translate these excerpts to ease the understanding of any non-Portuguese speakers. Hence, all excerpts are available in Portuguese and English. The original versions of the transcripts are presented in the footnotes.

The analysis is presented according to the order in which each instrument of data collection was applied and conducted. Firstly, a detailed examination of each participants' answers to the questionnaire is conducted; this analysis allows the reader to have an idea of what were the perceptions each participant has prior to the interview. Considering that being the subject of research could be a moment of apprehension and anxiety, the questionnaire is also a way to soothe any concerns the participants may have about the types of questions that would be asked during the interview.

Secondly, an analysis of the semi-structured interview is conducted considering each participant's answer separately. Although during the interview, the participants had moments of interaction and, at times, helped each other with some of their narratives or shared knowledge, the analysis was done individually. The intention is to structure this research paper straightforwardly, making it easier to read and follow.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the data collected through the processes previously mentioned is discussed according to the participants' inputs, and the theoretical background investigated formerly. This chapter is divided into three main sections regarding the information provided by each participant (Anna, Angela, and Cristina). Within these three main sections, there are separate reports of both instruments of data collection. Firstly, it is taken into account what each participant answered in the questionnaire they were given. Secondly, each participants' contribution to the interviews is analyzed.

5.1 Anna

This subchapter focuses on Anna's answers to the questions asked and discusses some of the perceptions and beliefs she expressed. Firstly, an analysis of the questionnaire is done, followed by an analysis of the semi-structured interview. It is relevant to mention that Anna's health did not allow her to write, meaning that her granddaughter, Cristina, had to write her answers to the questionnaire.

5.1.1 Anna's Questionnaire

Through the questionnaire, Anna affirmed being able to speak and understand Talian. However, she also mentioned not being able to write or read. Furthermore, according to Anna's answers, her mother and father spoke to her in Talian, hence the fact she learned Talian with her family at home. Anna also said she continued the tradition and taught her children to speak Talian.

During her school years, around 1946 and 1950, Anna said the classes in school were in Portuguese and that she could use Talian without any problems in the classes, meaning that there was no prohibition of usage. She also reported not having any difficulties when switching from Talian to Portuguese. According to Anna, *"I did not have any difficulty (with the usage of Talian)."*[1]

Additionally, Anna answered she feels more comfortable speaking in Portuguese and not Talian. Considering that Anna was born at the beginning of the Second World War in 1939, she was still a child during the time in which speaking

---

1 "Eu não tinha dificuldade (com o uso do Talian)" (Anna)

Italian or German was prohibited in Brazil. The fact she says feeling more comfortable in using Portuguese might be a reflex of her parents' forced choice to give greater importance to Portuguese than to Talian during wartime. She also shared that the only moments in which she uses Talian is to communicate with her children, which shows the importance the language has within the family.

To conclude, when asked about the possible future of Talian, Anna wrote that since she had to move to a new neighborhood recently, due to her health, she noticed that nobody in this new community speaks Talian. She explained that those people think that it is not well seen because, in her point of view, people who speak Talian are seen as those who have a strong accent in Portuguese. It is possible to understand that having a strong accent when speaking the majority language, in this case, Portuguese, makes these speakers fall out of the social norm. Furthermore, she believes in 10 years there will be few Talian speakers left.

5.1.2 Anna's Interview Answers

In the interview, Anna said she could speak and understand Talian, whilst not being able to read nor write. She said her entire family and group of friends communicated using Talian when she was in her childhood and adolescence. Anna reported not having difficulties learning Portuguese. She said some friends of hers spoke Portuguese and Talian. Therefore, she had opportunities to practice both.

When asked if she was the one who taught her children to speak Talian, she expressed being very proud to have taught them herself. Although her husband also spoke Talian, she said the responsibility of teaching the language was hers. She also said that all of her children have continued to speak Talian, especially with her. It is relevant to mention that during the interview, Anna referred to Talian as Italian.

Although Anna was asked the same questions as the other two participants during the interview, she was not able to answer all of them. Her health issues had advanced dramatically since the day she answered the questionnaire. Within a short time, Anna became completely blind and lost a significant portion of her memory. This prevented her from sharing most of her opinions verbally.

5.2 Angela

This subchapter focuses on Angela's answers to the questions asked and discusses some of the perceptions and beliefs she expressed. Firstly, an analysis of the questionnaire is rendered, followed by an analysis of the semi-structured interview.

5.2.1 Angela's Questionnaire

Angela, Anna's daughter, asserted being able to speak and understand Talian. However, she answered not being able to read nor write in Talian. Angela said, having learned Talian with her family. She also reported that both her parents were Talian speakers, as well. Additionally, she has taught her daughter, Cristina, to speak Talian.

When asked what language her parents would communicate with her in, she said that Portuguese and Talian were used, yet Talian was used more. She also reported having noticed her ability to speak Talian during her childhood. Much like Cristina, her daughter, Angela, was raised speaking Talian with her family and neighbors. Furthermore, Angela answered that during her school years, around 1965 and 1975, the classes were in Portuguese and that Talian was never used and that she had no difficulties with either language.

When asked what language she feels more comfortable speaking in, Angela answered Portuguese; however, she reported using Talian with her family and in her everyday activities with other people from her community who also are Talian speakers. This could indicate that she feels more competent in Portuguese, considering she only had formal teaching in the language. However, the fact that she uses Talian with her family and in daily interactions with other people who also are Talian speakers may reinforce the bond within the family members and the community. According to Collins and Toppelberg (2012),

> "The development of children's home language may associate with strengthening of family cohesion and intimacy, parental authority, and transmission of cultural norms, all of which can lead to healthy adjustment and a strong identification and internalization of the social values of the family. Developing L2 skills is crucial for academic success and long-term social and economic well-being (…)". (TOPPELBERG, 2012, p. 701)

Although Collins and Toppelberg (2012) regard mainly children's perspective, it can easily be applied to any age, when considering the family's choice to use the

heritage language as means of communication with one another. This quote also explains that the usage of L2, which in Angela's family is Portuguese, is essential for the social, academic, and economic future of the offspring.

Considering the future of Talian, Angela wrote: "*I believe it is not used much, which is a pity.*" [2] . Furthermore, she said that within 10 years, the likelihood of the language continuing to exist is zero. Angela noted that due to the lack of interest, the language will no longer be used and therefore die.

5.2.2 Angela's Interview Answers

During the interview, Angela explained she learned Talian with her parents at home; she said their communication was entirely in Talian. According to Angela, *"I learned with my parents at home because they would usually say everything in Italian."*[3] It is relevant to mention that during the interviews, Angela called Talian as Italian several times; she even corrects herself in certain moments. This reinforces the heritage aspect of the language, although they are aware that one is a variety of the other, she fell into the habit of calling it Italian.

Angela also said that she only started using Portuguese once she began going to school. She explained that until then, she only had contact with Talian since, at home, that was the only language spoken by her entire family. Except for specific moments in which her parents taught her some words and phrases in Portuguese. She also added that there were not many opportunities to speak Portuguese during her childhood and her adolescence. According to her *"(…) in the past, it was not as it is now, we have many communication methods now. In the old times, we would only stay at home. And if we went out, it was with our families."*[4], which means that the only moment she could have noticed her ability to speak two languages was in her school years.

Although on the questionnaire, Angela said she did not face difficulties in school while being a native speaker of Talian starting to use Portuguese. During the interview,

---

2 "Acredito que é pouco utilizado o que é uma pena" (Angela)

3 "eu aprendi com meus pais em casa porque geralmente eles falavam tudo mais Italiano uma vez" (Angela)

4 "(...) uma vez não era como é agora, onde se tem um monte de meios pra falar né?! Só se ficava em casa antigamente, não se saia assim como agora. Se eu saia era com a família" (Angela)

she reported having felt some minor complications. She explained that in some circumstances she did not know a word or two in Portuguese

Angela also said that she uses Talian at work. Considering that she works in the same Talian-speaking community as she lives, most of the people who work with her can use the language. In Angela's words, *"sometimes we are talking in Portuguese and end up switching to Italian [Talian]."*[5] It is visible how code-switching is part of Angela's life. It is part of the shared membership she has developed with her co-workers. According to Poplack (1980, p.588), "The phenomenon of code-switching has been a point of contention in assessing community identity."

5.2.2.1 Angela's Views on Talian

Angela said she noticed that once she leaves the rural areas of Farroupilha, she no longer hears people using Talian. This perception contradicts Harding-Esch and Riley's (2003, p. 27) assertion that "Bilingualism is also identified as an 'essentially urban phenomenon." In this case, Talian-Portuguese bilingualism happens mostly in the rural areas of the city. Angela laments the fact that the city, as a whole, does not have the tradition of speaking the language. In Angela's words, *"here we speak Talian a lot, but once you leave the area, you do not hear it anymore. No one speaks, and no one hears [Talian]"* [6] .

When asked about the future of Talian inside her community, Angela said she believes it will not die any time soon. She said that the people who live in her community feel proud to be part of the group of Talian speakers. Angela also fondly remembered moments from when her daughter, Cristina, was a child and was learning Talian. She said her and her husband taught Cristina to say a couple of words at a time and encouraged her to repeat them until she was able to understand and create sentences, she also expressed her wish for other families to do the same.

It is relevant to point out that on the questionnaire, Angela wrote that Talian would not continue to exist. On the other hand, during the interview, she changed her answer by saying it would not cease to exist. I believe her change of heart happened due to her daughter's influence. The question in the questionnaire did not specify

---

5 "(...) às vezes a gente tá falando em Português e acaba indo pro Italiano [Talian]." (Angela)

6 "aqui a gente fala bastante, mas quando tu sai daqui, já tu não ouve ninguém. Não se fala e não se ouve [Talian]" (Angela)

where the future of the language was relevant; it merely asked the participant to say what they thought might happen in 10 years with the language. Angela answered in the questionnaire considering a broader view of the language, considering the greatness of the world. However, in the interview, her answer was pertinent to her community.

Furthermore, when asked if Talian should be taught in schools, Angela said she believes it would be something amazing. She said that if the children from her community and other children around Farroupilha learned how to speak, read, write, and understand Talian, the likelihood of it dying would be minimal.

To conclude, Angela was asked if she considered Talian to be a language or a variety. She said that there are words in Talian that have the same meaning and similar pronunciation as Italian words, but she still considers it to be a language.

5.3 Cristina

This subchapter focuses on Cristina's answers to the questions asked and discusses some of the perceptions and beliefs she expressed. Firstly, an analysis of the questionnaire is rendered, followed by an analysis of the semi-structured interview.

5.3.1 Cristina's Questionnaire

Through a written questionnaire, Cristina reported being able to speak and understand Talian. However, when asked whether she could read or write in Talian, she affirmed not being able to. Considering that her mother and her grandmother have given the same answers, it is possible to state that Talian may be an oral language, at the very least, in the context of this family. This subject is further discussed in chapter *6, FINAL CONSIDERATIONS.*

Additionally, she answered that she had learned with her family and that both her parents also speak and understand Talian. However, on the questionnaire, Cristina reported that during her childhood, her parents spoke to her in Portuguese.

When asked at what moment in her life she realized she could speak two languages, Cristina said she noticed it during her teenage years. She wrote, *"I noticed that besides understanding Talian, I could also speak."*[7]. Cristina also pointed out that

---

7 "percebi que além de entender o Talian eu também falava." (Cristina)

while going to school, the only language used was Portuguese and that she never used Talian during classes.

Cristina was also asked which language she felt more comfortable speaking in. She answered, feeling more comfortable speaking Portuguese than Talian or Italian. She reported using Talian mostly in family gatherings and on her daily routine at home.

The final section of the questionnaire was regarding the participant's view on the future of Talian. On the questionnaire, Cristina wrote that *"I believe it is not given the proper importance; in my opinion, other languages are more used."*[8] However, when asked how she thought Talian would be seen in 10 years, she answered that it would have a more significant number of speakers since the language is passed from generation to generation.

5.3.2 Cristina's Interview Answers

Cristina said she has been speaking Talian since she was a child because she learned it with her parents at home. However, when asked whether she could write or read Talian, she described never having learned to do so. Although the former assertion is true, Cristina also said that she is able to read Italian, or as she mentioned during the interview *"(…) some friends of mine take an Italian course, and since ours is the dialect[9] and theirs is Italian (the language), sometimes they show me things and we can interact"*[10].

Cristina pointed out that nobody in her family could read or write in Talian. She said that there are words that she had no idea of how they could be in written form. More importantly, she said never having seen any printed material in Talian. Perhaps there is no material available since Talian is considered by many a dialect (variety), and reading and writing in dialects is not usually taught. Cristina said having learned to speak Talian during childhood by hearing and interacting with her parents and grandmother. She also affirmed that she used Talian with friends of her age group since most people from the community were taught by their parents to speak Talian.

---

8 "Acho que não é dado importância, na minha opinião, outros idiomas são mais utilizados." (Cristina)

9 During the interview the word *dialect* was used by the interviewees to refer to varieties of a language. This is a habit presented by all participants.

10 "(…) algumas amigas minhas fazem curso de italiano e já que o nosso é o dialeto e o deles é italiano, às vezes elas me mostram algumas coisas e a gente conversa entre si" (Cristina).

During the interview, she explained that, to her, speaking Talian was something that came naturally.

When asked at what moment in her life, she realized she could speak two languages, she said it was perhaps during her childhood or teenage years. However, she also pointed out it was not something that left a mark; she said it was something that happened unnoticed.

Cristina also said that when she started going to school, she did not feel like it was an appropriate place to use Talian. She noticed that nobody at school could speak the language, so she decided to use Talian only with her family and friends from her community. In fact, she called attention to the fact that during her early school years, she did not speak Talian as much as she does now. Cristina said as a child and a teenager, she would only listen and, with time, she began to speak more.

Evidently, it is fascinating to analyze Cristina's remark on not having realized she spoke two languages in any significant way. Contrary to those who learn a second or additional language, she did not have this sense of accomplishment in learning Talian. Since she learned Talian and Portuguese at the same time, she did not see them as two separate languages from the very beginning of her learning process. She knew both languages; however, to her, it may have felt like it was only one.

5.3.2.1 Cristina's Views on Talian

When asked in the questionnaire about the future of Talian, Cristina said that in 10 years, it would have a higher number of speakers. However, during the interview, she was asked about the future of Talian, not only in their community but in the city of Farroupilha as a whole. She pointed out that the language is seen in entirely different ways when comparing the more central areas and the rural area.

She talked about the fact that the tradition of passing on the language from generation to generation is nearly dead in other parts of the city. According to Cristina, *"from what I can see there are still many speakers here, so it will still take some time until we lose this practice, since there is a large group of senior citizens, this tradition is being kept (…) but on the central areas of the city it is nearly gone."*[11]

---

11 "ao meu ver o pessoal ainda fala bastante ainda acho que vai um tempo até que se perca esse costume, porque aqui tem bastante gente de mais idade,

então o pessoal continua mantendo essa tradição (...) já no centro acho que se perdeu bastante" (Cristina)

Cristina's view on the future of Talian did not change; she simply had the opportunity to think about the question in a broader sense. Taking into consideration people from beyond her community made her realize a lack of interest from the people of Farroupilha in keeping the language alive. The author Spolsky (2004, p. 14) explained that the value applied to each of the language variables is determined by the people who belong to the community. If the community does not apply value to a specific variety, its chances of thriving decrease.

Furthermore, Cristina asserted that the most likely reason for people who do not live in the countryside to have "lost their language" is family. She said that most families did not continue the tradition of teaching Talian to their offspring. Other studies that show this loss of contact and usage of the heritage language through generations are Baker, 1997; Fishman, 1991; Grosjean, 1982; Romaine, 1994. Furthermore, Cristina also presumed that some families might never have had access to the Talian because they come from other origins.

When asked about the future of Talian in her community, she answered that it would not die soon. She expressed that if it relies on her and the people she knows, the language will be passed on to the next generation. In fact, not only the language but also the pride that comes with the ability to speak Talian. Cristina also stressed that *"(…) without a doubt, I will pass on the language to my children"*[12].

Lastly, after being asked if she considers Talian to be a language or a variety, Cristina said having heard people call it a dialect of Italian. However, she affirmed that, in her opinion, it is a language. Even if it has some shared words with Talian and others with Portuguese, she still categorizes it as a language. Cristina's view reinforces Spolsky's (2004) affirmation on the value a group bestows upon a language. According to him, the higher the value they give to variety, the greater are the chances of it withstanding the changes in the community and its neighboring areas and surviving.

---

12 "(...) com certeza se eu tiver filhos vou passar pra eles também" (Cristina)

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The decision to conduct research on Talian, a language that I have lived with since I was a child, was particularly motivating. I had a chance to understand better aspects such as bilingualism and linguistic policy, and how these apply to a reality in which I am part of. It was possible to present a community in which being bilingual is the norm and is mostly present in rural areas. These aspects have proven to be the opposite of what is believed by common sense. Through this research, I was also able to develop a better understanding of Talian speaker's role in society and the possible future of the language.

An interesting aspect of the oral nature of Talian is the fact that out of the three generations of speakers, none of them reported being able to write or read in Talian. Even if there is a strong belief that the language should be growing in the number of speakers, especially from Cristina and Anna's perspective, the fact that it is mainly an oral language decreases its chances of thriving.

Furthermore, it is relevant to mention here that there have been efforts from members of the Portuguese-Talian speaking community to change this reality. For instance, there are many Portuguese-Talian dictionaries being created, one of the being Ghia de Parole by Giusepin Oro and Clara Strapazzon, which was developed by members of the community. Another example is Dissionario Talian Veneto Brasileiro Portugues, developed by Darcy Loss Luzzatto, which resembles a more official and complete work.

This research was conducted with the hope of identifying the crucial aspects of Talian. A language born from a variety of Italian, which was spoken in the Venetian area during the 1700s. It was possible to identify that the language is still alive and has speakers in many areas of Brazil. It was possible to find an entire family who communicates using Talian and who lives in a community that does the same.

The main objective of this paper was to present the perceptions of three generations of the same family of Talian speakers surrounding its usage, relevance, and the need for the language to be passed on along. I believe these goals were achieved through the questionnaire and interview. It was possible to identify the participant's views and experiences with the language.

I trust that this research has high relevance in helping to draw an overall picture of the languages that are spoken in Brazil. Languages that are not necessarily accounted for in documents and official records. Bearing in mind the current unfunded and diminished scenario of research in Brazil, I see no better way of gathering information than from research such as this one.

Although I have a strong belief in the relevance of this paper, I also express that broader research, with a larger pool of participants, could be even more positive. Understanding the perceptions of more than three generations of the same family of Talian speakers may help us postulate a more definite future for the language. New and more extensive research could help increase awareness about the language and its speakers. Furthermore, instigating in the community the development of other features that could help bestowing value to Talian is undoubtably necessary for its longevity. Features such as bilingual schools, newspapers written in Talian and stronger linguistic policies. It could also boost the chances of engaging enough people in the community of Talian-Portuguese Bilinguals so that it may see a brighter future with more speakers and official recognition in cities where it is spoken.

REFERENCES

ALVES, Ubiratã Kickhöfel; FINGER, Ingrid.; FONTES, Ana B. A. da Luz; PREUSS Elena Ortiz. **Diálogos em multilinguismo**: uma discussão sobre as pesquisas realizadas no labico/ufrgs. Porto Alegre. PUCRS. 2016. Available at <http://revistaseletronicas.pucrs.br/ojs/index.php/letronica/article/download/22390/15 082/>. Accessed on 18 Aug. 2019.

AMIR, Alia. Self-Policing In The English As A Foreign Language Classroom. **Research on Youth and Language**. Sweden: Linköping University, Novitas-ROYAL. 2013

ALMEIDA, Jacqueline Toribio. On the emergence of bilingual code-switching competence. *In*: **Bilingualism**: Language and Cognition 4. Pennsylvania State University. Cambridge University Press. 2001. Available at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/bilingualism-language-and-cognition/article/on-the-emergence-of-bilingual-codeswitching-competence/6C7726B73B05E63F2F9F304F027FBD48> Accessed on 18 Jun. 2019.

AUER, Peter. On the Meaning of Conversational Code-Switching. *In*: Auer, Peter (Hrsg.): **Interpretive Sociolinguistics**. Tübingen, 1984. Available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/29754777_On_the_meaning_of_conversational_code-switching>. Accessed on 15 Jun. 2019.

BAKER, Colin. **Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism**. Great Britain: Multilingual Matters Ltd, ed. 3, 1997.

BEHREND, Martin. **Um Drama na História de Novo Hamburgo**: a priobição dos hamburguenses cantarem ou conversarem em alemão. Jornal O 5 de Abril. Available at: <https://www.martinbehrend.com.br/noticias/noticia/id/1788/titulo/um-drama-na-historia-de-novo-hamburgo-a-proibicao-dos-hamburguenses-cantarem-ou-conversarem-em-alemao?fbclid=IwAR3Kh4P1QPyPZ6g9TI-TwLY7iQT_XhP0SnapY_tUu3nVCd3tG7oqe9XIBG8/>. Accessed on 20 Mar. 2019.

BLOOMFIELD, Leonard. **Language**. Great Britain: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1933.

COLLINS, Brian A.; TOPPELBERG, Claudio O. **Language, Culture, and Adaptation in Immigrant Children**. Child Adolesc Psychiatr Clin N. Am. 2012. Available at: < https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3526379/>. Accessed on 19 Oct. 2019

SLOTTE-LÜTTGE, Anna. Making use of bilingualism: Construction of a monolingual classroom, and its consequences. **International Journal of the Sociology of Language 2007**. Finland: Åbo Akademi University Library. V. 200, p. 103-128. 2007

CHIZZOTTI, Antônio. Pesquisa em ciências humanas e sociais. São Paulo: Cortez, 1998.

CONKLIN, Nancy F.; LOURIE, Margaret A. **A host of tongues: language communities in the United States**. New York: The Free Press, 1983.

COOK, Guy; HALL, Graham. **Own-language use in language teaching and learning and Language Teaching**. Cambridge University Press. 2012. Available at < https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-teaching/article/ownlanguage-use-in-language-teaching-and-learning/6F479F6C8DD0CF628A53131D5CCE7B5D> Accessed on 10 Jul. 2019.

DAVIES, Alan; ELDER, Catherine. **The Handbook of Applied Linguistics**. The United States of America: Blackwell Publishing. 2004.

DE FINA, Anna. **Code-switching and the construction of ethnic identity in a community of practice**. Georgetown University Italian Department ICC. Washington D.C.: Cambridge University Press. 2007.

DENCKER, A. de F. M. **Métodos e técnicas de pesquisas em turismo**. 4th edition. São Paulo: Futura, 2000. p. 286.

DEWAELE, Jean-Marc; HOUSEN Alex; LI, Wei. **Bilingualism**: Beyond Basic Principles. London: Multilingual Matters. 2013.

EBERHARD, David M.; FENNIG, Charles D.; SIMONS, Gary F. **Ethnologue languages of the world**: Brazil. 2019. Available at: <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/br/> Accessed on 4 May 2019.

FARROUPILHA RS. In: GOOGLE maps. Satellite View: Google, 2019. Available at: https://www.google.com.br/maps/search/Farroupilha,+RS/@-29.2234032,-51.3750545,13z?hl=en&authuser=0. Accessed on 4 May 2019.

FERGUSON, Charles A. Introduction to National Languages and Diglossia. *In*: Di Pietro, R. and Woodworth E. (eds.). **Report of the Thirteenth Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Studies**. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press. 1959.

FISHMAN, Joshua. A**. Reversing language shift. Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance of threatened languages**. Clevedom: Multilingual Matters, 1991.

FISHMAN, Joshua A. **Bilingualism With and Without Diglossia; Diglossia With and Without Bilingualism**. Journal of Social Issues. New York: Yeshiva University, 1967.

FUNDAÇÃO INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA (IBGE. **Censo Demográfico 2010**: Resultados gerais da amostra. Available at: </https://ww2.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/censo2010/resultados_gerais_amostra/resultados_gerais_amostra_tab_uf_microdados.shtm/> Accessed on: 12/04/19.

GARCÍA, Ofelia; LIN, Angel M. Y. **Bilingual and Multilingual Education**: Encyclopaedia of Language and Education. Springer International Publishing. 2016.

GROSJEAN, François. Living with two languages and two cultures. *In* **Parasnis**: Cultural and language diversity and the deaf experience. Switzerland: Neuchâtel University and Cambridge University Press, 1996.

HARDING-ESCH, Edith; RILEY, Philip. **The Bilingual Family**. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

HOFFMANN, Charlotte. **An introduction to bilingualism**. London: Longman Linguistics Library. 1999.

INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO EM POLÍTICA LINGUÍSTICA (IPOL). **Línguas cooficializadas nos municípios brasileiros**. 2017 Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qSSwGRixkbsv_wJKrRzMX24KtKShjHbW/view>. Accessed on 16 Apr. 2019.

KING, Kendall; MACKEY, Alison. **The Bilingual Edge**. Harper Colling E-Books. 2007.

KLOCK, Kátia. **Speechless**: Documentary. Rermesehenato, 2011. (52min06s). Available at:< https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WMUGVvRdQA>. Accessed on: 26 July 2019.

LAMBERT, Wallace E. The social Psychology of Language In: **A Perspective for the 1980s**. Arlington: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.1980.

LIMA, Maria do Socorro Correia. **Surdez, bilinguismo e inclusão**: entre o dito, o pretendido e o feito. Tese (Doutorado em Linguística Aplicada). São Paulo: Universidade Estadual de Campinas. 2004.

LUDKE, M.; ANDRÉ, M. **Pesquisa em educação: abordagens qualitativas**. São Paulo: EPU, 1986.

MYERS-SCOTTON, Carol. **Multiple Voices**: An introduction to bilingualism. Michigan: University of Michigan: Blackwell Publishing. 2006.

MUCK, Gisele Farias. **O Status Da Libras E Da Língua Portuguesa Em Contextos De Ensino E De Aprendizagem De Crianças Surdas**. São Leopoldo: Universidade Do Vale Do Rio Dos Sinos. 2009

PANAYIOTOU, Alexia. Switching Codes, Switching Code: Bilinguals' Emotional Responses in English and Greek. *In* **Panayiotou Journal Of Multilingual And Multicultural Development**. University of Cyprus: Cyprus. 2004. P. 120-146.

PAULSTON, Christina Bratt. **Ethnic-Relations And Bilingual Education:** Accounting For Contradictory Data. Mexico City: American Anthropological Association. 1974.

POPLACK, Shana. **"Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish Y TERMINO EN ESPAÑOL":** Toward a typology of code-switching. Linguistics, vol. 18. Canada: University of Ottawa. 1980.

PORTAL PREFEITURA DE FARROUPILHA. **A Cidade e a História**. Farroupilha. 2017. Available at: http://farroupilha.rs.gov.br/cidade/historia/>. Accessed on 27 Sep. 2019.

PRESIDÊNCIA DA REPÚBLICA CASA CIVIL SUBCHEFIA PARA ASSUNTOS JURÍDICOS. **Lei nº 10.436**, de 24 de abril de 2002. Brasília, 2012. Available at: <http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/2002/l10436.htm>. Accessed on 13 Sep. 2019.

ROMAINE, Suzanne. **Language in society: an introduction to Sociolinguistics**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

SPOLSKY, Bernard. **Language Policy**. The United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 2004

STONE, Norman. World War Two: A Short Story. The United States of America: Basic Books. 2012

WEI, Li. **'What do you want me to say?' On the Conversation Analysis approach to bilingual interaction**. Centre for Research in Linguistics. Department of Speech. University of Newcastle. Newcastle

APPENDIX A – TERM ON THE USAGE OF INFORMATION

TERMO DE CONSENTIMENTO PARA USO DE INFORMAÇÕES DE ENTREVISTA

São Leopoldo, Setembro de 2019.

Prezado/a senhor/a,

Sou aluna de Licenciatura Plena em Língua Inglesa na Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos e estou realizando meu trabalho de conclusão de curso baseado no tema Bilinguismo. Busco investigar como se deu o processo de aprendizagem de dos idiomas que você aprendeu e qual a sua percepção de cada língua. Para tal atividade, é necessária a busca de dados através de questionários e entrevistas as quais gostaria de gravar para obter uma maior fidelidade das informações adquiridas.

A publicação de qualquer dado da pesquisa acontecerá somente em meios acadêmicos. A sua autorização é, portanto, essencial para que o projeto atinja seus objetivos propostos. Em caso de dúvida e/ou necessidade de esclarecimentos, estou a disposição de vocês.

Desde já agradeço a sua atenção!

Atenciosamente,
Amanda Seimetz

LI A DESCRIÇÃO ACIMA E AFIRMO QUE ESTOU DE ACORDO COM A GRAVAÇÃO DA ENTREVISTA, BEM COMO AUTORIZO O USO DE REGISTROS PARA PESQUISA CONFORME INDICADO ACIMA.

_____

ASSINATURA DO PARTICIPANTE DA PESQUISA

APPENDIX B – ANNA'S QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONÁRIO AVÓ

Idade: _____ Escolaridade: _____

a) Marque com um X a resposta que você considera apropriada:

1. Você fala Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

2. Você entende Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

3. Você lê em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

4. Você escreve em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

5. Onde você aprendeu o Talian? ( )amigos ( )família ( ) escola

6. Seu pai falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

7. Ele entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

8. Sua mãe falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

9. Ela entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

10. Seus filhos entendem Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

11. Seus filhos falam Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

12. Eles aprenderam Talian com você? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

b) Quando você era pequena em que idioma seus pais falavam com você?

_____

_____

c) Quando você se deu conta que sabia falar mais que um idioma?

_____

_____

d) Quando você frequentava a escola, em que idioma as aulas eram realizadas?

_____

_____

e) Você podia utilizar o Talian nas aulas? Você tinha alguma dificuldade com o uso

do idioma?

_____

_____

f) Qual destas línguas você se sente mais confortável em falar?

( ) Português ( ) Talian ( ) Italiano

g) Em quais situações você utiliza o Talian?

_____

_____

h) Como achas que o Talian é visto pela comunidade em geral?

_____

_____

i) Como o Talian será visto na sua comunidade nos próximos 10 anos? Você acredita

que terá muitos falantes?

_____

_____

j) Relate como você aprendeu Português e Talian.

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C – ANGELA'S QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONÁRIO MÃE

Idade: _____ Escolaridade: _____

a) Marque com um X a resposta que você considera apropriada:

1. Você fala Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

2. Você entende Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

3. Você lê em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

4. Você escreve em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

5. Onde você aprendeu o Talian? ( )amigos ( )família ( ) escola

6. Seu pai falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

7. Ele entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

8. Sua mãe falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

9. Ela entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

10. Seus filhos entendem Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

11. Seus filhos falam Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

12. Eles aprenderam Talian com você? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

b) Quando você era pequena em que idioma seus pais falavam com você?

_____

_____

c) Quando você se deu conta que sabia falar mais que um idioma?

_____

_____

d) Quando você frequentava a escola, em que idioma as aulas eram realizadas?

_____

_____

e) Você podia utilizar o Talian nas aulas? Você tinha alguma dificuldade com o uso do idioma?

_____

_____

f) Qual destas línguas você se sente mais confortável em falar?

( ) Português ( ) Talian ( ) Italiano

g) Em quais situações você utiliza o Talian?

_____

_____

h) Como achas que o Talian é visto pela comunidade em geral?

_____

_____

i) Como o Talian será visto na sua comunidade nos próximos 10 anos? Você acredita que terá muitos falantes?

_____

_____

j) Relate como você aprendeu Português e Talian.

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX D – CRISTINA'S QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONÁRIO FILHA

Idade: _____ Escolaridade: _____

a) Marque com um X a resposta que você considera apropriada:

1. Você fala Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

2. Você entende Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

3. Você lê em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

4. Você escreve em Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

5. Onde você aprendeu o Talian? ( )amigos ( )família ( ) escola

6. Seu pai falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

7. Ele entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

8. Sua mãe falava Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

9. Ela entendia Talian? ( )SIM ( )NÃO

b) Quando você era pequena em que idioma seus pais falavam com você?

_____

_____

c) Quando você se deu conta que sabia falar mais que um idioma?

_____

_____

d) Quando você frequentava a escola, em que idioma as aulas eram realizadas?

_____

_____

e) Você podia utilizar o Talian nas aulas? Você tinha alguma dificuldade com o uso do idioma?

_____

_____

f) Qual destas línguas você se sente mais confortável em falar?

( ) Português ( ) Talian ( ) Italiano

g) Em quais situações você utiliza o Talian?

_____

_____

h)Como achas que o Talian é visto pela comunidade em geral?

_____

_____

i) Como o Talian será visto na sua comunidade nos próximos 10 anos? Você acredita que terá muitos falantes?

_____

_____

j) Relate como você aprendeu Português e Talian.

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX E – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Vocês se consideram falantes de Talian?

Vocês conseguem entender Talian?

Vocês tem a habilidade de ler ou escrever em Talian?

Como você aprendeu Português e Talian?

A família toda fala Talian?

Vocês tem amigos que falam Talian?

Quando você percebeu que sabia falar duas línguas?

Como foi a experiência escolar com o Talian?

Vocês já foram proibidas de usar Talian?

Em que língua você se sente mais confortável em falar?

Onde vocês mais usam o Talian?

Como o Talian será visto na sua comunidade nos próximos 10 anos? Por quê?

Vocês acham que o Talian vai continuar existindo na comunidade?

Vocês acreditam existir um orgulho em falar o Talian?

Você considera o Talian uma língua ou um dialeto?

Você acha que o Talian deveria ser ensinado nas escolas?