

MINORITY LANGUAGES

SARDINIAN – SARDU

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Outline

- 1) Language policy in the EU
- 2) Language policy in the country of interest
- 3) Focus on the Sardu
- 4) Revitalising Sardu by using internet
- 5) Sources

1) LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE EU

Language policy is a governmental action of cultivation of a language, determination of its usage and establishment of rights connected with its maintaining. Members of the European Union have policies which aim to protect or promote regional or minority languages that are threatened. One of the most prominent aim of the EU language policy is that every european citizen should master at least one other language in addition to his mother tongue. Language policy of particular state also aims to determine how languages are used and establish the rights of individuals to use and maintain languages.

What is important for our interest is the more specific *European Charter for Regional or Minority Language*, which was created in 1992. It is a european treaty that protects and promotes historical and minority languages in Europe. Minority language is a langugae that is spoken by linguistic minority of the population of one teritory.

The most important framework for the minority languages is, apart from the *European Charter for Regional of Minority Language*, the Kuijaspers Resolution published in 1987. It paid particular attention to the usage of the language in spheres such as education and culture and it also stated the equality of preserving the language both in public and private life.

2) LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE COUNTRY OF INTEREST

Art. 2 of the law 482/1999 defines that there are twelve historical linguistic minorities and protects them. Some of the minority languages were protected by a state law 482/1999, others by regional laws (one of them Sardinian).

The law n. 482/1999 explains the position of an Italian language as an official language. Supporting the general European and international rights and the Constitution, the Italian republic protects the culture and language of these minorities: Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovenian, Croatian, French, Franco-provenzal, Friulan, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian.

In the art.4 of the law 482/1999 is established that a language of the minority present at certain place can be used in kindergarten, primary and secondary school used as a second

educational language. According to the art. 6 universities of interested regions assume every initiative including courses of language or culture, scientific research and cultural activities of a minority language.

Art. 7 of the law 482/1999 explains that a city hall and city administration may use one of the minority languages to communicate with inhabitants. If there is someone who does not understand used language the city hall is obliged to provide translation into Italian.

Art. 9 of the law 482/1999 provides the right of use of the minority language for the local administration offices to use oral and written minority language, except for the police and military service. In case of a judicial proceeding an inhabitant can use a minority language.

According to art. 12 interested regions can provide to their inhabitants a radio and television broadcasting in the minority language.

3) SARDU IN SARDINIA – LANGUAGE AND ITS BACKGROUND IN THE COUNTRY OF INTEREST

There are 1.3 million people speaking Sardu in Sardinia, which makes it the largest linguistic majority in Italy. Although considered to be a Romance language, Sardinian does not have a codified standard version. Sardinian consists of two major dialectal groups, each representing different parts of Sardinia: northern Logudorian dialect and southern Campidanian with its less distinguishable variants. There are also barriers in communication between these two dialectal groups. Whereas Logudorian is at the top of the social-prestige scale because of its long literary tradition and its linguistic conservatism, Campidanian is stigmatised as a socially inferior variant. Numerous efforts to standardize the groups were made as well as the attempts to enhance its status into areas of social interaction in which the Sardinian language might be extended, such as media and literature.

Eveluation of vitality of Sardu

To evaluate vitality of a language it is used a Unesco Language Vitality Assessment. This assessment contains nine cathegories any of these cannot be evaluated standing separately.

Evaluative Factors of Language Vitality	Sardu
Intergenerational Language Transmission	4
Absolute number of speakers	1,3 million
Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population	5

Shifts in Domains of Language Use	3
Response to New Domains and Media	4
Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy	5
Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use	3
Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language	4
Type and Quality of Documentation	3

1. Intergenerational Language Transmission

Sardu is evaluated as an Unsafe language (4). Most of the children speak the sardu as their first language, though use it only in restricted area like in family or with friends. Many Sardinian families speak in Sardu and use Italian at school or when needed.

2. Absolute number of speakers

Problem of the exact number of speakers is connected to the fact that Sardu is not a unique language but consists of many languages:

500,000 Campidanese, 100,000 Gallurese, 500,000 Logudorese, 100,000 Sassarese.

(Ethologue)

3. Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population

According to the research of the University of Cagliari in 2007 the 68,4% of Sardinians declares to speak Sardu, 29% says to have the passive knowledge of the language and 2,7% speak only Italian. (Morelli)

4. Shifts in Domains of Language Use

Sardinian misses some registres of scientific language and slang, which limits the language in using it.

5. Response to New Domains and Media

The Sardinian television TVSardegna1 is broadcasting in Italian language. Sardinia paid for three spots in Sardinian 1 million 50 thousand Euro with very low influence.

In 2015 Italian Senat prohibited broadcasting in Sardinian in the public TV Rai, on the other hand having local broadcasting in languages of Friuli, Trentino and Valle D'Aosta.

On YouTube can be found many videos with lessons of Sardinian or promoting Sardu, for example

videos of Ricu Burreccu and others.

We can find also online newspapers Il minuto and Sardegna Oggi in both languages in Italian and in Sardinian with the possibility to switch in one or another.

The beletry written in Sardinian is not numerous, but there can be found some short stories, poetry and legends in sardu.

6. Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use

Sardu plays a minor role in education as Italian language has been compulsory at all levels of education as a teaching language since 1859. Nevertheless, Since 1985 the State has recognized the right to learn the local language at primary school and in the lower years of secondary school. Some primary schools allow children to take Sardinian as an optional subject if their parents have so requested. However, the pupils who choose that option cannot obtain text books or other learning materials in Sardinian.

The limba Sarda comuna is a written language, created in order to rewrite all the variations of spoken sardinian within one standard. As an experiment Regione autonoma della Sardegna let rewrite in limba Sarda, as a matter of co-officiality policy. The language is based on Logudorese- nuorese and in the same time takes other features from the spoken language. (Delibera di Giunta Regionale n.16/14 del 18 aprile 2006)

It is possible to communicate in Sardinian in the official organs but politicians and public speeches are in Italian.

7. Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language

Sardinians are very proud of their own language and are trying to promote it. We can see young people for example trying to promote Sardinian on YouTube, on the other hand the old people talking only Sardinian and still vivid traditions.

8. Type and Quality of Documentation

There may be an adequate grammar or sufficient numbers of grammars, dictionaries and texts but no everyday media.

9. Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy

There is a big number of language books for speakers of other languages.

10. Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use

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requested. However, the pupils who choose that option cannot obtain text books or other learning materials in Sardinian.

4) REVITALISING MINORITY LANGUAGE

Minority languages are dying because of the lack of L1 speakers and use of majority language in schools and in administration. Even though that the Sardu speaking minority is the largest one in Italy, it is the least protected. Marongiu asks if the recognition of the Sardu as a minority does not hurt it instead of revitalising it, particularly spontaneous heritage language revitalisation. Some of the institutional attempts of maintenance of the language were unsatisfactory and discouraging. The language and the identification of the language is strong, nevertheless there are many fields in which Sardinian should and could be promoted.

Although that the local universities do not support the acceptance of Sardu and there is no possibility to study it, some universities (such as Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic; University of Girona, Spain; University of Stuttgart, Munich and Tübingen, Germany and Waseda University in Tokyo; Japan) provide their Romance languages students with the possibility of studying Sardu and thereby they are trying to revitalise it.

5) LINGUISTIC SECTION

The linguistic section is based on the analysis of the following websites in Sardinian, focusing on single words and their origin.

- <http://www.sardegna.cultura.it/argomentos/>
- <http://www.urn-indipendentzia.com/URN/Istatudu%20regionale%201948-URN%20Sardinnya.pdf>
- <http://www.susarduinbarumini.it/Paperis%20informativos/uf%ECtziu%20de%20su%20sardu.pdf>
- <http://gianfrancopintore.blogspot.cz/2009/11/su-bantu-de-seu-sardu-sa-bregungia-de.html>
- <http://linguistics.byu.edu/classes/ling450ch/reports/sardinian.html>
- <http://www.nativlang.com/sardinian-language/sardinian-basic-phrases.php>
- <http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/sardinian.php>

Some of the web sites are official and some them are cultural. The main focus was on nouns, adjectives and verbs. The hardship of deciding the level of difference of the Sardinian and Italian is in the same origin of language. Moreover, most of the words are based on latin, developing in a different way. Although Sardinians explain it is not possible to generalize them in one common

language because of the big number of dialects, we will do so for the reasons of economy of this project.

The web site Sardegna Culturù occupies with different arguments like history, architecture, art, literature and theatre. This web site is cultural

On the contrary following web site URN Indipentzia is an official one, containing the constitutional law from 1948.

Another web site is an official website Su Sardu in Baruminesu of the office, which helps Sardinians with use of Sardinian.

Gianfranco Pintore is a cultural blog, the blogger comments on art, language and current affairs in Sardinian.

Ilaria Nardotto is explaining the differences in Italian and Sardinian, her website is cultural.

Omniglot website is a study tool for people interested in studying and practising Sardinian language. This website is cultural.

Most of the words collected in websites above belong to the categories of Neologism. Words in contact with Italian we found 8, neologisms 37 and obsolesces 7 (some of them very interesting like *apostivgado* meaning tram, *sighint* meaning to ask, etc.). As mentioned before it is hard to judge if the word is if the word is neologism or contact. Anyway, the language is weak because of the low number of obsolesces.

6) SOURCES

<http://www.parlamento.it/parlam/leggi/994821.htm>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/IT/languages>

<http://www.minoranze-linguistiche-scuola.it/sardo/>

<http://www.ladonnasarda.it/magazine/approfondimento/5733/bambini-che-parlano-sardo-e-giusto-imparare-l-italiano-solo-a-scuola.html>

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http://www.unionesarda.it/articolo/politica_italiana/2015/06/19/sardo_nelle_scuole_pronti_i_bandi_la_regione_stanzia_450_mila_eur-1-423326.html

<http://www.minoranze-linguistiche-scuola.it/sardo/>

http://ricerca.gelocal.it/lanuovasardegna/archivio/lanuovasardegna/2005/05/31/SC5PO_SC501.html

<http://www.sardiniapost.it/cronaca/dalla-regione-un-milione-alle-tv-per-lo-spot-choc-sardegna-si-parla-il-sardo/>

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<http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/sard/an/i1/i1.html>