Sociolinguistic factors in the transmission of multiple heritage languages: the case of Italian and Calabrese in Toronto

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Introduction

This paper investigates the sociolinguistic factors that can influence heritage language[1] transmission, intergenerational language change, and language contact within a heritage community with multiple heritage languages. The object of this investigation is a group of Italian heritage speakers in Toronto, which is documented by the Heritage Language Variation and Change (HLVC) project (Nagy 2011)[2]. The HLVC corpus collects sociolinguistic data from three generations of Italian heritage speakers in Toronto who all share the same region of origin, Calabria, in Southwestern Italy. More specifically, the heritage speakers in the HLVC use Regional Calabrian Italian, a local form of Italian. Regional Calabrian Italian bears various features that are not present in Standard Italian[3] and is strongly influenced by another Italo-Romance language: Calabrese (Baird, Cristiano, and Nagy 2021; Ledgeway 2010).

Calabrese varieties are non-standardized Italo-Romance languages historically spoken in the region of Calabria, in the Southwestern part of the Italian peninsula. The term 'Calabrese' is used to describe two different groups of Italo-Romance languages spoken in Calabria: Northern Calabria dialects, which are more closely related to Neapolitan, and Southern Calabrese dialects, which are part of the Southern Italian dialects, along with languages spoken in Sicily and Salento (cf. Avoglio 2012). Nowadays, many people who live in Calabria are still bilingual Italian[4] and

[1] The term *heritage language* is here used, following the Canadian tradition, to refers to languages other than French and English (the official languages) and aboriginal languages (Duff 2008a).

[2] A special thank you goes to Professor Naomi Nagy (University of Toronto) for sharing the HLVC data with me, as well as to Professor Zsuzsanna Fagyal (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) through whom I first came to know about this project and to Professor Eda Derhemi, for her guidance during the writing of this paper.

[3] The term *Standard Italian* refers here to the language taught in schools, the codified National Language.

[4] When referring to speakers from Calabria, the term *Italian* is intended in its regional realization.

Calabrese speakers (Berruto 2018), but while Italian is considered the prestigious language in the region, the attitudes towards the use of Calabrese are much more negative (Nodari 2017). Following the Italian linguistic and cultural tradition, I use the term *dialects* to refer to local Italo-Romance languages, such as Calabrese, and *Regional Italians* to refer to regional varieties of Italian, the national language. All Italo-Romance languages evolved from Vulgar Latin. Italian, the national language, is based on the Florentine dialect (cf. Berruto 2005:83).

When the first generation of heritage Italian speakers in the HLVC arrived in Canada, many were bilingual Calabrese/Italian[5] speakers, as will be highlighted in my analysis. When this group immigrated to Canada, they brought with them their two heritage languages, Italian and Calabrese, as well as their respective attitudes toward them. While the data collected by the HLVC focuses on the Italian linguistic heritage of this community, it indirectly provides interesting evidence of their Calabrese linguistic heritage. This data indicates that first-generation speakers tend to be Calabrese/Italian speakers, and it offers relevant information on whether and under which conditions Calabrese is transmitted alongside Italian to second and third-generation speakers.

Despite the limitations of the corpus, the corpus contains enough data to support my research question. The speaker sampling method of the HLVC is focused on *Italian* language heritage speakers, and the elicitation questions oppose Italian and English while precluding Calabrese. Regardless of this, many speakers bring up Calabrese and recognize the distinction between Calabrese and Italian. This suggests that, one, most speakers are aware of the metalinguistic distinction between Calabrese and Italian and, two, that the use of Calabrese is salient enough to be mentioned in interviews where they are asked about something else.

[5] This order reflects the order in which the languages were acquired from birth: Calabrese was the first language acquired at home, and Italian was learned only later, in school.

This means that the information on the use and attitudes towards Calabrese that I can extract from the HLVC data is only impartial and likely incomplete. Keeping this in mind, the HLVC data can provide interesting insights into the use of Italian and Calabrese among individuals who are Italian speakers and these findings can be used as a reference to conduct further research on specific patterns of language use in this community.

The final goal of this investigation is to provide a detailed sociolinguistic background and description of patterns of language use of the HLVC group of Italian speakers as potential carriers of multiple heritage languages. This investigation will serve as a reference for future studies that will focus on a specific pattern of language use within this group, focusing on whether knowledge of Calabrese among these heritage speakers correlates with particular patterns of language change over generations, or with patterns of language shift or language maintenance. I will argue that a linguistic study of the influence of Calabrese on Italian heritage speakers can provide new insight into the nature of language change as a result of language contact. The case of the HLVC Italian heritage speakers can reveal what happens when an existing contact situation (that between Standard Italian and Calabrese dialects) is transferred from its original context into a new sociolinguistic reality, where it is brought into contact with another dominant language, English.

The first part of this paper presents the sociolinguistics status of Italian and Calabrese in Italy. It provides background information on Italian immigration to Canada and on the role and status of heritage languages in Canada. It also gives an overview of the state of Italian heritage language(s) in Toronto based on existing literature. The paper then introduces the HLVC project and the Italian corpus which constitutes the main source of data for this study. The third part presents a methodology for the analysis of HLVC data in order to determine the socio-economic

background of speakers and their linguistic practices and attitudes towards heritage languages, with particular attention to the presence of Calabrese. The results of this analysis are thus presented and discussed in detail. The closing section summarizes the main findings of this study, and then describes the future trajectory of this research, presenting a project for the study of postnominal possessive markers starting from HLVC data.

Italian and Calabrese in Italy

Before discussing the status and vitality of Italian and Calabrese as heritage languages in Canada, it is necessary to consider the sociolinguistic situation in Italy. Italian is the national language of Italy and the majority language of the country. Italian is the national language of Italy and the majority language of the country. In present-day, regional varieties of Italian coexist with many Italo-Romance dialects and other historical linguistic minorities (as well as more recent immigrant minorities). According to Berruto's (2018) calculation based on ISTAT[6] data, 45% of the Italians are monolingual Italian speakers; around 25% of speakers are Italian/dialect bilinguals with Italian dominance; and 25% are Italian/dialect bilinguals with dialect dominance. Only a very small percentage, 1-5% at most, are monolingual dialect speakers. This is a very different situation compared to the past.

Until the late 19th century most of the Italian population exclusively used a local Italo-Romance language while Italian was spoken by a small part of the population. Several socioeconomic changes over the course of the 20th century brought about a rapid increase in the use of Italian nationwide (De Mauro (1991)[1963]). Dialects were strongly stigmatized, and their use was actively discouraged in schools (cf. Cremona and Bates 1976). This led to a drastic

[6] ISTAT, *Istituto Nazionale di Statistica* ('the Italian National Institute of Statistics') is the main producer of official statistics in Italy. https://www.istat.it/en/

decrease in the transmission of dialects, and Italian, in its regionalized forms, has largely replaced local languages in all communicative functions (Coluzzi 2009). Contemporary attitudes toward dialects are more positive, but most varieties have lost many, if not most, of their functions and are now highly endangered (Coluzzi 2009).

Because the Italian language spread through a rapid process of mass second language acquisition, this resulted in the emergence of many regional forms of Italian shaped by local Italo-Romance languages. These Regional Italians are the languages currently used in contemporary Italy. Cerruti (2011: 21) argues that it was this substratum interference from local languages that contributed to the widening of rage style variation, which made it possible to expand the use of Italian from written/formal context to everyday communication, giving rise to stylistically stratified regional varieties. In terms of language acquisition, Telmon (2001) posits that current regional Italians emerged as interlanguages from the mass second language acquisition process. From a contact perspective, Berruto (2005) describes that the ongoing contact between the National Language and local dialects produces language convergence, i.e., the reduction of structural distance between two languages, as well as frequent code-mixing by bilingual Italian-Dialect speakers.

In Calabria, the mass acquisition of Italian resulted in the emergence of a local form of Italian that deviates from standardized Italian at all levels of linguistic analysis, sometimes to the point where comprehension of this variety becomes difficult for speakers from other regions. Ledgeway (2010) gives an overview of the major linguistic features of Regional Calabrese Italian. Features such as the absence of synthetic future tenses, which are replaced with present tense forms, are likely inherited from Calabrese dialects, where the future tense does not exist. Other features, however, have emerged in Calabrese Italian independent of its dialectal

substratum. For instance, in regional Italian forms spoken in Northern Calabria, masculine singular determiners such as articles and quantifiers trigger consonant doubling (e.g., il [pp]osto 'the place', un [ll]ibro 'a book'), whereas the local dialect does not include doubling. According to Ledgeway (2010:117), the fact that there are non-standard features of Calabrian Italian that are not inherited from the dialect substratum, or from Italian, but are original to this regional variety of Italian, suggests that regional Italians are more than just a hybrid of Italian and dialect.

While the administrative region of Calabria recognizes and promotes local languages and dialects, Calabrese dialects, like many other local Italo-Romance languages are not recognized by the Italian state as minority languages. Dialects in Calabria (like the rest of the South) are characterized by a higher vitality compared to the rest of Italy. Berruto (2018) calculates that in Calabria there are around 1,450,000 speakers of dialect, accounting both for monolingual dialect and bilingual Italian/dialect speakers. This number corresponds to 74.2% of the total number of active speakers in the region, making Calabria the first region in terms of relative number of active speakers of dialect, although not the first in terms of absolute numbers (which are Veneto and Campania). Regardless of these numbers, dialects still have negative connotations. For instance, a study by Nodari (2017) found that in many families in Calabria children are reprimanded or disciplined for using dialects at home. This highlights that, despite its relative vitality, Calabrese is still strongly stigmatized.

Italian immigration to Canada

In order to understand the social potential of Italian and Calabrese in Canada, a brief overview of Italian immigration to Canada needs to be presented. The beginning of Italian immigration to Canada dates to the late 19th century, but it was in the mid-20th century that the largest group of Italian immigrants came to Canada. Ramirez (1989) reports that between 1948 and 1972 Italy was second only to the United Kingdom as a source of immigration to Canada. After World War II, immigration policies in Canada played a key role in determining immigration from Italy. In 1948, Canada introduced the sponsorship system which allowed Italians to enter the country if they had a relative already living there who could guarantee for them and cover for initial expenses. The sponsorship system did not require any professional standard and immigrants were often employed in areas that required no specific skills (Coluzzi 2017:25). In addition, Canada and Italy signed a bilateral agreement in 1951 to incentivize Italian immigration, following which approximately 25,000 Italians arrived in Canada every year (Di Salvo 2017: 76).

Things changed considerably with the end of the sponsorship system in 1967, when access to Canada became conditional to the possession of professional qualifications. This resulted in the arrival of skilled workers already integrated into the labor market in Northern Italy (Coluzzi 2017:25). The new immigration system favored the arrival of qualified individuals, while the old immigration system was based on family ties and often resulted in the arrival of immigrants with low literacy levels and no language competence in English (Di Salvo 2017:76). Most Italian immigrants moved to large urban centers, and Toronto today has the largest Italian ethnic group in the country.

Italian and Calabrian in Toronto

The present section provides an overview of the status and vitality of Italian and Calabrese as heritage languages in Canada, with a focus on the situation in Toronto, which is necessary to comprehend the data in the HLVC. In Canada, both Italian and Calabrese are minority immigrant languages. According to Statistics Canada's (2016) census, out of a population of nearly 6 million, there are 484,365 ethnic Italians in the Greater Toronto Area, 151,415 mother tongue speakers of Italian, and 51,815 individuals are recorded as having Italian as the language most often spoken at home. According to Dolci (2023), the number of people who declared to speak Italian at home in the census survey should be reinterpreted in light of the fact that many Italians immigrated to Canada with dialects as their native language.

The relative vitality of Italian and other heritage languages in Toronto and in the rest of Canada is in great part due to the multicultural policy adopted by the Canadian Government since the '60s (Brosseau and Dewing 2009). The purpose of this multicultural policy is to encourage language, cultural, and identity maintenance through the support of language programs (Nagy 2021). In terms of educational support, there are no federal mandates to fund heritage language education, but there are provincial provisions. In Ontario, for instance, the Canadian Education Association supports up to 2.5 hours per week of class if there are at least twenty-five students in one school requesting that language (Nagy 2021).

In a study on Italian Heritage Speakers in Ontario, Turchetta (2018) identifies three groups of first generations: those who arrived between the 50s and 60s, are mostly dialect speakers and low level of education; those who arrived from the 70's to the late 90's and are typically speakers of both Italian and dialects, and have a medium-high level of education; those who arrived in recent year who tend to be Italian speakers only and have a high level of

education. These differences in linguistic competence reflect changing sociocultural conditions in Italy at the time of immigration (Turchetta 2018: 103).

The Heritage Language Variation and Change project

The present section presents the Heritage Language Variation and Change (HLVC) project, from which data from this study is drawn. The main goal of this project is the development of a cross-linguistic, intergenerational, and diatopic (heritage vs. homeland varieties) corpus for the study of heritage languages in Toronto, mainly for the purpose of variationist analysis (Nagy 2015: 312). Within this project, heritage language speakers are defined in accordance with the definition provided by the Canadian government: they are speakers whose mother tongue is neither one of the two official languages of Canada nor an indigenous language (Nagy 2018; Cummins 2005). Accordingly, the status of heritage language speaker is considered independent of how proficiently the language is spoken. According to Nagy (2015: 310), Rothman's (2007:360) definition of heritage speakers most closely describes this situation:

> *Like all monolingual and childhood bilingual learners, heritage speakers are exposed naturalistically to the heritage language; however, this language is by definition a nonhegemonic minority language within a majority-language environment.*

The HLVC collects a corpus of conversational data from ten different heritage languages in Toronto: Cantonese, Faetar, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Tagalog, Ukranian. The corpus records three different generations since immigration including the group that immigrated from the homeland, and it includes comparable homeland samples. While the

selection of speakers sampled in the HLVC is not restricted in terms of heritage language proficiency, speakers must be able to participate in an hour-long conversation in the heritage language (Nagy 2018: 434). For each heritage language, the sample of speakers is restricted to speakers from one city or region in order to minimize variation. For instance, Russian heritage speakers are all of Saint Petersburgh's origin, and Italian heritage speakers are all originally from the southern region of Calabria.

The HLVC collects conversational data in three forms. Participants take part in an hour-long standard sociolinguistic interview (IV) (Labov 1984) conducted in the heritage language and guided by a fellow heritage language speaker. Participants are then asked to respond orally to a shorter Ethnic-Orientation questionnaire (EOQ) which includes questions regarding ethnic identity, relative frequency of heritage language vs English, frequency of participation in the cultural environment of the heritage language, preferences between heritage and "mainstream Canadian" culture and experiences of discrimination connected to the heritage identity (Nagy 2018:434). The final task is the First Words task (FW) where participants are asked to describe orally a series of pictures from a children's story book. Participants are interviewed by heritage speakers from the same community. The recordings are then transcribed and time-aligned with ELAN.

The Italian heritage speakers sampled in the HLVC project are speakers of Calabrian origins and they belong to or are descendants of that large group of immigrants that came to Toronto in the mid-20th century. First-generation (Gen 1) speakers are those who were born in Calabria between 1935 and 1959, they moved to the Toronto Greater Area after the age of 18 and have been in Toronto for at least 20 years at the time of recording. Second-generation (Gen 2) speakers were either born in Toronto or arrived before the age of 6 from Calabria and are

children of Gen 1 speakers. Third-generation (Gen 3) speakers are born in Canada and are children of Gen 2 speakers.

Linguistically, the Italian heritage speakers recorded in the HLVC use a regionalized form of Italian that bears influence from local dialects, i.e., Calabrian regional Italian (Baird, Cristiano, and Nagy 2021). These influences include the presence of features from local dialects, such as the use of the emphatic *ci* 'there' before the verb *avere* 'to have', the use of *imparare* 'to learn' instead of *insegnare* 'to teach' and the use of dialectal articles and dialectal words (Baird, Cristiano, and Nagy 2021). The linguistic layer where local features of Calabrian Regional Italian are more perceivable is the phonetic level. As a matter of fact, most existing studies on Calabrian Regional Italian are concerned with phonetic variation (e.g., Loporcaro 1988, Loporcaro et al. 1998, Silverstri 2008).

Research questions

The present study addresses the following research questions:

1) What are the socio-economic profiles of each generation of Italian heritage speakers in the HLVC?
2) What are the speakers' linguistic practices? What are their attitudes, and beliefs toward their heritage language(s)? And how are these linked to their socio-economic background?
3) Are Italian heritage speakers from each generation also speakers of Calabrese?

Methodology

The following methodology addresses the research questions presented above with the analysis of HLVC data on Italian heritage speakers. The data for this analysis comes from the responses to the EOQs and IV. Because the data comes from interviews, speakers' responses reflect their own self-perception. The participants considered in this study were four Italian heritage speakers (2 women and 2 men) from each generation who were randomly selected from the Italian speaker sample from the HLVC project. Twelve speakers were considered in total.

1) *Socio-economic profiles*

Information on the speakers' socio-economic profile is extracted mainly from the first part of the IVs. In particular, responses to the following IV questions were considered:

- What year were you born? (IV)
- Where were you born? (IV)
- Where were your parents born? Raised? (IV)
- How about your grandparents? Your great-grandparents? (IV)

Identity was identified based on the EOQ question:

- Do you think of yourself as Italian, Canadian, or Italian-Canadian? (EOQs)

Information on jobs, professional experience, and education was extracted from the IVs using the search function in ELAN for words such as 'school' 'university' 'work'. These topics were in many cases not directly prompted during the interview, but they were still mentioned or addressed in most interviews. Because of this, however, the information reported in this study is likely incomplete.

2) *Linguistic practices*

To find information on the linguistic practices of HLVC Italian speakers and on their linguistic attitudes and beliefs toward their heritage languages, answers to the following EOQ questions were considered:

- Do you speak Italian? How well? How often? (EOQ)
- Where did you learn Italian? At home? In school? (EOQ)
- Do you prefer to speak Italian or English? (EOQ)
- What language does your family speak when you get together? (EOQ)
- What language do you speak with your friends? (EOQ)
- Did/do you speak to your parents in Italian? Your grandparents? (EOQ)
- Do you speak to your children/grandchildren in Italian? (When relevant) (EOQ)
- Do/did your parents speak Italian? English? And your grandparents? (EOQ)

3) *Presence of Calabrese*

The presence of Calabrese in the speakers' linguistic repertoire often emerged during the analysis of EOQ responses listed above. For instance, when Gen 1 speakers were asked where they learned Italian, they would reply that they learned it in school, as the language used at home was Calabrese. Some Gen 2 and Gen 3 speakers, on the other hand, when asked which language they use with their grandparents, would answer that they use Calabrese and not Italian. Further evidence of the use of Calabrese was extracted from the EOQ and IVs, when available, using the search function in ELAN for words such as 'Calabrese' and 'dialect'.

Results: Socio-economic profiles

Gen 1

The analysis of the four Gen 1 speakers' socio-economic profiles reveals that they all arrived in Toronto between 1965 and 1972. At the time of the interview, they were between the ages of 59 and 61, and had spent between 39 and 45 years in Canada. Three out of four speakers came from very small towns, and only one came from a larger urban center. The two women identify as Italian, while the men identify as Canadian and Italian-Canadian respectively. In terms of education and professional experiences, they all have medium-high levels of education, and three out of four worked jobs that required special qualifications. One of the men mentioned completing higher education in Canada, while all the other Gen 1 speakers were reportedly educated in Italy.

Participant	**Homeplace (in Italy)**	**Year of the interview and age at the time**	**Year of arrival in Toronto and age at the time**	**Years spent in Toronto at the time of the interview**	**Identity**	**Education**	**Profession in Canada**
I1F59A	Cittanova (Reggio Calabria)	2011 (59)	1972 (20)	39	Italian	Middle school certificate + professional course for accounting (in Italy)	Seamstress
I1F61A	Gabella (Lamezia Terme – Catanzaro)	2011 (61)	1970 (20)	41	Italian	Secondary school certificate for primary school teachers + 1 year of university (in Italy)	Teachers (for a few years only) Bank clerk (for many years)
I1M60A	Gabella (Lamezia Terme – Catanzaro)	2011 (60)	1972 (20)	39	Canadian	Secondary school certificate for primary school teachers (in Italy) + started university in	Teacher

						Italy, completed university in Toronto	
I1M61B	Crotone	2010 (61)	1965 (16**)	45	Italian-Canadian	Private middle school certificate + 3 years of classical lyceum (in Italy)	broadcaster / owner of advertising company

Table 1: Gen 1's speaker profiles. The data reported here is based on speakers' responses to the EOQs and IVs. I1M61B came to Toronto at 16, while Gen 1 speakers in the HLVC are usually selected among Italo-Canadians who moved to Canada over the age of 18.

Gen 2

The four Gen 2 speakers analyzed here were all born in Canada and were between the ages of 30 and 44 at the time of the interview, with an average age of 37.5. All four speakers are children of Italian-born parents. For those speakers that we have data available, we know that the parents came from small rural towns. All Gen 2 speakers identify as Italian-Canadian. All the Gen 2 speakers analyzed report having university-level education and working qualified jobs.

Participant	**Homeplace of parents in Italy**	**Place of birth**	**Year of the interview and age at the time**	**Identity**	**Education**	**Profession**
I2F34C	Mother: Sambiase (Lamezia Terme) Father: Mongiana (Vibo Valentia)	Canada	34	Italian-Canadian	University	Teacher
I2F44A	Calabria (Unspecified)	Canada	44	Italian-Canadian	University	Social services
I2M42A	Mother: Aprigliano (Cosenza) Father: Pietrafitta (Cosenza)	Canada	42	Italian-Canadian	University	IT developer for Governmental office
I2M30A	Italia (unspecified, supposedly Calabria)	Canada	30	Italian-Canadian	University	Office job

Table 1: Gen 2's speaker profiles. The data reported here is based on speakers' responses to the EOQs and IVs.

Gen 3

The Gen 3 speakers analyzed were all born in Canada and were between 18 and 33 years of age at the time of the interview, with an average age of 24.75. Their parents were either born in Canada or moved to Canada at a young age. Their grandparents were all from Calabria. Speaker I3F21A's grandparents are from two large urban centers, while the other speakers' grandparents are from smaller towns in Calabria. For those speakers we have data available, we find that at the time of the interview they either have a university degree or are in the process of completing one. Those who work have qualified jobs.

Participant	**Place of birth of parents**	**Homeland of grandparents**	**Year of the interview and age at the time**	**Identity**	**Education**	**Profession/occupation**
I3F21A	Toronto, Canada	Maternal grandparents: Catanzaro Paternal grandparents: Cosenza	2011 (21)	Italian-Canadian	University (in progress)	Student / Secretary in an office
I3F33A	Father: small town near Reggio Calabria Mother: small town near Vibo Valentia	Grandparents: Calabria (unspecified; likely the same as parents)	N/A 33	Italian-Canadian	N/A	Instructor in a community center
I3M27A	Mother: Toronto, Canada Father: San Fili (Cosenza)	Maternal grandparents: Rende (Cosenza) Paternal grandparents: San Fili (Cosenza)	N/A (27)	Italian-Canadian	University	Elementary school teacher
I3M18B	Mother: Toronto, Canada Father: Sant'Onofrio (Vibo Valentia)	Grandparents: Calabria (unspecified)	N/A (18)	Italian	University (in progress)	University student

Table 1: Gen 3's speaker profiles. The data reported here is based on speakers' responses to the EOQs and IVs.

Results: Linguistic practices / presence of Calabrese

The following sections report the major finding from the analysis of the EOQ responses.

Gen 1

Speaker I1F61A claimed to have learned Italian in school since her family at home would only speak Calabrese. She specifies that later in life she started using Italian with friends as well, even before moving to Canada. She states that she speaks Italian "rather well", that she uses Italian most of the time, and that she prefers speaking Italian over English. She says that the language spoken in her home is Italian. When asked which language she uses with her parents (it is unclear from the interview if the parents are still alive) she says that she speaks Italian, but when the interviewer asks, "not dialect?" she corrects herself: "with my parents [we speak] mostly dialect, I mix it with some Italian." She later specifies that with her children she uses Italian, and not dialect.

Speaker I1F60M states that the language used in his home as a child was "dialect", and that he learned Italian in school and then from the television and newspapers. At the time of the interview, he states that he speaks Italian rather well and that he uses it almost every day. Italian is also his preferred language. He claims his family mixes English and Italian a lot at home, but that the preferred language of communication is English. He only uses Italian sometimes with his children, but mostly talks with them in English. He first claims that his parents speak "Italian dialect", likely referring to Calabrese, and then adds that they now speak *Italiese* i.e., "English words mixed with Italian ones".

I1F59A uses dialect and Italian at home with her husband but uses Italian and English with her children, and mostly English with her grandchildren. She predominantly uses Calabrese

to talk to her parents, and a little Italian. I1F59A comments that she feels mortified that she doesn't speak Calabrese very well, and that every time she goes back to Calabria and everyone uses dialect, she ends up speaking in Italian as it comes easier to her.

Speaker I1M61B discusses using Italian very frequently, both with his parents, his wife, and his daughter, and he does not mention at all the use of dialect. This speaker says that he learned Italian at home as his father was "a fanatic" about Italian and never mentions the use of dialect at all, either in the EOQ or in the IV.

Gen 2

Speaker I2F34C learned Italian at home, from her parents. At the time of the interview, she claims to often use Italian with her parents, and that she speaks Italian every day with her young child, as she is committed to transmitting the language to him. She does not mention the use of Calabrese.

Speaker I2F44A claims that she does not use Italian often but that she speaks Calabrese almost every day and is better than Italian. Later in the EOQ she says that she uses Italian to talk to her parents, and that she uses it sometimes to talk to her children (but she might mean Calabrese, given her statement about using Calabrese every day). When asked where she learned Italian, she replies that she learned it at home, and later in school, from middle school to university.

Speaker I2M30A states that he learned Italian at home, then in school, and never mentions speaking dialect or Calabrese. He claims to use English to speak with his parents and that he only speaks Italian with his grandparents, less than once a week.

Speaker I2M42A states that he speaks Calabrese frequently with family members, and says Calabrese is easier to speak for him than Italian. He learned Calabrese at home, as everyone in his family used Calabrese. He says that he cannot speak Italian well and attributes the possible cause of this to the fact that he only heard Calabrese at home growing up. Reportedly, he speaks dialect with his parents and with friends of Calabrian origin, but he uses English with Italian Canadians of different origins.

Gen 3

Speaker I3F21A claims that she often speaks Italian. She learned Italian at home from her parents and grandparents but says that she struggled to learn the language because everyone else in the family used Calabrese. She understands Calabrese but cannot speak it fast, and reports that her grandparents would scold her every time she said a word in Calabrese. Her grandparents explicitly required that she speak "Standard Italian". She claims that her grandparents believed that because they were not in Calabria anymore, if she used Calabrese to speak with other Italians in Toronto they would think that she was "not very smart". She adds that her grandparents made an effort to speak more Italian around her. She also attended Saturday classes of Italian at a cultural center. She says that she mostly uses English to talk with her parents and that within the family Italian is used for jokes, but she does talk in Italian with her grandparents.

Speaker I3F33A says that she uses Calabrese every day and that she speaks Calabrese way better than Italian. According to what she reports, she learned Calabrese at home from her grandmother who only spoke Calabrese and she later learned Italian in school in Toronto. With her parents she mainly uses English, and sometimes Calabrese. She speaks only Calabrese with her grandparents.

Speaker I3M18B says that he learned Italian in Italy, taking summer courses at a school in Abruzzo. It is not clear whether he was exposed to Italian at home. He does say that his parents can speak Italian but that the language used at home is English. He does not reference Calabrese. He claims that he speaks Italian often and is very passionate about his Italian heritage, expressing the wish to be as Italian as possible.

I3M27A says that he speaks some Italian, but that he uses it very rarely. Reportedly, he learned Italian at home from his grandparents who took care of him when his parents were working. He says that before going to school he only spoke Italian as a child. At the time of the interview, he only uses English to speak with his parents and friends and speaks English with his grandparents while they speak Italian to him. He never mentions Calabrese.

Discussion

The sociolinguistic profiles that emerged from the analysis of the HLVC data suggest that these Italian heritage speakers tend to be from or to be descendants of people from rural areas and small villages in Calabria. In terms of education, while only one Gen 1 speaker completed university, all Gen 2 and Gen 3 have completed or are in the process of completing a university degree, suggesting the increased socioeconomic condition of this group since immigration. Linguistically, the everyday linguistic practices of these heritage speakers are rather complex and involve three languages: English, Italian, and Calabrese. English seems to be the preferred language for interactions outside the family, and Italian and Calabrian are both used within the family.

The sociolinguistic profiles of first-generation Italian heritage speakers that emerged from this analysis are in line with previous studies on Italian heritage speakers in Canada. As

discussed before, Turchetta (2018) found that Italians who immigrated between the 70s and the late 900s tend to be Italian and dialect speakers and have medium-high levels of education. This finds correspondence in the profiles of the four speakers analyzed, who arrived in Canada between the late 60s and the early 70s, who all have medium-high levels of education, and three of whom are Calabrese/Italian speakers. These profiles reflect both the sociolinguistic conditions of the speakers' families at the time of immigration, as well as the changes in the immigration policies that allowed them to move to Canada.

The linguistic practices of Gen 2 and 3 are rather different from Gen 1. While Gen 1 usually prefer speaking Italian, both at home and with their social circles, Gen 2 and Gen 3 are all dominant English speakers and most of them prefer or find it easier to speak in English rather than in their heritage language (s). Nonetheless, they are all fluent enough in Italian to hold a one-hour-long conversation in the heritage language. The fact that there has been transmission of Italian to Gen 2 and Gen 3 can be taken as a marker of the family's positive attitude toward Italian as a heritage language. In addition, the results reveal that most Gen 3 received some form of formal education in Italian, unlike Gen 2 speakers (only one of them mentioned studying Italian in school). This reflects the general growth in interest in the Italian language and culture, as well as a possible awareness of the economic value of Italian as a language of fashion, art, and food connected to the *Made in Italy* market (cf. Di Salvo 2017:91).

Let us consider what emerged regarding the use of Calabrese. Three of the four Gen 1 Italian heritage speakers grew up in Calabrese-speaking homes in Calabria and only learned Italian when they started going to school. At the time of the interview, however, most of these speakers seemed to prefer using Italian. The apparent predominance of Italian in everyday linguistic practices of Gen 1 speakers might be due to the way the questions of the EOQ are

prompted, opposing Italian and English, and excluding Calabrese. However, one speaker explicitly states that she finds it difficult to speak Calabrese when she visits her family in Italy. This suggests that the linguistic practices of her heritage community in Canada have diverged from the linguistic practices in Calabria, where Italian/Calabrese bilingualism is still widespread. It should also be remembered that the speakers in the HLVC were selected on the basis of their ability to hold a one-hour-long conversation in the target heritage language, Italian, which possibly excluded those heritage speakers who predominantly use Calabrese at home.

The only Gen 1 speaker who does claim to have learned Italian at home also comes from a larger urban center in Calabria. While this instance might be a coincidence, Berruto (2018: 505) has demonstrated that there is a correlation between the use of Italian/dialect at home and location: people living in urban centers use dialect less than people living in small towns and villages. It is possible therefore that the use of Italian by this speaker's family reflects a practice in the community of origin. It should be noted however that this particular speaker adds that his father was "a fanatic of Italian", something that would make little sense in a monolingual Italian community. This comment hints at the fact that the speaker's father, and the speaker himself, were aware of the presence of Calabrian in the community repertoire and made an explicit choice to use Italian instead.

I will now consider the transmission of Calabrese to Gen 2 and Gen 3 speakers. Two Gen 2 and two Gen 3 speakers never mention Calabrese and always talk about speaking and using Italian. Strikingly, however, while all Gen 1 speakers claim to prefer Italian, two Gen 2 speakers point out that they prefer using Calabrese and that speaking Calabrese is easier for them than speaking Italian, because this is the language that they learned at home. One Gen 3 speaker also uses Calabrese more often than Italian, and another one points out that she grew up in a

Calabrese-speaking home, and that she is the only one that cannot speak dialect well, because of the linguistic policy at home. This suggests that there are some first-generation heritage speakers in Toronto (the parents and grandparents of Gen 2 and Gen 3 speakers) who are predominantly Calabrese speakers. The Gen 1 speakers of the HLVC were all educated in Italy up to middle school or high school, and even university in some cases, where they were very likely exposed to the linguistic policies of Italian educational institutions. Students in southern Italy at the time were in fact openly discouraged from using dialect and pressured to learn Standard Italian, allegedly with the goal of being more successful in their education and working career (cf. Cremona and Bates 1976).

Gen 1 speakers seem to play a crucial role in the transmission or loss of Calabrese. In several cases, grandparents are the ones responsible for the passage of the heritage language(s), just like in Italy younger generations often learn dialects from their grandparents and not their parents (Berruto 2018: 518). For instance, I3F33A says that she learned Calabrese (and some Italian) from her grandparents while her parents were at work. In other cases, grandparents are the ones who forbid the inter-generational transmission of Calabrese. Several comments illustrate this pattern. Gen 1 speaker I1F61A makes it clear that for her is important that her children and grandchildren only speak Italian, and that nowadays she only uses Calabrese with her parents. Gen 3 speaker I3F21A comments that it was difficult to learn Italian in a dialect-speaking family when she was younger but that as she was growing up everyone in the family made an effort to use more Italian, and that her grandparents were the ones who were strict about using Italian only. In the eyes of her grandparents, the use of dialect would mark her as “not intelligent” in front of the rest of the Italo-Canadian community. This supports Turchetta’s (2018:83) proposal that, in this migratory context, the encounter with Italians from other regions is one of the factors

that foster the convergence toward a common form of Italian. However, I2M42A, a Gen 2 heritage speaker who prefers Calabrese over Italian, states that he uses English to speak with Italian-Canadians from other regions as a lingua franca, rather than Italian.

Some of the stigma about the use of dialects has clearly been carried over from the homeland to Toronto and affects the pattern of heritage language transmission, to the point that some of the younger generations of Italian heritage speakers do not even mention dialect in their experience.

While the lack of mention of Calabrese might reflect the absence of this language from the linguistic repertoires of some HLVC speakers (or that Calabrese was never present at all in their family repertoire), this phenomenon might also be interpreted in other ways. It is attested that among Italian heritage speakers, there is a tendency to use the category "Italian" even when referring to dialect, which makes it difficult to establish when they are referring to Italian or dialect (Di Salvo 2017:88). This is not to say that heritage speakers cannot tell the two languages apart, but simply that at the terminological level they refer to all of their heritage linguistic repertoire as 'Italian'. Because of the way the HLVC interviews are designed, where speakers are often asked to choose between their preference for English and Italian in various situations, speakers might have primed speakers to answer with "Italian" even when they referred to Calabrese. I found an instance of this in the data analyzed. When Gen 1 speaker I1F61A was asked what language she uses with her parents she replied "Italian". The interviewer, however, remembered from an earlier discussion that I1F61A had only learned Italian in school and that her parents used to speak to her in Calabrese. Accordingly, the interviewer verified whether the speaker meant Italian or dialect and I1F61A corrected herself and said that she spoke dialect with her parents.

Final remarks and next steps

This paper presented the complex sociolinguistic reality of a community with multiple heritage languages in their repertoire. The case of the HLVC Italian heritage speakers highlights that socio-economic and linguistic patterns in the country of origin at the time of immigration can affect heritage language transmission and/or language shift. The analysis of the four Gen 1 speakers' linguistic backgrounds and practices revealed that most of them are bilingual Calabrese/Italian speakers. Based on the literature reviewed on Italian immigration, we can assume that this is the typical profile of Italians who immigrated around the 70s. The first generation made an effort to transmit Italian, sometimes to the detriment of Calabrese. Because of this, there are some Gen 2 and Gen 3 speakers who do not ever mention Calabrese as part of their experiences. Several Gen 2 and Gen 3 speakers, however, still use Calabrese, and some of them prefer speaking Calabrese over Italian, suggesting that second and third generations of Italian heritage speakers might be more positively oriented toward Calabrese, than earlier generations.

The next step of this study is to develop a more fine-grained research question that can address the full scope of the analysis presented here. While the discussion brings up many insights and interesting points about the bilingual heritage repertoire of heritage speakers, I will need a stronger research question that embraces and accounts for the full potential of my analysis. I will control the selection of speakers in accordance with my research question, selecting speakers whose responses to the interviews provide relevant insights. More speakers will be considered to give more depth to the analysis, and hopefully produce more insight into the speakers' linguistic attitudes and use and metalinguistic awareness of the distinction between

Calabrese and Italian. The results of this study will also serve as a reference for a quantitative investigation of a specific linguistic feature that I plan to conduct in the future, with a focus on structural variations under the influence of Calabrese in Italian.

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