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The linguistic needs of immigrant students of Italian as a second language for a cultural and work integration.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates the linguistic needs of immigrants learning Italian as a Second language, especially as far as their work integration is concerned; in order to do so, the first chapters present a description of the problems related to immigration from a social and psychological point of view and a focus on the social situation of immigrants in the region where the research was conducted.

It then tries to understand which perception they have of their own linguistics skills, where they come in contact with the language and which are the main reasons that motivate them to learn it.

INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge that the main reason pushing people to migrate from their country of origin is to seek an improvement of their quality of life; migration flows have as their final goals economically developed countries with a higher job offer, better salaries and better welfare services. In the past twenty years, Italy has been no exception. Especially in the rich northern regions of the country with a high concentration of small- and medium-sized enterprises (from now on SMEs), migration flows have been increasing year after year. This relatively new process not only brings to these regions large groups of new inhabitants, but also defines a radical change in their social structure. These changes are happening fast and the situation – also due to the different cultures of origin of immigrants – is very heterogeneous, which makes it difficult for the Government and its Institutions to find adequate and efficient solutions to the many problems that constantly arise in the management of these “new citizens”.

The goal of this thesis, that originates from my personal experience as a teacher of Italian as a second language in a strongly multicultural community, is to shed some light on the linguistic needs perceived by immigrants as far as their cultural and work integration is concerned. Through a questionnaire specifically developed for this goal, we tried to draw a profile of the immigrant learner of Italian that may give the guidelines for new linguistic teaching methods more deeply integrated to the work environment, methods which may also result in a faster path of integration into the host society.

The first chapter is dedicated to an analysis of the social and psychological characteristics of integration from both a cultural and linguistic perspective; the second chapter focuses on the development of the definition of linguistic needs and the model proposed by various authors who took inspiration from various disciplines; chapter 3 deals with a more detailed analysis of the immigrants' social and work environment in the Veneto region, where the research was conducted. Finally, the last two chapters describe respectively how the data were collected and with which methodologies , and their analysis, from which we derived our conclusions.

1. INTEGRATION

Many different factors play a key role in a successful process of integration: education, character, context, self-initiative, previous experiences, etc. These factors, though, are extremely variable and dependent on the personal history of an immigrant; nonetheless, two macro-areas of fundamental importance can be identified: cultural integration and linguistic integration. These two aspects of the same process are in a relation of interdependence: one cannot exist without the other and, at the same time, they nurture each other.

The aim of a positive integration is the creation of a bicultural personality, in which the immigrant's two cultures coexist and are perceived as a source of enrichment rather than a weakness.

The path to this goal is often rough and requires patience and obstinacy, especially in the first periods of settlement in the new culture; it is undoubtedly filled with hindrances that may have a negative psychological outcome, but, equally, with a great deal of satisfaction once these problems have been overcome.

The following paragraphs describe the two aforementioned aspects of cultural and linguistic integration according to the most accepted theories in the literature.

1.1 Cultural integration

In the following paragraphs we will firstly give an outline of how culture is described in the literature and what is the relation between culture and the individual; given these premises we will focus on the specific case

of individuals who have to adjust to a new culture, delineating how this process takes place and which critical points may emerge.

1.1.1 The concept of culture

To give a definition of culture has been the ultimate aim of anthropological studies, aim that led to the formulation of numerous different theories; it is therefore impossible to handle the subject thoroughly in a few lines. For this reasons, we limit ourselves to a concise definition of the concept of culture borrowing Balboni's (2006) words.

He defines culture as “the way we satisfy our natural needs” and adds that many populations make a distinction between culture and *civilitas*¹ stating that “every population has models of everyday culture and models of ‘civilization’, i.e. values or behaviors that should be taken as an example, and considers uncivilized those populations that do not share the same model”.²

1.1.2 The ecological system

Culture has a strong effect on the life of an individual: as already mentioned, it is a behavioral model used by the individual to face life. This model is acquired – similarly to language – unconsciously, through external inputs. It is therefore the context in which an individual lives. One may wonder how this context could be described, with Luise's (2006) words:

“If one cannot not communicate³, if the individual is molded, characterized and defined by the interactions he or she has with the elements of the context, of the

¹ In the ancient Rome, the *civilitas* was the cultural model of the city taken as an example by those living in the countryside or in smaller towns (Balboni, 2006)

² See Balboni (2006) for more references on the subject.

³ She is quoting Paul Watzlawick's famous axiom taken from his theory of communication.

environment and the environments that more or less closely surround him or her, if a person does not exist in the hollow, but in a wide and varied system of relations, then it becomes important to define what we mean by <<context>>.”

Bronfenbrenner (1979) studied for years how an organism adapts to the surrounding environment and the interaction between the individual and the contexts in which he or she lives; as a result of these studies he gives a definition of *ecological system* which is represented as a “set of structures, one inside the other”, whose interconnections “can be as defining for the development [of an individual] as the events that take place in a given situation”; therefore, “the development of an individual is deeply determined by the events taking place in systems in which the individual is not even present.”

The ecological system is represented by four interconnected concentric circles, with the individual set as their center.

These circles are defined as:

- a) *Microsystem*
- b) *Mesosystem*
- c) *Esosystem*
- d) *Macrosystem*

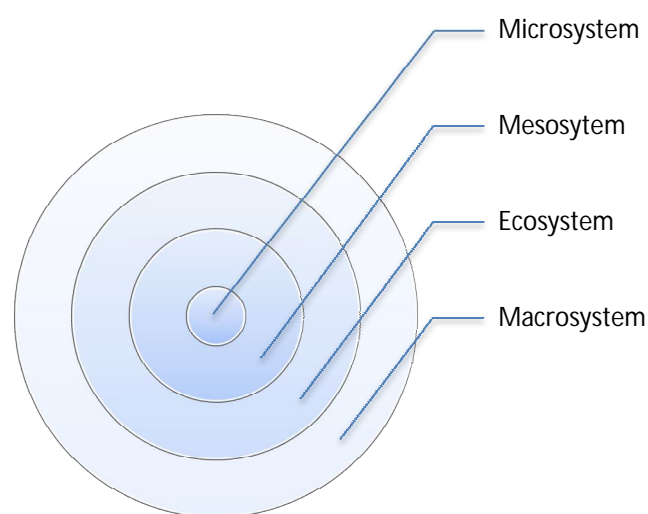
The *microsystem* is “the complex of interrelations inside an immediate context. [...] It is a scheme of activities, roles and interpersonal relations, experienced in a given context by the developing individual, that have particular physical and concrete characteristics.”

The *mesosystem* is a “system of Microsystems inside which interrelations between two or more systems take place and to which the individual actively participate”(Luise, 2006).

The *esosystem* shares the composition of the mesosystem, but in its case the individual does not actively participate. These systems are nonetheless strictly related to the individual, as – right inside them – events take place that determined, or are determined, by what takes place in the system involving the individual. To give a practical definition of this stage, it could be compared to the organization of the centers offering continuing education courses.

The *macrosystem* “consists of the congruences of form and content of the systems that constitute it – micro-, meso- and ecosystem – that are present inside a given culture or subculture, and of every system of beliefs and ideologies beneath said congruence.”(Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

Table 1 – The structure of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system



Source: Our elaboration

1.1.3 Schumann’s theory

Schumann (1978) developed a model to explain the difficulties faced by learners of a second language during its acquisition, called “Acculturation

theory”; Luise (2006) defines it “*a process of adaptation to the culture of the speakers of the second language as a mother tongue*”⁴.

According to this model the process of the L2 acquisition is hindered proportionally to the socio-cultural distance perceived between the learner and the cultural, social and linguistic context that surrounds him or her; in some cases of individuals perceiving a wide social distance the acquisition may be limited to basic linguistic levels which are barely sufficient to satisfy minimal communicative needs; as a negative consequence, this limitation – amplified by low motivation towards the learning of the second language – may worsen and block the linguistic development in a stage of pidginization.

According to Schumann’s theory, many different factors play a role in creating social distance:

- Social dominance
- Integration pattern
- Closure
- Cohesiveness
- Cultural congruence
- Attitude
- Length of residence

These factors can be described as follows: *social dominance* refers to the relations between the various groups belonging to the linguistic minorities; the *integration pattern* indicates the ability of the immigrant to enter the host culture; *closure* is the degree of openness towards the host society; *cohesiveness* defines both the degree of internal unity and the

⁴ Our translation

largeness of the group of origin; *attitude* is referred to the immigrant's attitude towards the host society while the *length of residence* describes how long the immigrant remains in the host country and how stable his or her stay is.

To these factors, Schumann also associates four more psychological factors that can interfere with the L2 learning process:

- The *linguistic shock*: i.e. the feeling of insecurity due to scarce control over the language;
- The *cultural shock*, caused by the admission into – but also clash with – a culture different from the culture of origin;
- The *motivation* towards learning;
- The *ego permeability*, i.e. the ability to give up, partially and for a short amount of time, the uniqueness of one's own identity in order to ease learning.

Acton (1979) refined Schumann's theory on social distance arguing that what plays a key role in L2 learning is not the actual social distance between two cultures but the individual's perceived social distance between his or her culture of origin and the host culture, since "what the learner perceives forms the learner's reality" (Brown, 1980).

1.1.4 The stages of acculturation.

The settling-in period after arrival on a new country is a very delicate stage in an immigrant's integration process. Studies have identified four different stages that lead to acculturation (Kim, 1988; Brown, 1992):

- Euphoria
- Culture shock
- Recovery and optimism
- Acculturation (assimilation or adaptation)

The first few months in a new culture are usually characterized by a state of euphoria: immigrants live in a world where everything is new and has to be discovered and enjoy the chance they had to escape from their old life and problems. Nonetheless, after this first stage the status of excitement slowly decreases and starts downgrading to a “negative stage” – whose duration may vary from a few weeks to several months in certain cases – during which the immigrant can be irritable and even have panic attacks. This “cultural shock” is due to the feeling of alienation, of homesickness, but also of isolation and frustration for the difficulties in integrating with the new culture and in communicating with other people. Immigrants start noticing the aspects of the new culture that they do not like or even completely reject; they feel lost and have problems picking points of reference that give them a sense of identity, especially for those who left their families in their home country. It can therefore be considered as a stage of psychological instability, to which some immigrants respond by “bonding more closely with members of their ethnic group” or even “return to the home country or migrate to another” (Coelho, 1998).

Culture shock is described by Adler (1972) as:

“a form of anxiety that results from the loss of commonly perceived and understood signs and symbols of social intercourse [...]. With the familiar props, cues and clues of cultural understanding removed, the individual becomes disoriented, afraid of, and alienated from the things the he knows and understands.”

This stage is usually followed by a first stage of recovery, which still displays some of the problems that originated the former stage of “cultural shock” but in which the individual begins to find solutions to some others; it can be considered an “in-between stage” towards integration, where the immigrant is still deeply attached to his or her culture of origin but at the same time starts accepting the differences and characteristics of the new surrounding culture; for its vacillating nature, characterized by shifts from positive to negative feelings, it is also described by Larson and Smalley (1972) as *culture stress*. This improvement is usually strongly supported by the new skills acquired with the language especially for the basic needs of the everyday communication, that also allow him or her to make the first friendships even outside the ethnic group of origin.

The aforementioned detachment from both cultures, though, might have a negative aspect to which Lambert (1967) refers as *anomie*⁵, borrowing Durkheim’s (1867) term; it is “a feeling of hopelessness, where one feels neither bound firmly to a native culture nor fully adapted to a second culture” (Brown, 1978).

The feeling of anomie is particularly interesting as it shows how deeply related language learning and acculturation are: the studies conducted by Lambert (1967) demonstrated that anomie is stronger when the individual starts mastering the second language, that is to say when he or she has a tangible perception of the development of his or her new identity.

The last stage describes the final and complete integration of the immigrant into the host culture and may have a twofold outcome: “acculturation” or “assimilation”. The first term refers to a positive

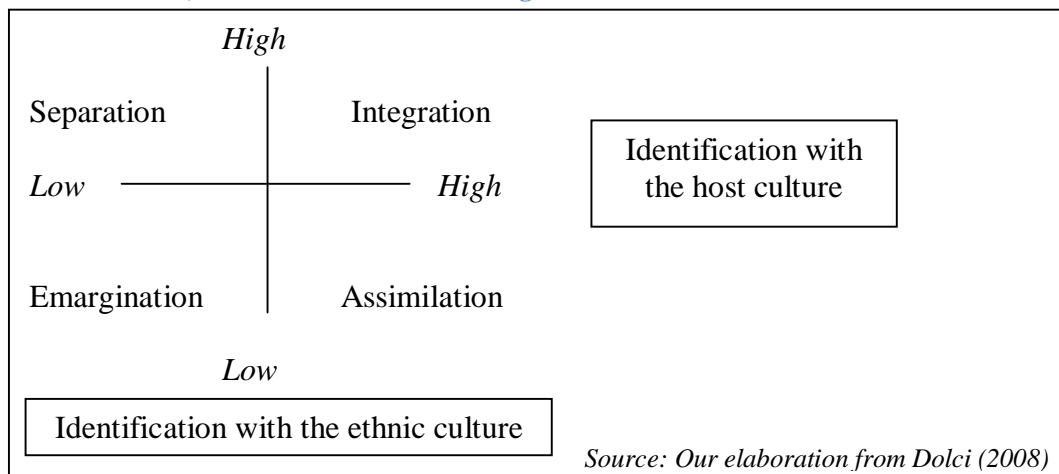
⁵ The word comes from Greek ἀνομία, composed of *a-* "without", and *nomos* "law" and therefore indicates an estrangement from the rules (of society).

integration, with a balanced acceptance of both the new culture and the culture of origin, whereas the latter specifies an imbalanced integration in which the culture of origin tends to be denied and hidden, which – according to Freire’s words – “has a negative adaptive value and would indicate an incomplete process of adaptation” (Freire, 1989).

These four stages, though, cannot be applied to every single case, since they depend also on the social environment the immigrant has to enter and by which he or she is surrounded. In some cases an individual may skip one of these stages, in some others they may happen in a slightly different order than the one presented above. It is also possible that an individual does not reach acculturation heterogeneously in all aspects of his life, according to the different degree of integration in various social contexts. In some cases, as reported by Coelho (1998): “some immigrants [...] experience great pain and frustration (during the transition period) and sometimes become ‘stuck’ in the second stage”.

Ward, Bocher and Furnham (2001), as reported in Dolci (2008), give an efficient representation of the possible outcome of the acculturation process:

Table 2 – Ward, Bocher and Furnham’s categorial acculturation model.



As far as language learning is concerned, Brown (2005) theorizes that a full integration parallels a good acquisition of the language and that the most useful stage – of the four outlined above – to efficiently acquire a second language is the third one, characterized by recovery and optimism: the immigrant, unable to identify himself or herself with neither of the two cultures, is more prone to the acquisition of the target language.

1.1.6 Kim's model

To end this section dedicated to the complicated process of acculturation we would also like to present one of the most recent models proposed in the literature, which has already been applied successfully to some contexts of the linguistic and educational field (Dolci, Spinelli, 2008).

Although very similar in some aspects to what had been already asserted by Brown and Schumann, this model is characterized by an effective representation that unifies notions taken from different disciplines (psychology, linguistics and sociology).that merge together to explain the many facets of the cross-cultural adaptation.

Creator of this model is Kim (2001), who tried – as already said – to put together all the factors that may have an influence on the development of an individual's intercultural competence.

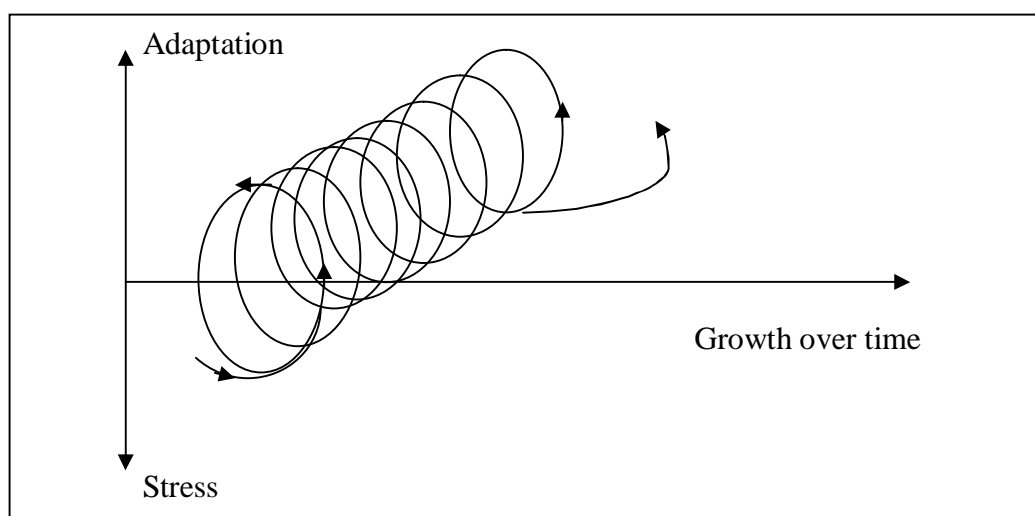
His proposal stems from his definition of cross-cultural adaptation:

“cross-cultural adaptation is a dynamic and complex process, characterized by a multifaceted and multidimensional structure whose components work simultaneously and interactively. [...] This transition allows the individual to establish relations that are relatively stable, mutual and functional to the surrounding environment”.

Two integrating components can be distinguished: a process-related component, that describes the path towards adaptation, and a structural component, that specifies its condition and dimensions (Dolci, 2008).

Similarly to Schumann and Brown⁶ he sees the process of adaptation as a continuum that crosses psychological stages of stress, adaptation and growth. He adds, moreover, that during this process the individual modifies his internal system through the interaction with the surrounding environment. This statement recalls Brown's third stage of his acculturation theory, and is, in our opinion, strictly related to the individual's linguistic development; indeed, as we have seen, the first evidence of cultural adaption is the acquisition of the language. On this subject, Kim claims that "the ability to integrate into the culture is proportional to the degree of development of the communicative competence".

Table 3 – The process of adaptation according to Kim, 2001



Source: our elaboration from Dolci (2008)

⁶ See previous paragraphs in this chapter

1.2 Linguistic integration

In the previous paragraphs we dealt with the stages of acculturation and the problems a foreigner has to face when entering a new culture. It has been already observed how social integration is strictly related to linguistic integration, how language not only functions as a support during the aforementioned stages of creation of a new identity but also how it may be responsible for the triggering of a period of psychological instability as first concrete instance of passage from the old self to the new self. Nevertheless, with both its positive and negative aspects, the acquisition of the L2 is fundamental for a complete integration, so much so that we could state that the latter is impossible without the first.

It is therefore necessary to describe the processes of linguistic integration as we have done for those of cultural integration. For this purpose in the following paragraphs we are going to analyze what happens during the various stages of language learning.

1.2.1 Definition of Second Language

In the literature we find a clear distinction between a Foreign Language (FL) and a Second Language (L2); even though both terms refer to a language which is learned after the acquisition of a Mother tongue (L1), they differ for their context of learning: a foreign language is usually learned at school and the linguistic inputs to which the learner is exposed are limited to those proposed in the FL class; whereas a Second Language learner is surrounded by linguistic inputs also in his or her everyday life, being the L2 the language of the country in which the immigrant lives.

1.2.2 Language learning

Many linguistic studies in the past decades tried to shed some light on how an L2 is acquired; we will not enter in the details of the matter, but for sake of completeness we deemed it crucial to outline the main aspects of this subject along the lines of Balboni (2006).

Krashen (1981) – following Chomsky’s theory of a LAD, a Language Acquisition Device – elaborated a SLAT (Second Language Acquisition Theory) proposing five hypotheses on how a second language is acquired, which are:

- a. Input
- b. Acquisition vs. learning
- c. Monitor
- d. Natural order
- e. Affective filter

Input

This hypothesis states that language is learned only if the input received is “one step” more difficult than the learner’s linguistic competence in a given moment; it is epitomized by the formula “ $i+1$ ”, where “ i ” is the input and “ $+1$ ” refers to the increasing progress on the learner’s current level of linguistic competence.

It bears some resemblance to Vygotskij’s “*area of potential development*” and Bruner’s “*zone of proximal development*”. Balboni (2006) defines it as: “[it is] the distance between the part of a task that one is already able to

carry out and the potential level one can reach in the attempt of carrying out the remaining part of the task.”⁷

Acquisition vs. Learning

In the second hypothesis, Krashen makes a distinction between Acquisition and Learning affirming that while the first is an unconscious process that leads to an effective and long-lasting knowledge of the language, the latter is only a temporary knowledge stored in the short-term memory.

Monitor

The third hypothesis states that only if the language is acquired it allows the production of spontaneous speech; learned language can only function as a monitor for language output.

Natural order

With this hypothesis the linguist theorized that every language is learned in a particular order that is innate and therefore common to every learner

Affective filter

The last hypothesis is strictly connected to the learner’s psychological status: if the learner is stressed (whatever the reason may be) a “filter” is raised; for the presence of this barrier, language inputs will not be acquired and, at the same time, it will be difficult to recover from the memory what has already been acquired⁸.

Krashen (1985) adds that all these hypotheses are subject to one necessary condition: the input must be comprehensible. Only if this condition is met, Chomsky’s LAD starts working – therefore producing acquisition.

⁷ Our translation

⁸ See Cardona (2001) for a detailed neurological explanation.

Corder (1967) and Schumann (1978b) proposed a hypothesis that shares some resemblance with Krashen's idea of a natural order of acquisition, the so-called *interlanguage*. According to this hypothesis, "language is acquired through a process that forms a spiral, proceeding towards the target language by subsequent approximations."⁹

These approximations gradually develop from a form of communication that is able to satisfy only basic needs – an oversimplification similar to pidginization – to following stages during which the interlanguage is revised and corrected, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Pallotti defines this "succession of different moments of restructuring of the interlanguage towards the target language" (quoted in Nuzzo, 2008) as *sequences of acquisition*.

This *continuum* can be divided into three varieties: prebasic, basic and postbasic. In the prebasic variety, "the lexical material is characterized by the presence of a base form for each word, i.e. a form considered neutral by the learner, that is chosen between the various inflected forms that can be found in the input" (Nuzzo, 2008). The basic variety what is codified in the target language through morphological means, is expressed by discursive and lexical means. The postbasic variety can also be considered as a *continuum* of varieties that slowly get more similar to the target language; this variety diverge from the first two especially for the appearance of syntax in the formulation of the sentences produced by the speaker.

In each of the aforementioned varieties, some regularities can be individuated that seem to appear at the same time in different individuals¹⁰;

⁹ Balboni (2006), our translation.

¹⁰ These regularities seem to hold also for languages different from Italian.

to explain these regular behavior of linguistic emergence, Pienemann (1998) proposed his *Theory of processability*, according to which “the structures of the language that has to be acquired are ordered in a hierarchy of increasing complexity according to the procedures required for their elaboration. The complexity increases with the increase of the syntactic distance between the elements of the sentence that have to “share” grammatical information” (Nuzzo, 2008).

In addition to these theories, it must be remembered that another important aspect plays a fundamental role in language acquisition: motivation.

Balboni (1994), in an elaboration of the motivational theory applied to marketing and advertisement, proposed a three-cause model to explain (originally) what pushes students to learn a new language; we believe, though, that this model can be perfectly applied also to L2-learners, especially for the motivation regarding their attendance to L2 courses.

The three causes of language learning are:

- a) Obligation
- b) Need
- c) Pleasure

Obligation

It is seen as a motivation that does not lead to acquisition but to mere learning, with a consecutive loss of information in the long term. As far as L2-learners are concerned obligation is usually restricted to children who have to attend school.

Need

This is the main motivation pushing immigrants to learn the L2, both in the everyday life and in the language courses; they need to learn the language to carry out everyday's tasks and – hopefully – to find a job and consequently a financial security. Balboni points out that the problem of *need* as a source of motivation is that whenever the learners feels that they have reached a satisfying level of language competence, needs are fulfilled and the process of language acquisition is interrupted. The same reasoning holds for L2-learners: even if their language competence is not very high, but they feel that it is good enough for their purposes they will not try to further improve it and usually will quit language courses.

Pleasure

The last one is the strongest of the three causes of motivation, its strength derives from the fact that it is not linked to any practical aspects but to a psychological satisfaction.

1.2.3 Communicative competence

We have so far described the difference between a FL and a L2 and how the latter is acquired; the developing of the linguistic competence was also mentioned, pointing out the fact that whenever the learner feels he or she can communicate efficiently to reach his or her goals the need is satisfied and the learning process stops even if the linguistic competence is stuck in a stage of pidginization.

The aim of a thorough linguistic integration, though, is not the achievement of a deficient linguistic competence but an exhaustive knowledge of the language. This assertion is nevertheless vague if not

completed by a clear definition of what it actually means to know a language.

In the past years, the approach that seems to be widely accepted to give a definition of language knowledge is the *communicative approach*; according to this approach language is a series of goals that have to be achieved, a system that allows the speaker to enter in relation with the others and with the world. As the name suggests, language is seen from the point of view of communication and the main goal of the speaker is to be able to face different contexts of linguistic interchange.

Therefore, an individual reaches a full linguistic integration only when he has learned to master a language in all its competences and skills.

The communicative competence comprises four different components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, pragmatic competence and meta-linguistic competence. Each of these components is in turn composed of sub-competences.

Linguistic competence is formed by:

- Phonological competence, i.e. the use of sounds and intonations;
- Lexical competence, the ability to choose and generate words;
- Morpho-syntactic competence, i.e. the use of grammar;
- Graphemic competence, the use of writing and writing methods;
- Textual competence, i.e. the cohesion and coherence of either the speech act or the written text.

Sociolinguistic competence includes:

- Socio-cultural competence, that refers to the knowledge and use of social conventions;
- Nonverbal languages, which include codes such as kinesics and proxemics,

Pragmatic competence refers to the use of the language inside a given speech act, like the identification of textual forms or irony.

Meta-linguistic competence includes the ability to self-analyze the learning process in order to develop the learner's awareness and autonomy on the matter, so that he or she can identify their learning methods and develop adequate strategies.

2. LINGUISTIC NEEDS

Aim of this thesis is the assessment of the immigrants' linguistic needs; the concept of linguistic need is relatively new in the literature, it was first mentioned in the project promoted in 1971 by the Council of Europe regarding language learning for adults, whose aim was to create a general reference framework made of "units" that could be capitalizable (units based on the learner's needs, motivations and aptitudes). The project also focused on new criteria of selection of the linguistic material, the definition of the *threshold levels* and – what is more important to our purpose – the analysis of linguistic needs.

The subject was successively examined in more depth by various experts that proposed a series of theories to give a more specific definition of the term and of methodologies to analyze linguistic needs.

Pierini (1981) states that the underlying idea of the analysis is that every individual is motivated to learn a foreign language by precise communicative needs that are personal, i.e. different from those of other individuals; the analysis tries to identify these needs in order to have a reference point around which it might be possible to organize the teaching process, for the choice of both the linguistic material and the pedagogical strategies but also of the definition of the goals and program of the course.

This idea fits perfectly the contemporary vision of teaching, which sets the individual, with his or her needs, personal skills, learning methods and background experience at the center of its work, in order to adapt to the learner's culture and psychology.

Such a "custom-made" definition of the course has two positive consequences: a. it focuses the attention only on the real needs that the learner wishes to satisfy; b. for this very reason, it is extremely motivating.

The analysis of linguistic needs may also have positive social repercussions, as it may be helpful to define *target groups*, i.e. groups of people sharing the same needs to which, after they have been individuated, the society tries to give an answer.

In his description of the adult immigrants' needs, Serragiotto (2008), tries to identify where the linguistic needs are located among the basic needs of an immigrant who is settling in a different country. He argues that a primary alphabetization in the second language is of fundamental importance – and said importance is felt by the immigrant – as the ability to communicate is the main condition to have a possibility to satisfy all the other basic needs as finding a place to live, look for a job, deal with the permits and so on.

Moreover, he states that “it is not easy nor immediate to give a classification of the immigrant's needs and it is equally difficult to try to establish the temporal sequence in which they emerge”.

The needs are therefore divided into macro-areas, which are in turn composed of sets of needs, summarized here as follows¹¹:

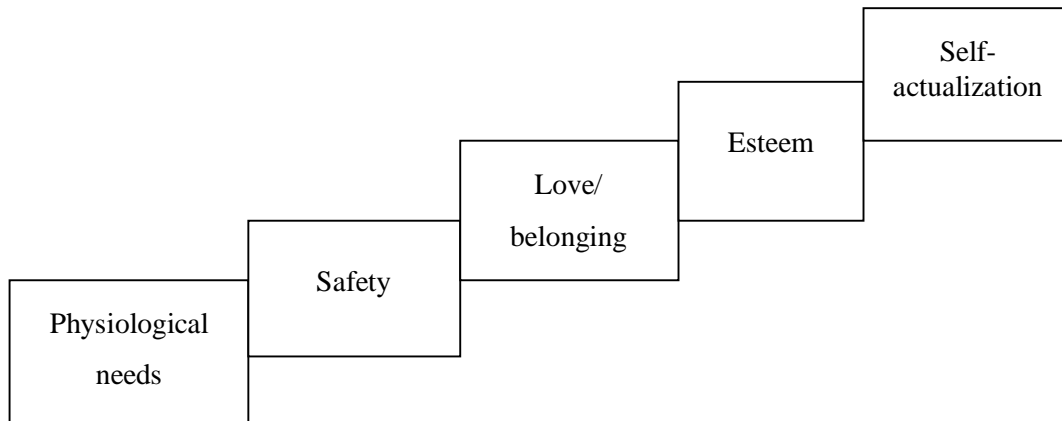
- Acceptance and regularization
- Work
- Home
- Health and assistance
- Education
- Socialization

As highlighted by Serragiotto, this sequence share some resemblance with the five fundamental needs identified by Maslow in his hierarchy of needs

¹¹ For a more detailed description of the set of needs, the reader should refer to Serragiotto (2008).

aimed to describe human motivation¹², according to which only when the most important need is satisfied, the individual tries to satisfy the others. The hierarchy, which starts from the satisfaction of physiological needs, is represented below:

Table 4 – Maslow’s hierarchy of individual motivations



Source: Our elaboration from Serragiotto (2008)

2.1 Richterich’s studies

Richterich (1973) was the pioneer of the studies on the analysis of linguistic needs; his first works were focused on creating a taxonomy of needs, especially those of adult learners who had to start studying a foreign language. Only in his later works he abandoned the mere enumeration of the needs and tried to propose a theoretical definition, that he borrows from psychology.

Indeed, psychologists define a need as “an organism’s state of imbalance in relation to its environment, [that] determines the pursuit of a new balance by means of an activity triggered by motivation”(Pierini,

¹² See the role of motivation in the learning of a language in Chapter 1.

1981). From a linguistic point of view, a state of imbalance is present every time there is a non-effective communication due to lack of communicative competence. Therefore, the analysis of linguistic needs consists in discovering and describing what an individual lacks to master effectively a communicative situation.

In addition to this definition, Richterich identifies one more type of need as a social or professional group's – or even a whole population's – necessity to know a given language to satisfy the needs of its social, economic and national life. (Richterich, 1974).

He proposes as well three levels to define needs:

- a. *Level of hypothesis*
- b. *Level of analysis*
- c. *Level of appropriateness*

The first level allows the creation of hypotheses on the possibility to foresee the needs required for a specific contexts; the second level refers to the degree of specificity of the needs analyzed and is subdivided into three more levels: *general needs*, *specific needs* and *particular needs*. Each level refers to a different (and deeper) degree of generalization of the communicative situation. The third and last level, instead, has a pragmatic connotation and indicates the connection between the ability to produce sentences – at a given point of the learning process – and the ability to use said sentences in the right context.

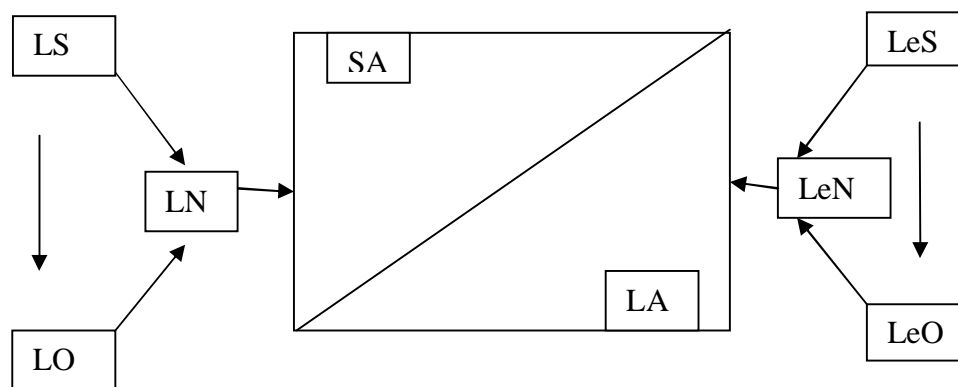
Additionally, Richterich created a model to define the objective linguistic needs of adult learners that according to Pierini (1981) “is not only a tool to collect statistical information, but also has a great pedagogical value, as it allows the determination of custom-made contents and techniques for the learner; it is moreover a fundamental part of the

learning process that makes the learner aware of his or her needs and the tasks required to satisfy them”:¹³

Richterich’s model aims to give a detailed analysis of the categories that form speech acts – that, according to his vision, are the union of situations (defined by the interlocutors but also time and space) and operations (function of the speech act + content + means producing the act) - and learning acts.

Regarding the collection of the necessary information to define needs, he states that they can either be individuated through the analysis of specific communicative contents derived from the direct observation of speakers using the language or through surveys.

Table 5 – Richterich’s model for linguistic needs



<u>Legend</u>	
LS	– Linguistic situation
LN	– Linguistic needs
LO	– Linguistic operations
SA	– Speech acts
LA	– Learning acts
LeS	– Learning situation
LeN	– Learning needs
LeO	– Learning operations

Source: Our elaboration from Pierini (1981)

¹³ Our translation

After the elaboration of the aforementioned model, Richterich (1973b) also worked on the description of categories of adults who want to learn a foreign language, who are divided into two main groups:

- a. Socio-professional group
- b. Socio-cultural group

The first group refers to those people who feel the need to learn a foreign language in order to improve their work performance, he also creates subgroups according to job typologies and the specific set of needs related to each job; whereas the latter contains all those individuals who are motivated to learn a new language for personal or cultural causes.

2.2 Porcher's theory

As previously mentioned, Richterich's theories were based on a psychological point of view of the concept of need; nevertheless, other theories have been developed afterwards, which were inspired by other disciplines. Porcher (1977) gives a definition of need derived from sociology. He criticizes Richterich's vision of needs, stating that it is too rigid, that if speech acts are labeled and classified their use becomes merely bureaucratic. He also adds that linguistic needs are sociologically marked and can be defined only sociologically; consequently, the individuation of said needs varies through time, following the variation of the individual or of the social group.

To summarize, Porcher's fear was that a structured definition of linguistic needs could lead to a technical application to social groups according to predetermined characteristics, while every group must be studied individually to ascertain its specific needs.

2.3 Martin-Baltar's definition

Pierini (1981) reports another definition, mentioned in Porcher (1978), that adopts a pedagogical point of view. Martin-Baltar claims that the concept of need has a threefold nature:

- a. What a foreign language allows to do;
- b. What one needs to be able to do linguistically, in order to realize the first point;
- c. What one needs in order to develop the communicative competence of the second point.

Pierini specifies that “in other words, b) represents the pedagogical goal while c) represents the program, in relation to the linguistic need taken into consideration”.

She also adds that:

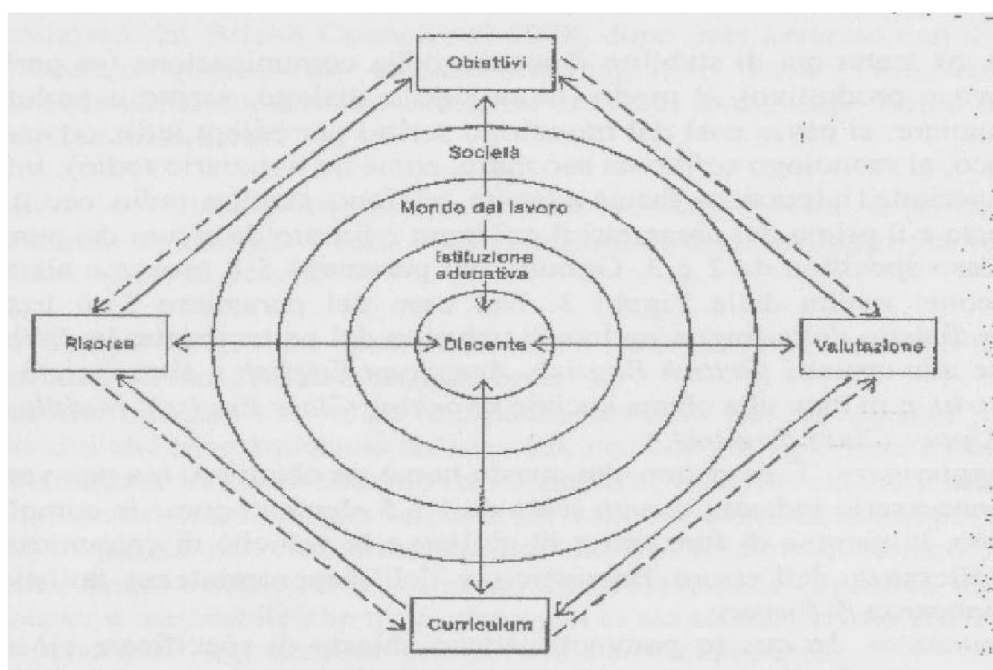
The three-level articulation allows us to understand the concept of “linguistic need” in its entirety: on one side, it makes the passage from the description of the needs to the organization of the didactic process automatic; on the other, it highlights the fact that adult learners learn a language for reasons that are never generically educational, such as job-related necessities, needs of social integration (emigrants), desire to communicate with foreigners”.

2.4 The concept of negotiation

Chancerel – in Chancerel *et alii* (1975) – defined need as a “necessity stemming from the agent’s [i.e. the individual] relationship with the social environment”. Moreover, he applies a sociological concept – that of *negotiation* – to the context of language teaching, using the term to describe the moment in which the educational institution and the learner *negotiate* on their needs to create an adequate program.

This vision allows Richterich and Chancerel (1977) to “picture the role of the identification of the linguistic needs within the teaching process” (Pierini, 1981); said identification puts the learner at the center of the teaching process as in Table 6. On this matter, they add that “a teaching process that is really centered on the learner is the result of a compromise between the resources, the goals, the assessment techniques and the curriculum as conceived by the learner, and the resources, the goals, the assessment techniques and the curriculum as conceived by the educational institution”.¹⁴

Table 6 – Representation of the identification of linguistic needs



Source: Pierini (1981)¹⁵

¹⁴ Our translation from Pierini (1981).

¹⁵ The Italian version is given. The English translations are the following: Obiettivi – Goals, Risorse – Resources, Valutazione – Assessment, Società – Society, Mondo del lavoro – World of work, Discente – Learner.

3. CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

In order to efficiently analyze the data that we collected on the field, it will be necessary to introduce the social context of migration in the country and region taken into consideration. After a quick overlook to the general peculiarities of immigration in Italy, we will focus our attention to the main characteristics of immigration in the Veneto region and in the town of Stra, where the research was conducted, highlighting in particular those data referring to employment and education.

3.1 Characteristics of immigration in Italy

As mentioned before in the Introduction, for historical and economical reasons, immigration in Italy is still a relatively new process; until the last decades of the XX century, the country had not completed its industrial development and, consequently, was not “economically attractive” to foreigners. Until 1991, year of the first arrivals of immigrants from Albania, Italy had known only emigration – after WW2 – and internal immigration from the south to the northern regions, especially Lombardy, Piedmont and Veneto. These very same regions are still those that attract a vast majority of the incoming immigrants due to their high job offer, while the South – still economically underdeveloped – attracts seasonal workers employed for the most part in agriculture.

As of 31/12/2011¹⁶ on an overall population of 60,626,442 inhabitants in Italy, the foreign population amounted to 4,570,317 (corresponding to a 7.5% of the Italian population), of which 60% lived in

¹⁶ Data taken from *Rapporto sulla coesione sociale, Anno 2012 – I Volume*, ed. Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (Roma, 2012).

the North (distributed as follow: 35% in the Northwest¹⁷ and 26.3 in the Northeast), 25.2% lived in the Centre, 9.6% in the South and 3.9% in the Islands, i.e. Sicily and Sardinia (the country's two major islands).

According to ISTAT data from 2009, immigrants are especially required as unskilled workforce, even if they have a level of education higher than the Italians applying for the same jobs; as a matter of fact, overeducated immigrant workers are 40.9% of the overall foreign population against a mere 19% of overeducated Italians. Owning a higher education degree can increase an immigrant's possibility of finding a more qualified job only of an 8%. Their earned income is consequently lower: 2/3 of an Italian's.

3.2 Immigration in the Veneto region

As already explained in the previous paragraphs, for economical reasons the Northern regions of Italy are those recording the highest number of immigrant workers in their territory. We will focus our attention on Veneto, a highly industrialized region where low-skilled workforce is sought after by its numerous SMEs, presenting in detail the composition and main characteristics of the immigrant population residing there.

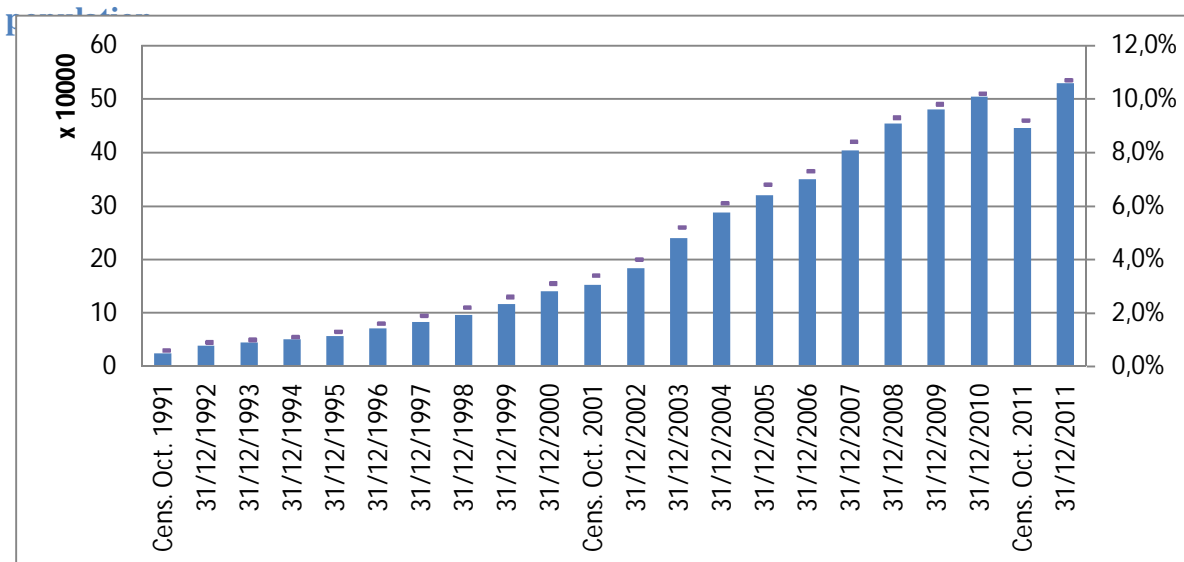
The region, in which many immigrants have been living since the very first incoming flows in 1991, is also a good set to study how - and if - they have settled in in twenty years and if there have been improvements in their working career.

¹⁷ Northwest, Northeast, Centre, South and Islands are the five statistic regions as defined by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT).

3.2.1 Nationalities and gender distribution

According to ISTAT, on an overall population of 4,965,000 immigrants residing in Italy in 2011¹⁸, 530,000 live in Veneto (i.e. 10.7%).

Table 7 – Residing immigrant population in Veneto and percentage on the overall



Source: Our elaboration on ISTAT data

As it is possible to see in *Table 7* the immigrant population has been constantly growing in the past twenty years; the Census held in October 2011 recorded a slight decrease but forecasts seem to confirm its tendency to increase in the near future. The yearly net migration rate remained stable at 33,000 units for the 2009-2011 period.

So far we dealt with data referring to the general population, let's now see in detail from which countries the majority of the immigrants come.

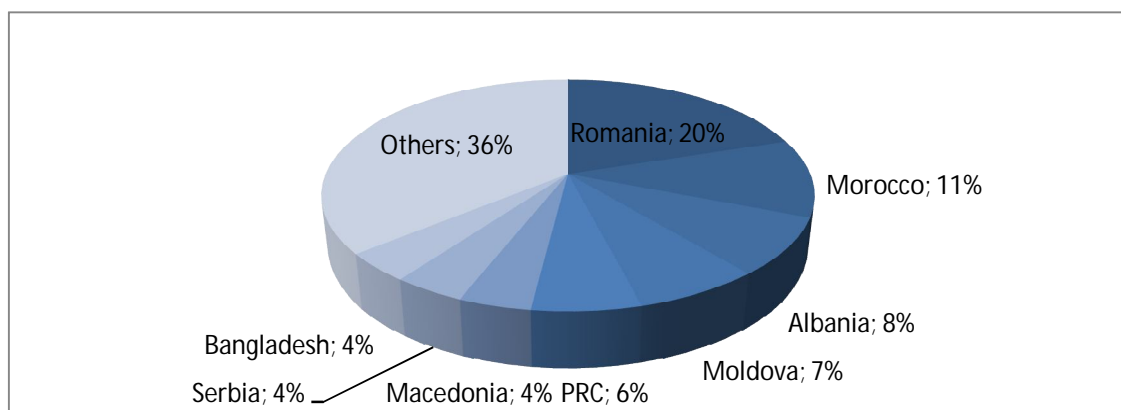
¹⁸ Latest available data.

Table 8 – Immigrant population residing in Veneto by gender and Country of origin as of 31.12.2010

Nationality	Men	Women	% of women	Total	% on regional pop.
Romania	48,438	53,534	52%	101,972	20%
Morocco	36,065	25,642	44%	57,707	11%
Albania	22,535	19,900	47%	42,435	8%
Moldova	12,018	23,948	67%	35,966	7%
PRC	15,326	14,321	48%	29,647	6%
Macedonia	10,868	9,002	45%	19,870	4%
Serbia	11,372	8,703	46%	19,075	4%
Bangladesh	11,304	6,654	37%	17,958	4%
Ukraine	2,737	12,442	82%	15,159	3%
India	8,895	5,851	40%	14,746	3%
Nigeria	6,577	6,003	48%	12,580	2%
Ghana	7,118	5,199	42%	12,317	2%
Sri Lanka	6,415	5,093	44%	11,508	2%
Bosnia-H.	5,403	3,904	42%	9,307	2%
Senegal	6,590	2,494	27%	9,084	2%
Kosovo	3,638	2,867	44%	6,505	1%
Tunisia	3,999	2,398	37%	6,397	1%
Brazil	2,006	4,176	68%	6,182	1%
Croatia	3,188	2,897	48%	6,085	1%
Philippines	2,659	3,334	56%	5,993	1%
Other	28,963	35,201	55%	64,164	13%
Total	251,114	253,563	50%	504,677	100%

Source: Our elaboration on ISTAT data

Table 9 – Immigrant population in Veneto by Country of origin



Source: our elaboration on ISTAT data

It is apparent that the most represented nationality is Romania, followed by Morocco, Albania and Moldova: countries that for many years have been the source of people's emigration towards Italy, even though the number of Romanians living in Italy has increased since 2007 when the Country joined the European Union.

Table 8 also presents the percentage of women by nationality; this datum is interesting not only because it allows to see that the male and female presence is perfectly balanced, although the first immigrants entering the country in the 1990s were for the most part men, but also highlights the high percentage of women from Eastern Europe, more precisely Ukraine (82%), Moldova (67%) and Romania (52%), who are vastly employed as domestic workers for the older.

3.2.2 Employment status

So far we have presented data referring to the immigrant population's ethnic and gender distribution. We are now shifting our attention to one of the most – if not *the* most – important information about foreigners living in Italy, which is strictly linked to their motivation for learning Italian and residing in the country: their employment status.

Although a general and widespread belief states that immigrants neither work nor look for a job, statistics demonstrates that the foreign population is extremely active as far as work is concerned: they fill vacancies in jobs usually rejected by Italians and – not being linked to one place in particular – they are more available to move where their labor is needed.

Data from 2011 picture the following situation:

Table 10 – Immigrant population by employment status (as of 2011)

Status	Units	Compared to pop. of Veneto
Employed	248,000	12%
- Employees	220,000	13%
- Self-employed	28,000	6%
Looking for a job	28,000	25%
Non-active	230,000	9%

Source: Our elaboration on ISTAT data

Table 10 shows that more than half of the population (276,000 persons) is either employed or looking for a job.

If we take into consideration only the employed population its composition is the following:

Table 11 – Employed immigrant population by gender and age (as of 2011)

Gender/age	Units	% on overall pop.
Male	153,000	62%
Female	94,000	38%
15-19	2,000	1%
20-29	45,000	18%
30-39	92,000	37%
40-49	78,000	31%
50+	32,000	13%

Source: Our elaboration on ISTAT data

Resembling the Italian situation, the number of male workers is higher than that of female workers. We can also see that the three most active categories are those between 20 to 40 years of age.

Table 12 examines in depth the sectors and professions in which immigrants are active:

Table 12 – Immigrant employed population by sector

Sector	Units	%
Agriculture and fishing industry	6,000	2%
Manufacturing	89,000	36%
Construction	37,000	15%
Tourism and trade	33,000	13%
Business services	27,000	11%
Care services	42,000	17%
Public administration, school, health system	12,000	5%

Source: Our elaboration from ISTAT data

Not surprisingly, manufacturing is the sector that absorbs the majority of the immigrant workforce, due to its need of low-skilled labor; care services, the second most active sector – even though it employs less than half of the immigrant workers if compared to manufacturing – is almost exclusively represented by women supplying care service and domestic work to the elderly.

Table 13 – Employed immigrant population by type of work (as of 2011)

Type of work	Units	%
Enterprise and management	2,000	1%
Intermediate occupation	3,000	1%
Technicians	10,000	4%
Employees	4,000	2%
Administrative occupation	38,000	15%
Artisans and qualified workmen	82,000	33%
Drivers	45,000	18%
Manual laborers	63,000	26%

Source: Our elaboration from ISTAT data

Table 14 – Employed immigrant population by sector (as of 2011) (detail)

Sector	Units
Agriculture	31,917
Industry	66,083
- Made in Italy	25,381
- Food industry	5,884
- Textile and footwear industry	13,428
- Furniture industry	4,554
- Engineering industry	17,224
- Others	6,178
- Utilities	1,063
- Construction	16,237
Service industry	86,193
- Trade	43,993
- Retail	4,626
- Tourism	39,367
- Financial services	2,306
- Wholesale and logistics	16,381
- Care services	8,109
Other services	15,404

Source: Our elaboration from ISTAT data

3.2.3 Self-employed workers

As from data on Table 10, 6% of the immigrant workers in Veneto (28,000 persons) are self-employed. Although implying more economic risks and not resulting necessarily more profitable, self-employment: ‘[...] represents both an opportunity of growth and emancipation and a possible solution to unemployment and, in some cases, to the necessity to own a regular residency permit.’¹⁹

The three most represented ethnicities among self-employed immigrants are Chinese (6,280), Moroccans (4,477) and Albanians (2,790).

¹⁹ Our translation from *Immigrazione straniera in Veneto, rapporto 2012*, ed. Osservatorio regionale sull’immigrazione.

Of these, 15,880 work in the industry sector (especially construction), 15,763 in trade and tourism, 5,797 in business services, 1,393 in care services and 733 in the agriculture/fishing sector.²⁰

3.2.4 Education

Another important factor for an effective work integration is the possession of an academic certificate; even when immigrants are reported to have an academic certificate, their position and their wage are lower if compared to Italian workers with a similar level of education; the majority received a very low degree of education in their home country and often left education before the age of 12 with some cases of illiteracy reported especially among women. The percentage of people who have no certificate or only a primary school level of education is reported to be around 40%.

There exists an additional factor that lowers the possibilities of finding a job for which medium or high skills are required: the recognition of academic certificates; 10% of the immigrant population has either a bachelor's or a master's degree but many foreign higher education diplomas are not recognized in Italy, forcing immigrants to accept less remunerated jobs that require manual labor. Table 15 presents a detailed description of the immigrant workers' level of education; interestingly enough, there is a very homogeneous distribution between the academic certificates owned by foreigners and those of the same level owned by Italians.

²⁰ ISTAT data as of 2011

Table 15 – Employed immigrant population by education (as of 2011)

Academic certificate	Units	% on immigrant pop.	% of Italians with similar levels of ed.
None/primary school certificate	99,000	40%	34%
Non-qualified vocational education	40,000	16%	12%
High school diploma	86,000	35%	37%
Bachelor’s degree	5,000	2%	2%
Master’s degree	19,000	8%	14%

Source: Our elaboration from ISTAT data

3.3 Area of the research

As already mentioned in the *Introduction*, the inquiry on which our data are based was conducted in Stra, a small town of 7,566 inhabitants (as of 2011) in the province of Venice, in the Veneto region.

We deemed it necessary to report a brief overview of the situation of immigration in this town as an additional note to the more detailed data describing Veneto in the previous paragraphs.

The town, which was chosen for practical reasons (the territory and its social characteristics are very familiar to the author), offers a good field for such a research: what we aim to find are the immigrants’ linguistic needs that may help them improve their integration both from a social and economic aspect. Stra perfectly combines these two factors: originally an rural area, in the 1960s the town known a sudden industrial development thanks to the development of the footwear sector that employed thousands of people; in the past decades, with the appearing of new international competitors many factories had to close down or delocalize their production; nonetheless, some entrepreneurs specialized in a high-level

production for worldwide famous fashion firms and are still very active in the town and the surrounding areas. Moreover, Stra is what could be considered a “strategic point” located halfway between two major cities like Venice and Padua. These are the main factors that make this town one of the most economically attractive for immigrants.

3.3.1 Immigration in Stra

The features of immigration in Stra resemble those previously presented to draw a picture of the main characteristics of the immigrant population in Italy and Veneto. ISTAT data from 2011, collected during the last general population census are schematized in the following table.

Table 16 – Immigrant population in Stra by age and sex (as of 2011)

Age	Men	Women	Total
0-9	69	65	134
10-19	32	42	74
20-29	57	79	136
30-39	104	99	203
40-49	67	50	117
50-59	13	27	40
60-69	4	12	16
70-79	3	1	4
80-89		2	2
Total	349	377	726

Source: our elaboration on ISTAT data

Similarly to national statistics, immigrants account for almost 10% of the residing population (9.59%); men and women are homogeneously distributed and the majority belongs to the 20-49 age category. Interestingly, the main discrepancy between men and women concerns the

50-89 age category, in which the female population is twice as big as the male population.

3.3.2 The linguistic setting

We have so far described the main aspects of the immigrant population in Italy and Veneto; data that help us outline the realization of the process of integration in our country and function as a background for a better understanding and analysis of the results of our research. In the previous paragraph we have also deepened the economic features of the town chosen for our study. Nevertheless, to have a complete idea of the social framework taken into consideration it is impossible not to mention its linguistic status, especially because it may turn out to be a major obstacle for the linguistic integration of foreigners.

Indeed, Veneto is one of the three regions of Italy (together with Sicily and Campania) in which the local language is still widespread. We will not dwell on the complex linguistic situation of Italy, for it is outside the goals of this study, but we may summarize it as follows: in many areas of the country in non-official contexts a local language is spoken instead of Italian; these languages for the most part developed independently from Latin and, due to the high level of illiteracy, were the only ones spoken by the population until Italian started to spread through compulsory schooling; in the last century the use of the so called *dialetti* has been constantly decreasing, so much so that some have completely disappeared. Sicily, Campania and Veneto, though, seem to witness a slower decay of the use of their local languages compared to other regions.

Veneto seems to be so entrenched in the local culture that many immigrants (have to) learn to speak it for their everyday relations with

Italians. It usually happens to foreigners working in predominantly Veneto-speaking contexts. This may cause confusion in the learner for many reasons: he or she is subject to a twofold lexical input describing the environment in which he or she lives or works and, most importantly, the learner experiences the development of two interlanguages at the same time, which may overlap and cause problems during communication.

4. THE SURVEY

The following chapters describe the methodology and materials used in this research while giving an explanation of the methodological choices selected; it moreover presents in details the interview guide of the administered questionnaire.

4.1 Methodological choices

Through the years, social studies have developed many research techniques, in order to have a tool that can adapt to different contexts and samples.

The methodology that seemed to fit better our needs and goals was the *survey*. This technique of quantitative research shares many similarities with *polls*; nonetheless Corbetta (2002) traces a distinction between the two based on their final aims: polls simply ascertain the consistency and existence of a given social fact, whereas surveys also try to understand the origin of the social fact, the interrelations with other social phenomena and the causal mechanisms connected to it.

Another important choice that had to be made regarded the kind of questions for the survey; it had to be decided whether to use open questions, close-ended questions or both of them. Each formulation possesses peculiar perks as well as drawbacks.

Corbetta identifies the following qualities of close-ended questions:

- a) As far as the alternatives are concerned, it gives to every interviewee the same framework of reference;
- b) Since each alternative is the equivalent of a memo, it helps the recollection of the interviewee's memories.

- c) It stimulates analysis and reflection, erasing possible ambiguities.

In addition to these qualities, he also highlights three limits:

- a) The alternatives not taken into consideration by the research are left out;
- b) The alternatives proposed influence the interviewee's answers.
- c) Different interviewees may give a different meaning to the same answers.

Nevertheless, given the characteristics of the sample of population taken into consideration, close-ended questions seemed more adequate to our purposes. Indeed, we could not underestimate the problems related to language proficiency: it was possible that also immigrants who had been living in Italy for a long time had low speaking skills; this “linguistic barrier” might have two negative consequences: from the practical point of view, it may increase the difficulties linked to the interpretation of the answers while psychologically it may raise the interviewee's affective filter, affecting the validity of the answer.

For the same reasons, as regards the administration of the survey, we opted for *face-to-face* interviews, in order to give the interviewees a linguistic reference point.

On the advantages of structured interviews, Pierini (1981) says: “since the questions are asked by the interviewer, he or she will make sure that all the questions are answered, give explanations, write down elements

that had not been taken into consideration while drafting the interview guide”.²¹

Lastly, close-ended questions were preferred over open questions because they simplified the successive stage of data analysis eliminating the problem of the individuation of general topics that could classify every answer with only a short set of categories, which, in our opinion, depends too much on the interviewer’s sensitivity and may consequently lead to undesired misinterpretations.

4.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire is our elaboration of an original questionnaire developed by Guglielmi for the analysis of linguistic needs; it was divided by topic, so that the final analysis of the results could be easier and clearer. Moreover, we deemed necessary to add a further division to reach a better understanding of the linguistic needs concerning the interviewees’ job and workplace: for this reason, the questionnaire is composed of a first common part completed by a second part that varies according to the interviewee’s employment status.

To ease the understanding of the questions, the language used is simple and direct; the use of periphrases was sometimes preferred over specific terms that might have been unknown to the interviewees.

4.3 Topics

The questionnaire was divided into seven different topics that try to embrace every possible aspect of the interviewee’s social and linguistic life. As stated beforehand, the seventh topic – concerning the employment

²¹ Our translation

status of the people who answered the questionnaire – had a different set of questions that varied according to the status of each particular interviewee.

The topics selected were:

- I. *General description;*
- II. *Family;*
- III. *Neighborhood;*
- IV. *National group of reference;*
- V. *Media;*
- VI. *Language proficiency and language learning;*
- VII. *Employment*
 - a. *Unemployed*
 - b. *Employee*
 - c. *Self-employed*

Topic VII, as anticipated, has three interchangeable formulations. It is our belief that an analysis of linguistic needs relative to the employment status and the workplace cannot be conducted with a set of general questions that address the issue without making the necessary distinctions between one case and the other: each one of these three statuses displays different facets that have to be investigated individually.

A detailed exposition of each topic is presented in the next paragraph.

4.4 Interview guide

I. General description

1. Age
2. Sex
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
3. Year of arrival in Italy
4. Have you also been in other European countries?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. Do you have a job?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
6. If yes: Are you an employee or a self-employed worker?
 - a) Employee
 - b) Self-employed
7. What is your level of education?
 - a) None/elementary school
 - b) High school degree
 - c) Bachelor's degree
 - d) Master's degree
8. Are you planning to stay in Italy?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
9. In Veneto?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

II. Family

10. Are you married?

- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 11.If not: Who do you live with?
- a) Boyfriend/girlfriend
 - b) Other relative(s)
 - c) Fellow countrymen
 - d) Other immigrants
 - e) Alone
- 12.In which language do you speak to him/her/them?
- a) Your mother tongue
 - b) Italian
 - c) Others
- 13.Do you have children?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 14.How many?
- 15.In which language do you speak to him/her/them?
- a) Your mother tongue
 - b) Italian
 - c) Others
- 16.Do they speak your language?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 17.Do they speak Italian at home?
- a) Yes
 - b) No

III. Neighborhood

18. In your neighborhood there are:

- a) Immigrants
- b) Immigrants from my country
- c) Only Italians
- d) Italians and immigrants

19. Do you like it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

20. Do you interact with your neighbors?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21. Is it a positive or negative interaction?

- a) Positive
- b) Negative

IV. National group of reference

22. Do you have any relatives here?

- a) Yes
- b) No

23. How often do you meet with your fellow countrymen?

- a) Often
- b) Sometimes
- c) Never

24. Do you follow the news regarding your country?

- a) Yes
- b) No

V. Media

25. Do you read newspapers?

- a) Yes
- b) No

26. In which language?

- a) Mother tongue
- b) Italian
- c) Both

27. If *yes* or *both*: What is your level of comprehension of Italian newspapers?

- a) High
- b) Average
- c) Low

28. Do you use the Internet?

- a) Yes
- b) No

29. Do you watch TV?

- a) Yes
- b) No

30. If *yes*: In which language?

- a) Mother tongue
- b) Italian
- c) Both

31. Do you follow the news about Italy?

- a) Yes
- b) No

VI. Language proficiency and language learning

32. What is your level of reading?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Not very good
- d) Bad

33. What is your level of comprehension?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Not very good
- d) Bad

34. What is your level of speaking?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Not very good
- d) Bad

35. What is your level of writing?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Not very good
- d) Bad

36. Have you learned Italian in the following places? (Yes or no)

- a) At work
- b) Public administration
- c) Bars, shops, squares...
- d) School
- e) Neighborhood
- f) Continuing education courses

37. Which instrument have you used to learn Italian? (Yes or No)

- a) TV

- b) Music
- c) Grammars
- d) Dictionaries
- e) Books
- f) Newspapers
- g) Internet

38. What do you do when you don't understand something?

- a) Ask a friend
- b) Ask a relative
- c) Ask my children
- d) Ask for professional help (agency)
- e) I try to understand it by myself

39. Do you speak other languages?

- a) Yes
- b) No

40. Which ones?

- a) English
- b) French
- c) Spanish
- d) Greek
- e) Russian
- f) Other(s)

41. Do you hear the difference between Italian and Veneto?

- a) Yes
- b) No

42. Can you speak it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

43. Do you think it causes problems to your comprehension?

- a) Yes
- b) No

VII. Employment (A) – Unemployed

44. Have you ever worked in Italy?

- a) Yes
- b) No

45. Are you looking for a job?

- a) Yes
- b) No

46. Do you think Italian is important to find a job?

- a) Yes
- b) No

47. Are you attending continuing education courses?

- a) Yes
- b) No

48. Do you know where to find them?

- a) Yes
- b) No

VII. Employment (B) – Employee

44b. How did you find your job?

- a) By myself
- b) I was told by someone a friend/a relative
- c) Through an employment agency

45b. Did you write a curriculum?

- a) Yes

b) No

46b. In which language?

a) Italian

b) English

c) Other(s)

47b. Did you have an interview?

a) Yes

b) No

48b. In which language?

a) Italian

b) English

c) Other(s)

49b. Are you satisfied by your job?

a) Yes (high satisfaction)

b) Enough (average satisfaction)

c) No (low satisfaction)

50b. Does it correspond to your education?

a) Yes

b) No

51b. Do you think Italian is important to find a job?

a) Yes

b) No

52b. Who do you speak to at work?

a) Chief

b) Customers

c) Colleagues

d) Other(s)

e) All of the above

53b. Do you have to write?

- a) Yes
- b) No

54b. Do you have problems with writing?

- a) Yes
- b) No

55b. And with reading?

- a) Yes
- b) No

56b. What would you like to improve?

- a) Speaking
- b) Listening
- c) Writing
- d) Reading

57b. Did you attend any continuing education courses?

- a) Yes
- b) No

58b. If *yes*: How important do you think they are?

- a) Very important
- b) Important
- c) Not very important
- d) Useless

59b. Do you know how to find them?

- a) Yes
- b) No

VII. Employment (C) – Self-employed

44c. Why have you chosen this kind of work?

- a) I wanted to become independent
- b) I was unemployed
- c) To be granted a residency permit
- d) Other(s)

45c. Why did you chose this sector?

- a) I already knew it
- b) It seemed profitable
- c) By chance
- d) Others

46c. Do you like it?

- a) Yes
- b) No

47c. Does it correspond to your education?

- a) Yes
- b) No

48c. In which language do you speak with your customers?

- a) Italian
- b) Mother tongue
- c) Other(s)

49c. Do you have problems with official documents?

- a) Yes
- b) No

50c. Do you have problems writing official documents?

- a) Yes
- b) No

51c. Does anybody help you?

- a) Yes
- b) No

52c. Whom do you have the most problems communicating with?

- a) Customers
- b) Bureaucracy
- c) Suppliers
- d) Employees

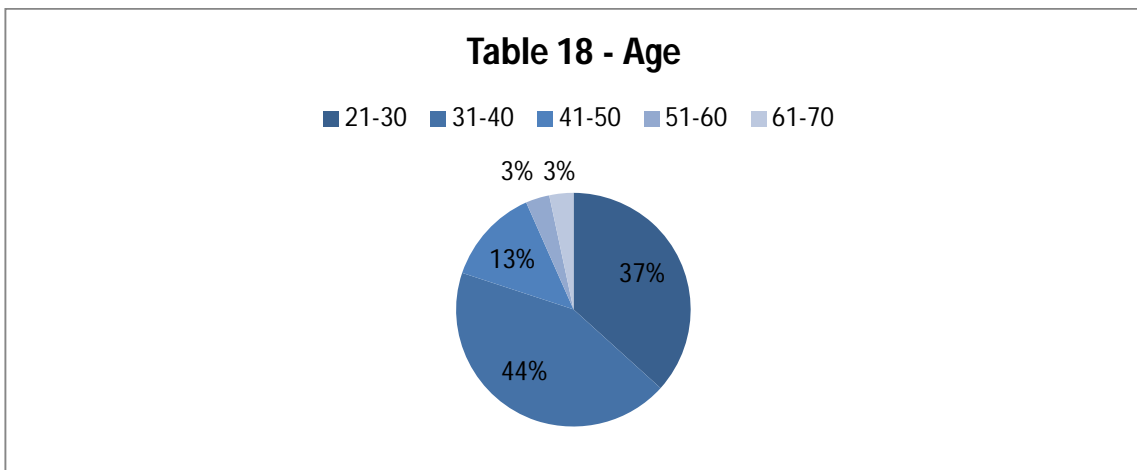
5. DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the data collected through the survey will be analyzed question by question, indicating the precise answers received and the percentage on the whole sample of population when needed. The analysis will give us the information from which we will derive our conclusions and comparisons with the national and regional situation.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

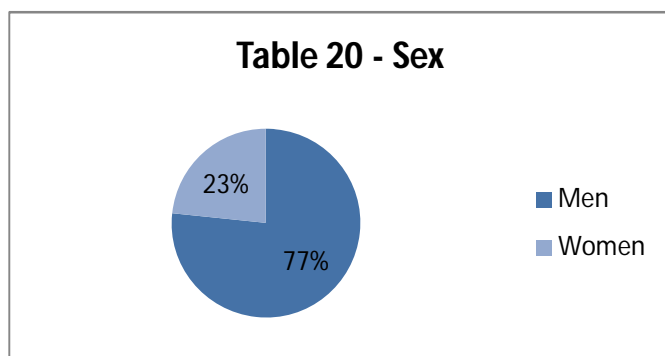
QUESTION 1 – Table 17 - Age

Age	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
Units	11	13	4	1	1



QUESTION 2 – Table 19 - Sex

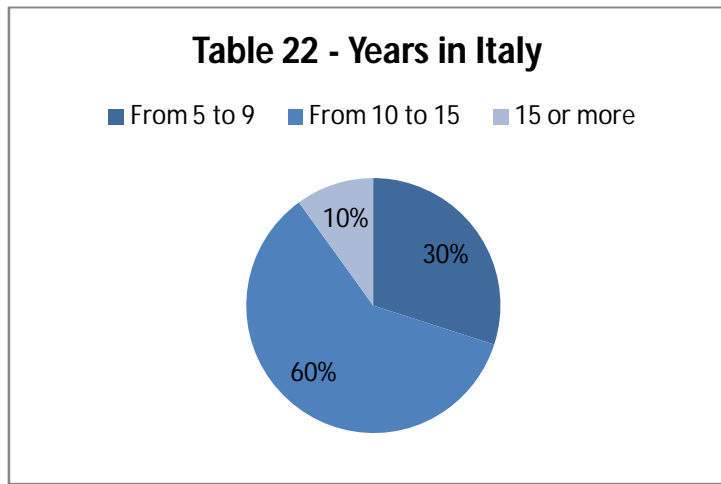
Men	Women
23	7



As far as the age of the interviewees is concerned, similarly to data referring to the situation of immigrants in Italy, more than 80% were of an age between 21 and 40 (see Table 18).

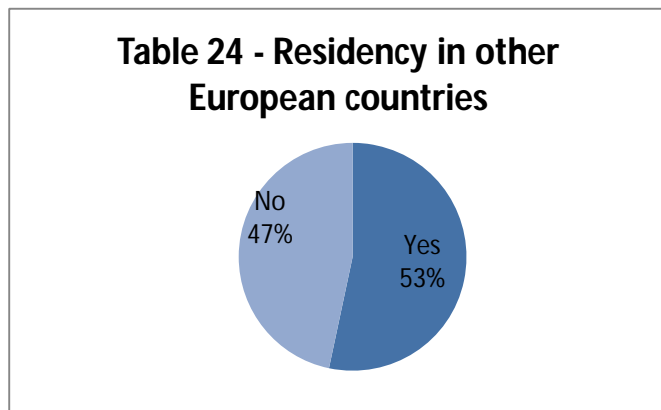
QUESTION 3 – Table 21 - Years in Italy

Years	Units
15-15+	3
10-14	18
5-9	9
0-4	0



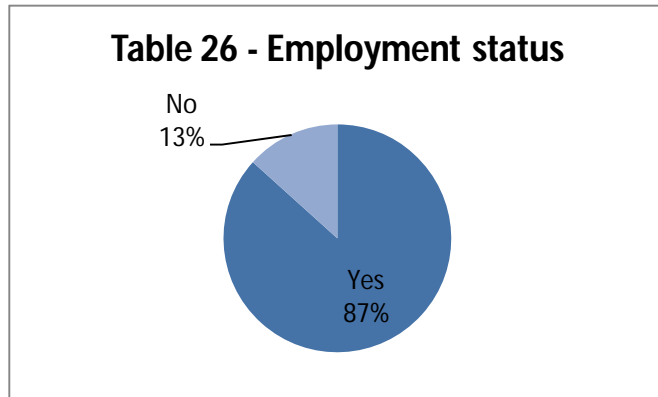
QUESTION 4 – Table 23 - Residency in other European countries

Yes/No	Units
Yes	16
No	14



QUESTION 5 – Table 25 - Employment status

	Units
Employed	26
Unemployed	4

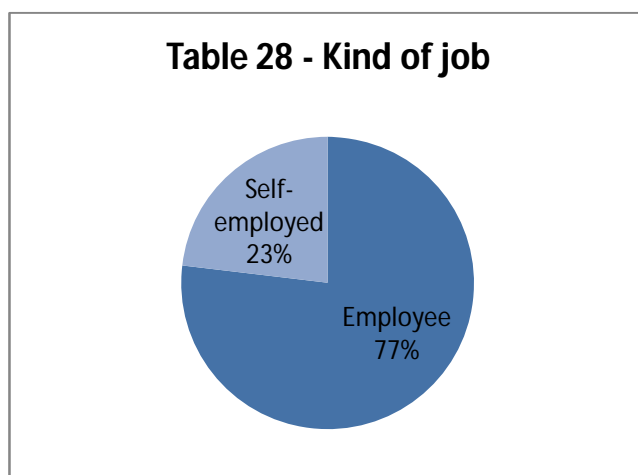


60% of them (see Table 22) had been living in Italy for more than 10 years, which should correspond to a good integration in the Italian context. Our personal opinion on the matter both culturally and linguistically speaking, is that as far as our sample of population is concerned, they indeed seemed to be fully integrated, especially if we take into consideration the high percentage of employed immigrants interviewed (87%), which should represent a good economic stability.

QUESTION 6 – Table 27 -

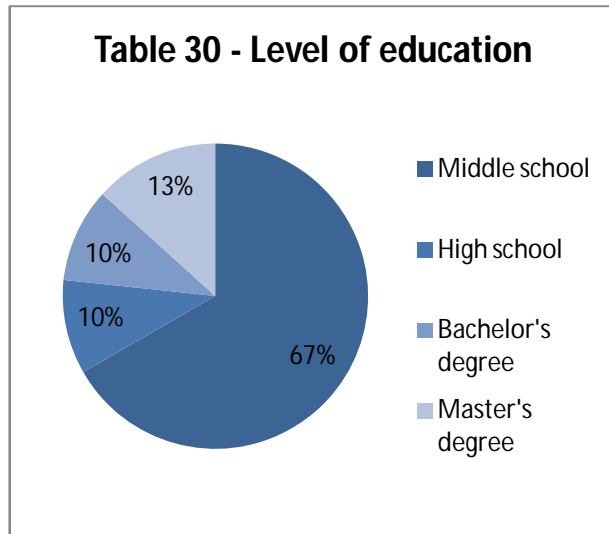
Kind of job

Kind of job	Units
Employee	20
Self-employed	6



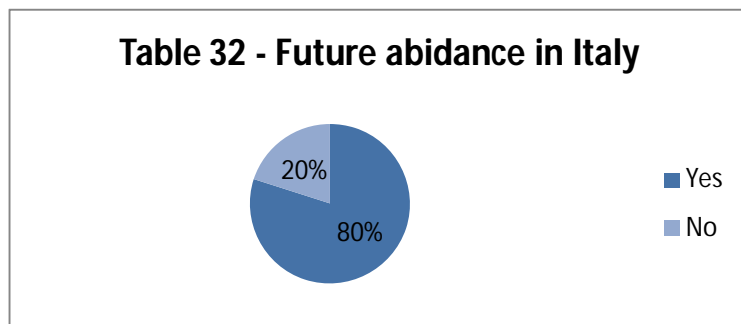
QUESTION 7 – Table 29 - Level of education

Level of education	Units
None/Elementary sch.	0
Middle school	20
High school	3
Bachelor's degree	3
Master's degree	4



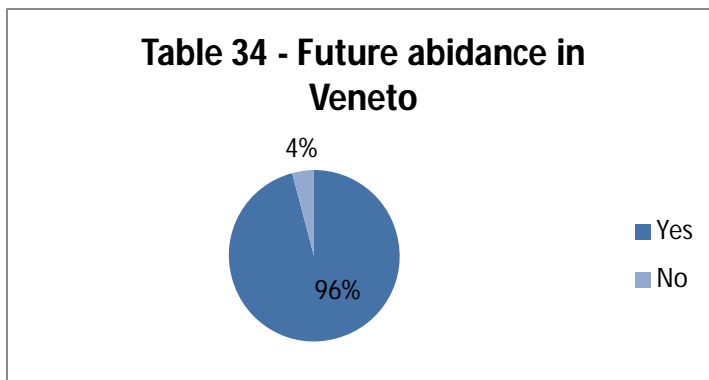
QUESTION 8 – Table 31 - Future abidance in Italy?

Yes/No	Units
Yes	24
No	6



QUESTION 9 – Table 33 - Future abidance in Veneto

Yes/No	Units
Yes	23
No	1



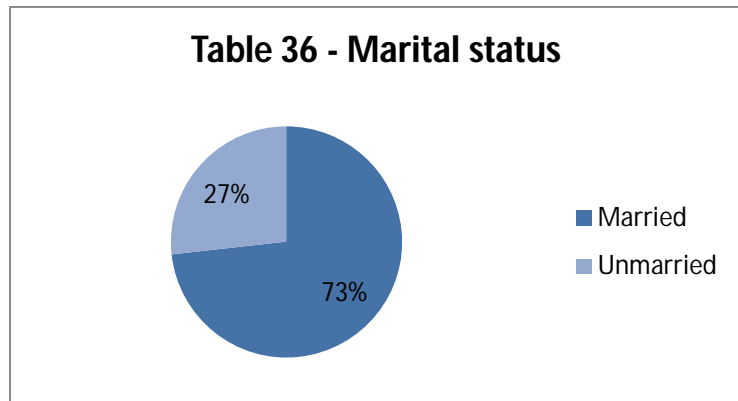
An interesting point arose when asked about their plans to abide in Italy in the future and, more specifically in Veneto; although 80% of the

interviewees asserted that they were willing to stay in the country in the near future and liked Veneto as a place to live, they all pointed out that it was impossible for them to know whether they would be in Italy or abroad in the future, due to the changing economic and working situation. Therefore, we can infer from those answers that although being fully integrated in the society and willing to stay, the majority of them cannot picture themselves in a particular place in the future since their residence is strictly linked to the job possibility offered by the country.

Another important aspect that we wanted to investigate was the immigrants' level of education and how it could be compared to their current employment status. The majority of the interviewees stated that they had attended middle school (67%, see Table 30), while the remaining 30% was almost equally split between high school, bachelor's degree and master's degree. Interestingly all the four interviewees who affirmed to have a master's degree were women, one was Romanian (working as a domestic worker) while the other three were unemployed Bangladeshi women who were forced to get married and follow their husband in Italy. It is possible to assert that the level of overeducation is lower than expected, especially for the high number of immigrants who received a low degree of education in their home country, in particular in Bangladesh.

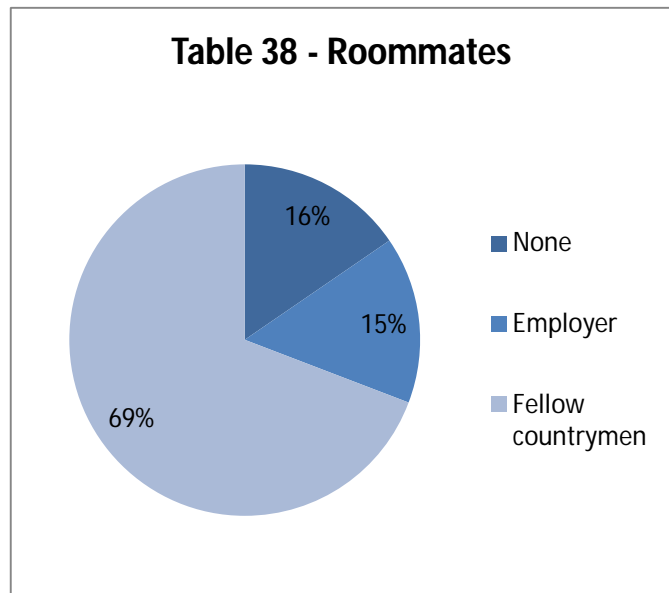
QUESTION 10 – Table 35 - Marital status

Marital status	Units
Married	22
Unmarried	8



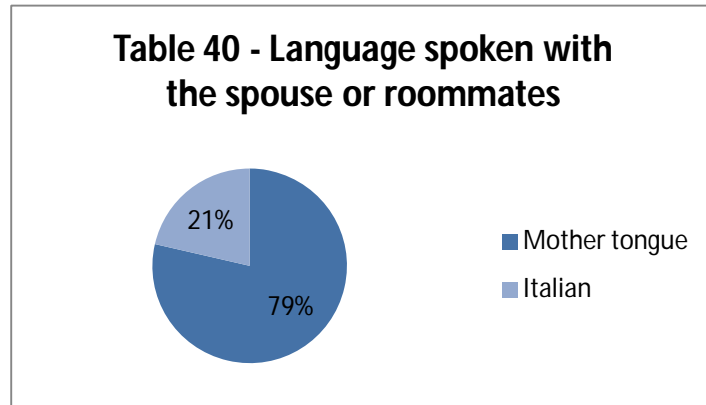
QUESTION 11 – Table 37 - Roommates

Roommate	Units
None	2
Boyfriend/girlfriend	0
Other relative(s)	0
Fellow countrymen	9
Other immigrant(s)	0
Employer	2



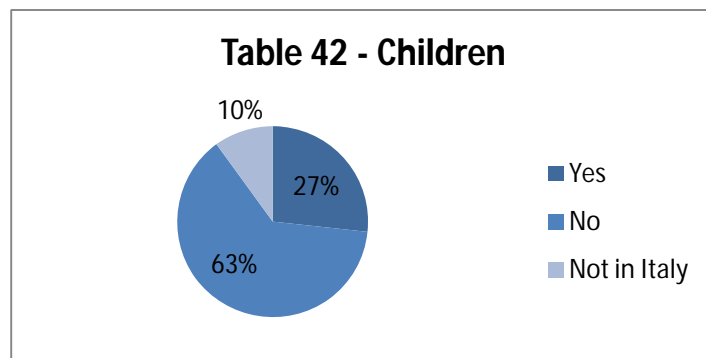
QUESTION 12 – Table 39 - Language spoken with the spouse or roommates

Language spoken	Units
Mother tongue	22
Italian	6
Other(s)	0



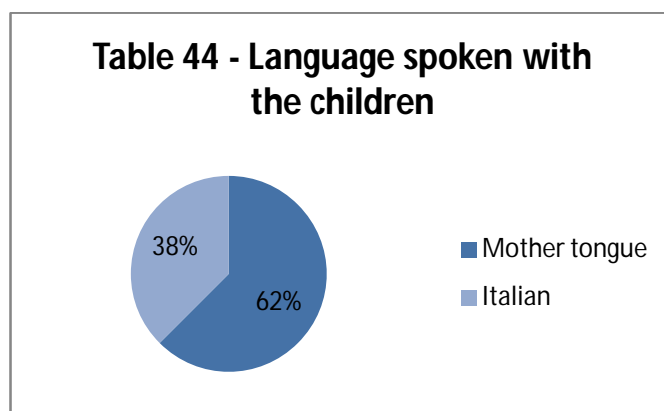
QUESTION 13 – Table 41 - Parental status

Children	Units
Yes	8
No	19
Not in Italy	3



QUESTION 14 – Table 43 - Language spoken with the children

Language	Units
Mother tongue	5
Italian	3
Other(s)	0



QUESTION 15 – Table 45 - Children’s Ethnic Language competence

EL competence	Units
Yes	8
No	0

QUESTION 16 – Table 46 - Children’s use of Italian at home

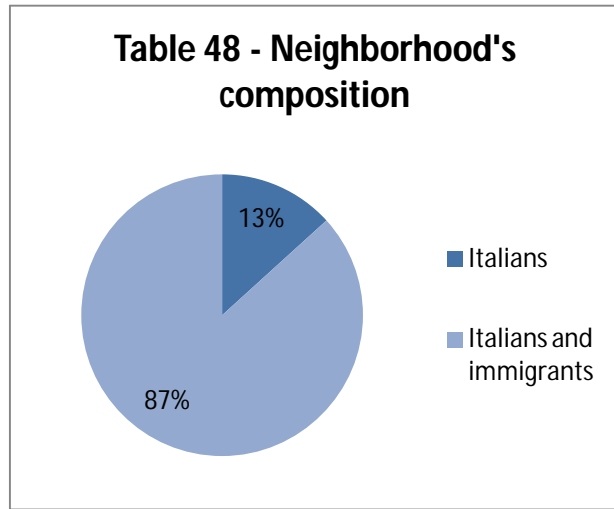
Use of Italian at home	Units
Yes	8
No	0

In order to understand which language the interviewees spoke at home, they were asked if they were married and who they lived with (the distinction had to be made because not everyone who answered to be married was living with their spouse at the moment of the interview). The results are not surprising: if we exclude the two domestic workers who live with their Italian employers (and are therefore forced to speak Italian) and the two (a Moroccan and a Bangladeshi who stated to live alone), 63% of the others (see Table 38) declared to live with fellow countrymen and consequently speak their mother tongue at home. We also asked to those who had children (in Italy) – 27%, see Table 42 – in which language they spoke to them: not all of them (5 out of 8) spoke in their mother tongue, but all of them affirmed that the children could nonetheless speak it²²; moreover, every child of the immigrants interviewed – according to what we have been told – also speak Italian at home.

²² We did not further investigate the matter, but we believe that the children’s competence in the EL could be also derived from the children’s interaction with the relatives in their home country.

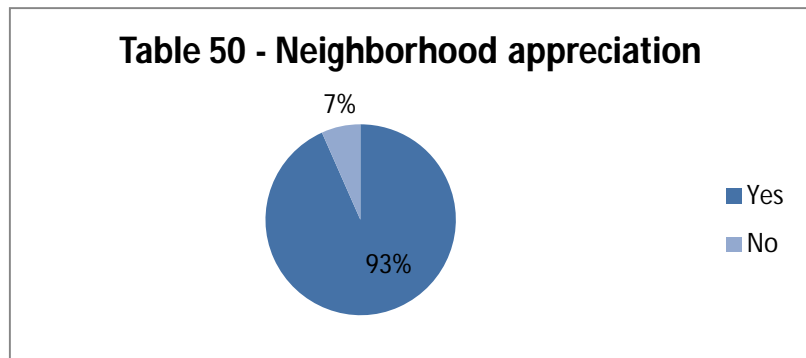
QUESTION 17 – Table 47 – Neighborhood's composition

Neighborhood's composition	Units
Immigrants	0
Italian	4
Fellow countrymen	0
Italians and immigrants	26



QUESTION 18 – Table 49 – Neighborhood appreciation

Yes/No	Units
Yes	28
No	2



QUESTION 19 – Table 51 - Interaction with neighbors

Interaction	Units
Yes	30
No	0

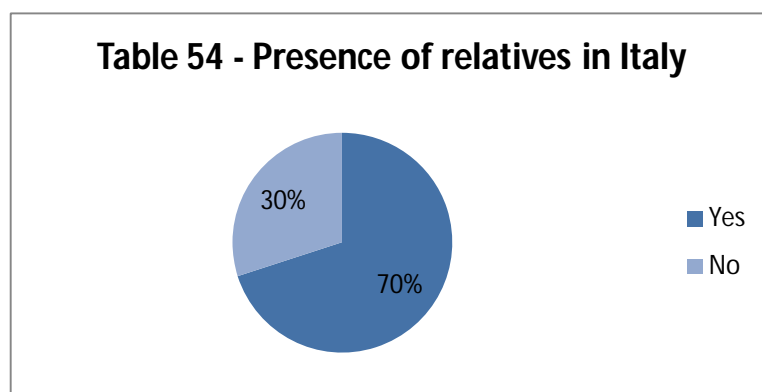
QUESTION 20 – Table 52 - Quality of the interaction with neighbors

Interaction	Units
Positive	30
Negative	0

Questions 17, 18, 19 and 20 dealt with the characteristics of the neighborhood in which the immigrants lived and how their perception of it. All but two said that they like the place in which they live and that not only do they have interactions with their neighbors but that they are for the most part positive interactions. It should be noted that 87% of them (see Table 48) lived in a neighborhood with a strong ethnic presence. We add to these data those of Table 22, referring to the relations with the ethnic group of origin, that seem to be very strong (90%), to highlight the fact that – as mentioned before – the majority of the interviewees were Bangladeshi, whose community is very united and socially active.

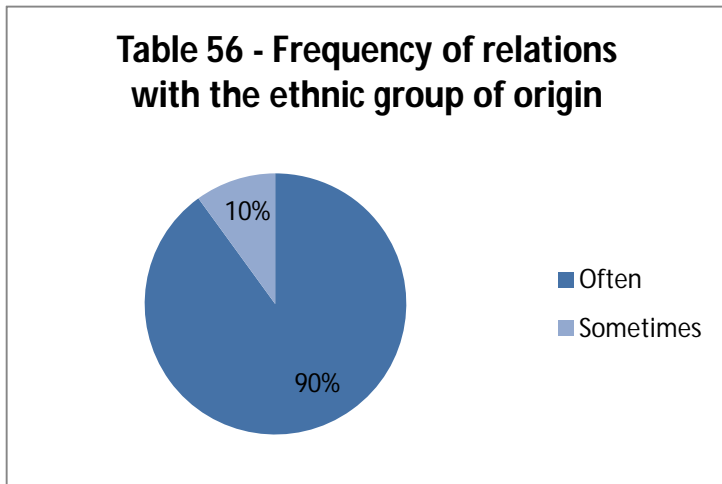
QUESTION 21 – Table 53 - Presence of relatives in Italy

Relative in Italy	Units
Yes	21
No	9



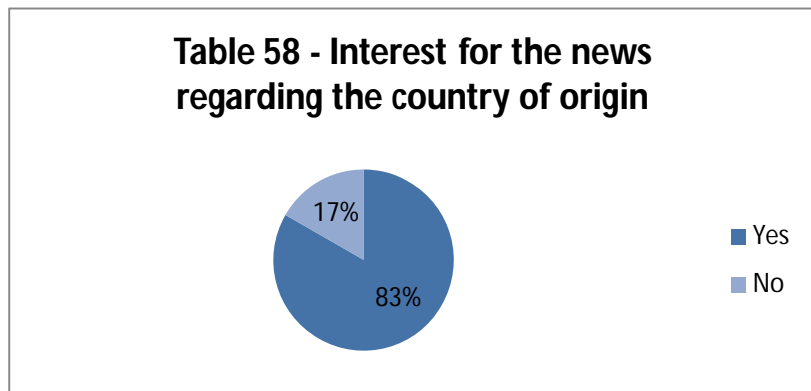
QUESTION 22 – Table 55 - Frequency of relations with the ethnic group of origin

Frequency	Units
Often	27
Sometimes	3
Never	0



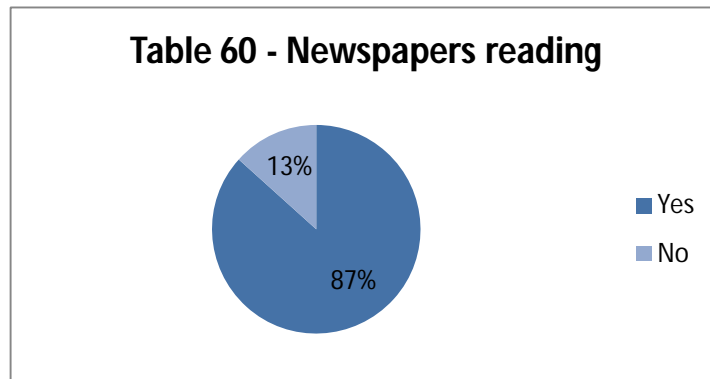
QUESTION 23 – Table 57 - Interest for the news regarding the country of origin

Interest	Units
Yes	25
No	5



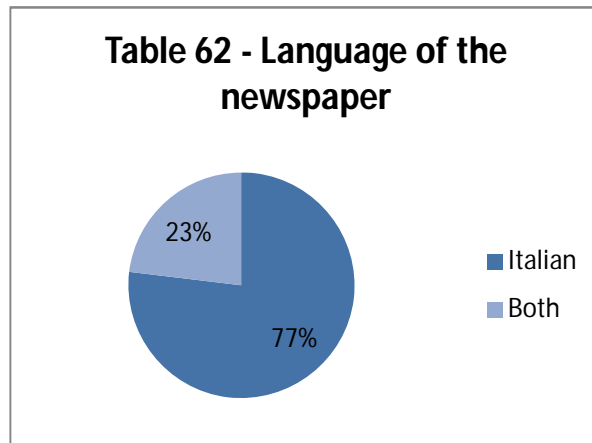
QUESTION 24 – Table 59 - Newspapers reading

Yes/No	Units
Yes	26
No	4



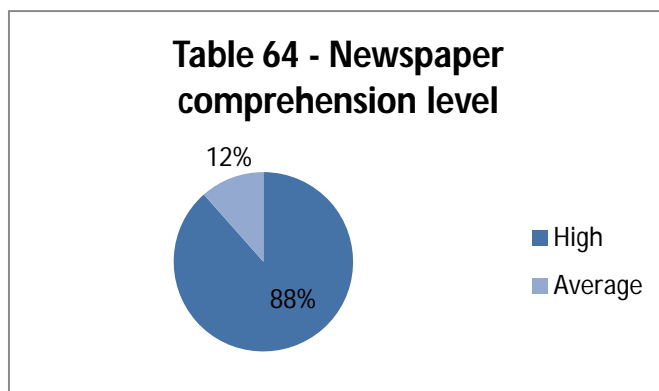
QUESTION 25 – Table 61 - Language of the newspaper

Language	Units
Mother tongue	0
Italian	20
Both	6



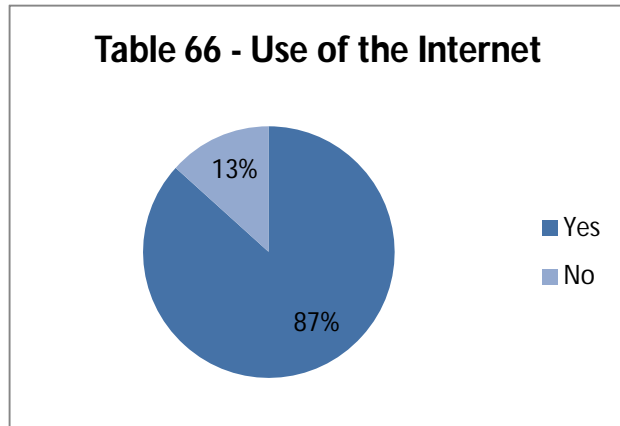
QUESTION 26 – Table 63 - Newspaper's comprehension level

Level	Units
High	23
Average	3
Low	0



QUESTION 27 – Table 65 - Use of the Internet

Yes/no	Units
Yes	26
No	4

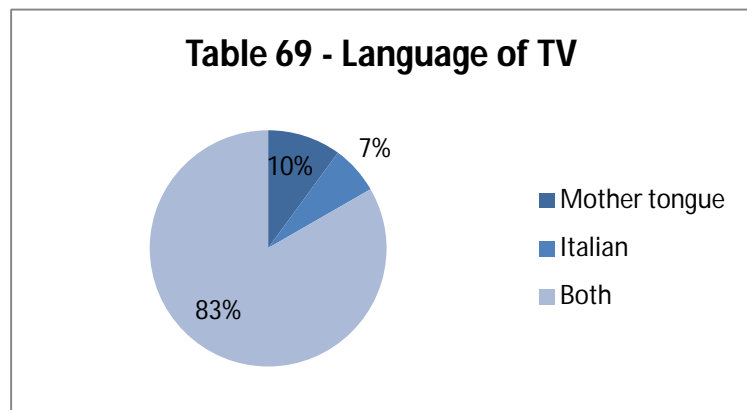


QUESTION 28 – Table 67 - Use of TV

Yes/No	Units
Yes	30
No	0

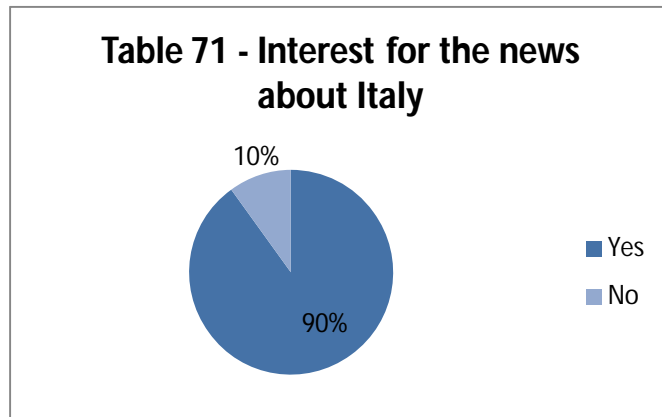
QUESTION 29 – Table 68 - Language of TV

Language	Units
Mother tongue	3
Italian	2
Both	25



QUESTION 30 – Table 70 - Interest for the news about Italy

Yes/no	Units
Yes	27
No	3

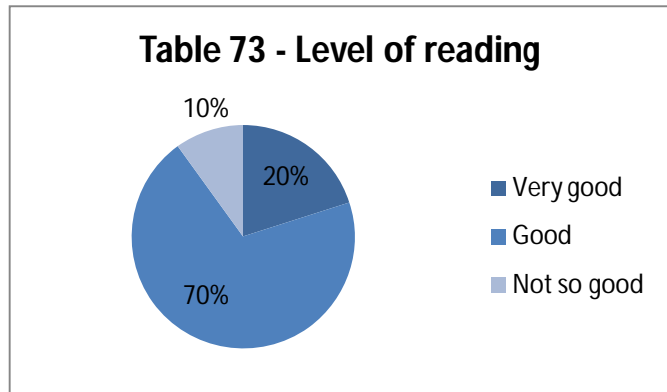


During the interview, we tried to shed some light on how the immigrants use the media; they were asked if they read the newspaper, to which 87% answered affirmatively; we then asked in which language they read the newspaper: 77% stated that they read it in Italian, while 23% in both Italian and their mother tongue. The interesting datum is that 88% of those who read it, affirmed that their comprehension was very good and the 22% average, while no one affirmed to have problems reading it. 87% also confirmed to use the internet, probably to communicate with their home country.

The most used means of communication, though, seems to be TV, since all the interviewees said that they watch it (see Table 67); 83% watch it in both Italian and their mother tongue, while only 7% watch it exclusively in Italian (not surprisingly, those who affirmed to watch only the Italian TV were the two domestic workers).

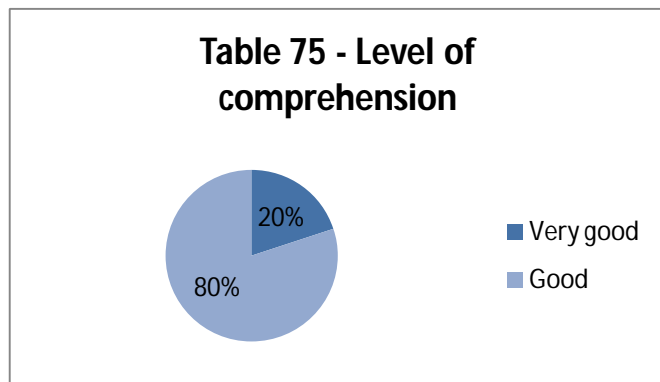
QUESTION 31 – Table 72 - Level of reading

Level	Units
Very good	6
Good	21
Not so good	3
Bad	0



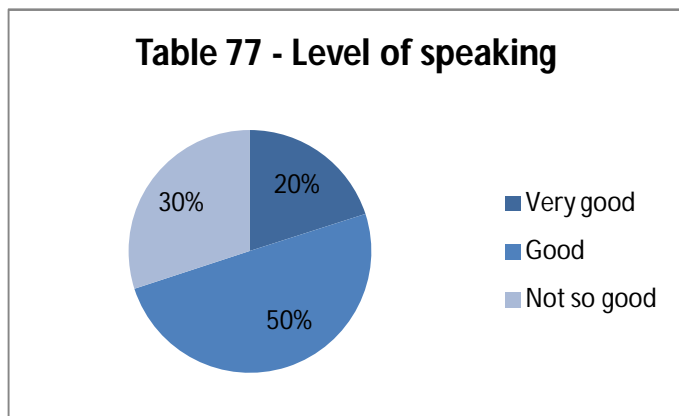
QUESTION 32 – Table 74 - Level of comprehension

Level of comprehension	Units
Very good	6
Good	24
Not so good	0
Bad	0



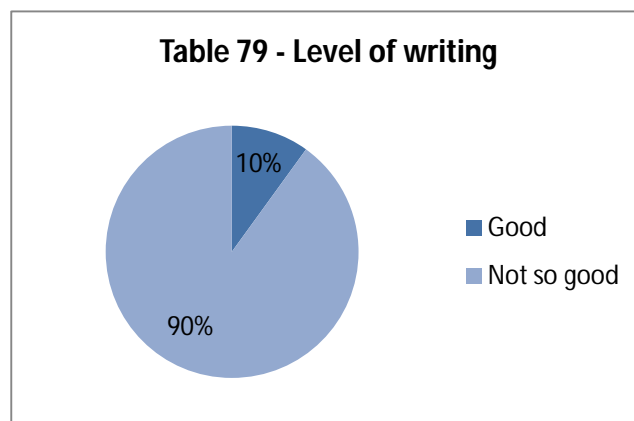
QUESTION 33 – Table 76 - Level of speaking

Level of speaking	Units
Very good	6
Good	15
Not so good	9
Bad	0



QUESTION 34 – Table 78 - Level of writing

Level of writing	Units
Very good	0
Good	3
Not so good	27
Bad	0

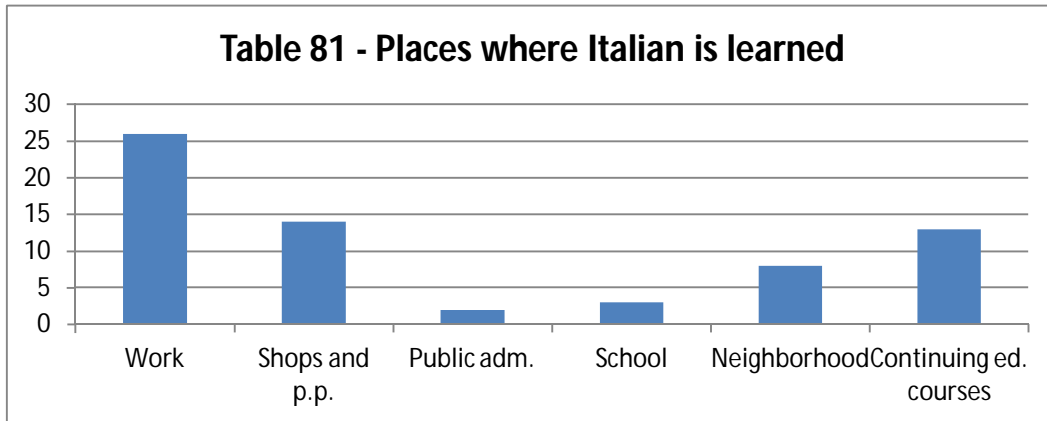


Questions 31, 32, 33 and 34 focused on the immigrants' own perception of their linguistic skills. Table 73 describes their reading skills: 70% judge themselves "good" at reading, 20% even "very good" and only 20% "not so good"; this percentage is not surprising if we compare it with the previous data about the comprehension of newspapers in Italian. There was a very high percentage of immigrants who also considered their listening comprehension "good" (80%), with an unvarying 20% of interviewees who answered "very good". More or less the same values held for the perception of their speaking skills, with a fix 20% of "very good", a 50% of "good" and a 30% of "not so good". Writing skills show a completely different state of affairs, with only 10% of "good" and a remaining 90% of "not so good". These data are very interesting, and led us to draw some conclusions to explain this fact. It can be seen that, moving from comprehension to production, the perception tends to shift from a positive or rather positive value to a negative value. Reading and listening have no standard to which they can be compared, even if the comprehension is partial and not accurate, in our opinion the speaker

deems it positive when he or she has understood the main topic of the discussion or of the article, if reading a newspaper. Speaking and writing, on the other hand, do have a standard of comparison. We might wonder, nonetheless, why there still is a difference between the two. We believe that while speaking – similarly to comprehension – can be considered good if the communication seems effective even though not accurate, writing is the more prescriptive skill, with a strong standard of reference: the immigrant has a tangible proof of his level whenever he or she compares it with a given written text.

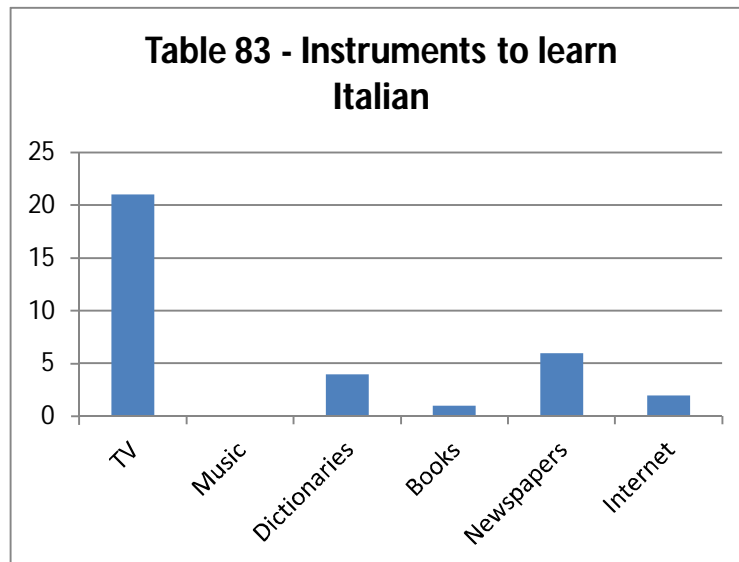
QUESTION 35 – Table 80 - Places where Italian is learned (multiple choice question)

Places	Units
Work	26
Shops and public places	2
Public Administration	14
School	3
Neighborhood	8
Continuing education courses	13



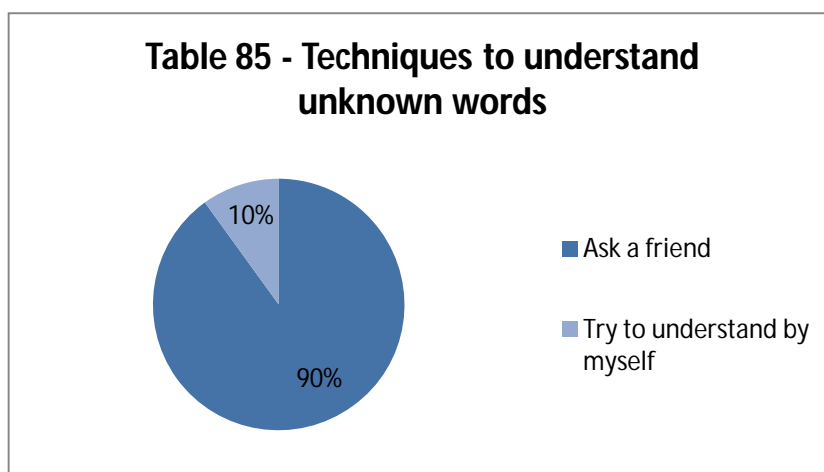
QUESTION 36 – Table 82 - Instruments to learn Italian (multiple choice question)

Instrument	Units
TV	21
Music	0
Dictionaries	4
Books	1
Newspapers	6
Internet	2



QUESTION 37 – Table 84 - Techniques to understand unknown words

Technique	Units
Ask a friend	23
Ask a relative	0
Ask my children	0
Ask for professional help	0
Try to understand it by myself	3

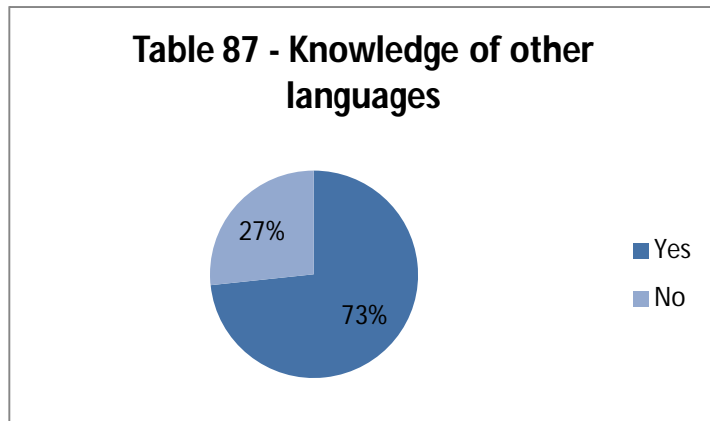


Through Table 81 and Table 83 we wanted to find out in which places the immigrants learn Italian and which instruments they use to learn or improve it. It can be seen that the workplace is the main learning context for the majority of the interviewees, followed by the public places and the continuing education courses of Italian. As a side note to these data, it must be added that, being the workplace the main chance of learning for the immigrants, if the colleagues are not Italian, the L2 is extremely hindered, as confirmed by the interviewees who worked in a strongly ethnic work environment.

As far as the instruments to learn Italian are concerned, the data confirm what has been previously said: TV is the main source of learning for the immigrants, followed by newspapers.

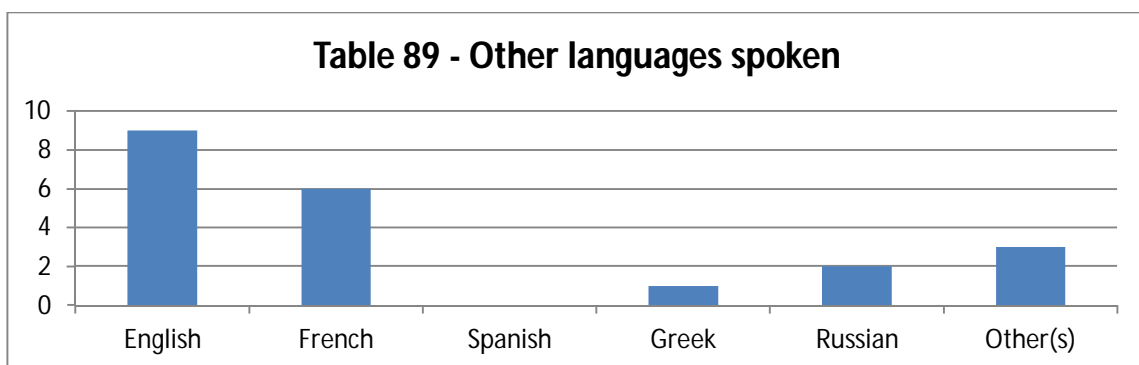
QUESTION 38 – Table 86 - Knowledge of other languages

Yes/No	Units
Yes	22
No	8



QUESTION 39 – Table 88 - Other languages spoken (multiple choice question)

Language	Units
English	9
French	6
Spanish	0
Greek	1
Russian	2
Other(s)	3



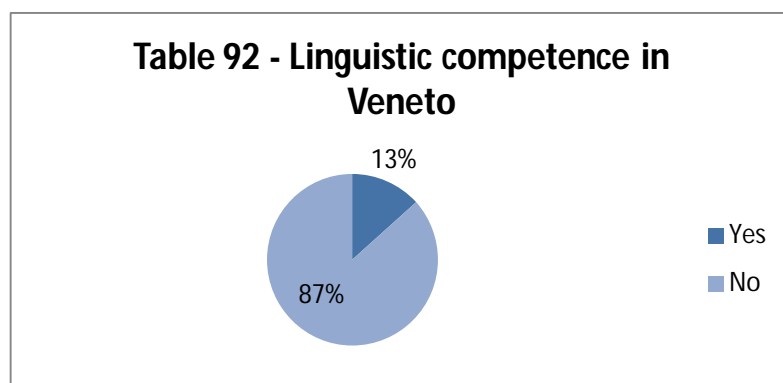
The immigrants were also asked whether they spoke other languages: 73% answered affirmatively. Table 89 shows which language they speak the most: English and French are the two most known foreign languages (note that Bangladeshi culture - through India – has a strong influence from Great Britain, while French is still used in Morocco by the Public Administration). Interestingly, one of the interviewee was fluent in Greek, since Greece is the “door” through which many Bangladeshi enter Europe.

QUESTION 40 – Table 90 - Perception of the difference between Italian and Veneto

Yes/no	Units
Yes	30
No	0

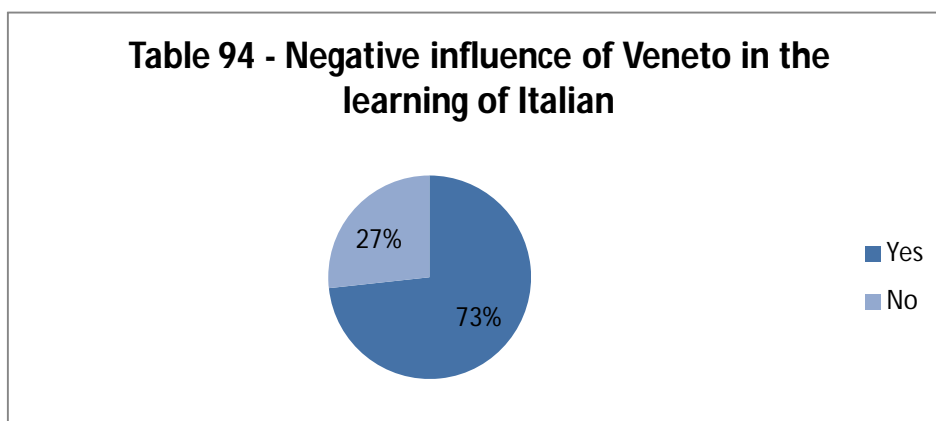
QUESTION 41 – Table 91 - Linguistic competence in Veneto

Yes/no	Units
Yes	4
No	26



QUESTION 42 – Table 93 - Negative influence of Veneto in the learning of Italian

Yes/no	Units
Yes	22
No	8



Given the linguistic situation of the Veneto region (see Chapter 3.3.2), questions 40, 41 and 42 focused on the regional language. All the interviewees confirmed that they can clearly hear the difference between Italian and Veneto, but only 4 of them (13%, see Table 92) could speak it. Nonetheless, 73% stated that the co-occurrence of two languages is disturbing when learning Italian and is also confusing.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

QUESTION 43a – Table 95 - Previous working experiences in Italy

Yes/no	Units
Yes	1
No	4

QUESTION 44a – Table 96 - Current job searching

Yes/no	Units
Yes	1
No	3

QUESTION 45a – Table 97 - Importance of Italian to find a job

Yes/no	Units
Yes	4
No	0

QUESTION 46a – Table 98 - Attendance of Continuing Education Courses

Yes/no	Units
Yes	0
No	4

QUESTION 47a – Table 99 - Ability to find Continuing Education Courses

Yes/no	Units
Yes	1
No	0

As previously mentioned, only four of the interviewees were unemployed, all four Bangladeshis. Three of them were overeducated housewives with children, who had no previous work experience in Italy and were not looking for a job either at the moment of the interview, but asserted that they wanted to go to work as soon as their children had grown up. The fourth was a boy who had just lost his job as cook but was already looking for a new one. None of them had attended continuing education courses and only the Bangladeshi boy knew where to find them if he needed them.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR THE EMPLOYEES

QUESTION 43b – Table 100 - Technique of job searching

Technique	Units
By myself	20
I was told by s.o.	0
Employment agency	0

QUESTION 44b – Table 101 - Composition of a curriculum

Yes/no	Units
Yes	8
No	12

QUESTION 45b – Table 102 - Language of the curriculum

Language	Units
Italian	8
English	0
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 46b – Table 103 - Interview

Yes/no	Units
Yes	20
No	0

QUESTION 47b – Table 104 - Language of the interview

Language	Units
Italian	20
English	0
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 48b – Table 105 - Level of job satisfaction

Level	Units
High	19
Average	0
Low	1

QUESTION 49b – Table 106 - Correspondence with the education

Yes/no	Units
Yes	0
No	20

QUESTION 50b – Table 107 - Importance of Italian to find a job

Yes/no	Units
Yes	20
No	0

QUESTION 51b – Table 108 - Persons to whom the interviewee speaks at work

Person	Units
Chief	2
Colleague	0
Customers	0
All the above	18
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 52b – Table 109 - Need to write during the work

Yes/no	Units
Yes	0
No	20

QUESTION 53b – Table 110 - Problems with writing at work

Yes/no	Units
--------	-------

Yes	20
No	0

QUESTION 54b – Table 111 - Problems with reading at work

Yes/no	Units
Yes	0
No	20

QUESTION 55b – Table 112 - Skill the interviewee would like to improve

Skill	Units
Speaking	0
Listening	0
Writing	20
Reading	0

QUESTION 56b – Table 113 - Previous attendance of Continuing Education Courses

Yes/no	Units
Yes	6
No	14

QUESTION 57b – Table 114 - Importance of the Continuing Education Courses

Yes/no	Units
Yes	6
No	0

QUESTION 58b – Table 115 - Ability to find Continuing Education Courses

Yes/no	Units
Yes	6
No	14

The employees interviewed were 20, all of them had found their job by themselves. Only 8 had written a curriculum (in Italian) while they all had had an interview (always in Italian). Although, according to them, their job did not correspond to their education they were all very satisfied with it (except for one Romanian woman working as domestic servant, who stated that she was doing it just to pay the mortgage of her house in her home country and planned to go back home as soon as she could). Such a high degree of satisfaction for a low-skilled job might seem weird, but if we compare the results with Marlow's hierarchy of needs (see Chapter 2), we can infer that at their point of integration the financial stability assured by the job is more important than the quality of the job (quality based on European standards). Questions 52b to 55b confirmed what has been previously said about the perception of the immigrants' linguistic competence: although none of their job requires writing, the workers interviewed affirm that if they had to write it could be problematic and consequently all of them would like to improve it.

As far as continuing education courses are concerned, only 6 of them attended them (courses organized by the employer to specialize them in

their work) and these are the only 6 individuals who consider them important and would be able to find them if needed.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EMPLOYED

QUESTION 43c – Table 116 - Reason for the choice of this kind of job

Reason	Units
Need for independence	5
Unemployment	1
For residency permit	0
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 44c – Table 117 - Reasons for the choice of this kind of sector

Reason	Units
Previous experience	3
Profitability	3
Chance	0
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 45c – Table 118 - Appreciation of the job

Yes/no	Units
Yes	6
No	0

QUESTION 46c – Table 119 - Correspondence with the interviewee's education

Yes/no	Units
Yes	0
No	6

QUESTION 47c – Table 120 - Language spoken with the customers

Language	Units
Italian	3
Mother tongue	0
Both	3
Other(s)	0

QUESTION 48c – Table 121 - Problems with official documents

Yes/no	Units
Yes	3
No	3

QUESTION 49c – Table 122 - Problems writing official documents

Yes/no	Units
Yes	4
No	2

QUESTION 50c – Table 123 - Help for translation/writing of official documents

Yes/no	Units
Yes	6
No	0

QUESTION 51c – Table 124 - Major problems in communication

Person	Units
Customers	0
Bureaucracy	6
Suppliers	0
Employees	0

Of the 26 interviewees who had a job, 6 were self-employed. The majority of them stated that they decided to work on their own because they wanted to become independent while only one did it because he was unemployed. The interviewees' answers split perfectly in two when asked the reasons for the choice of a specific sector: 3 did it based on their previous job experiences, while the other 3 considered it a profitable investment. As for the employees, they said that their current job does not correspond to their education but that they liked it.

When asked which language they speak with their customers, 3 answered Italian and 3 both Italian and mother tongue (note that one had a grocery store of typical Romanian products while the other two – of Chinese origin – owned a bar frequented by many of their fellow countrymen).

We also asked if understanding and writing official documents can be difficult for them. From what we gathered, they do not have problems with comprehension and only some problems with writing, but they easily

overcome them by asking for help. Nevertheless, they stated that a great deal of their communication problems came appeared with bureaucracy.

Further information on the data collected

Population sample: 30 units

Table 125 – Ethnic composition

Nationality	Units
Bangladeshis	14
Ukrainians	2
Romanians	6
Chinese	2
Albanians	2
Moroccans	4

As it can be seen in Table 125, the majority of the interviewees were of Bangladeshi origin; this is due to the big Bangladeshi community in Stra, where the research was conducted, whose components are very united and even formed an active association that organizes meeting and the celebration of the main Bangladeshi festivities. The majority of the interviewees belonging to this ethnic group show a good cultural and linguistic integration in addition to a very good work integration. Indeed, the only unemployed interviewed were a 27-year-old Bangladeshi boy who had just lost his job and three Bangladeshi women who had never worked in Italy before because they had to stay home with their children.

The Romanians interviewed, instead, represented 20% of the population sample taken into consideration and are all employees in the

industrial sector (especially construction) except for a man who was self-employed (with a previous experience in the industrial sector, though) and a woman who worked as domestic worker.

4 out of 30 were Moroccans, another ethnic group with a strong presence in Stra whose members have been living in the city for many years but that seems to count very few arrivals lately if compared to the Bangladeshi, Romanian and Chinese population.

The Chinese couple interviewed had been living in Stra for more than 5 years and are self-employed in a bar.

One of the Ukrainians interviewed was self-employed in a bakery while the other (a woman) was employed as domestic worker by a couple of old persons.

The Albanian couple worked together as self-employed in a restaurant.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis we tried to investigate the linguistic needs of immigrants learning Italian as an L2. We presented the main theories describing how the cultural and linguistic integration process takes place – with its strong psychological impact on the immigrant – but also how these two aspects of integration cannot be separated, and, on the contrary, how they are mutually responsible for the creation of a bicultural – as well as bilingual – personality.

We have then presented other theories, aimed to describe the concept of need and its subset of linguistic needs and how they are analyzed.

In the third chapter, we gave an overall description of the immigration situation in Italy and, more specifically, in the Veneto region and in the small town of Stra – where the survey on which this thesis is based was conducted.

The fourth chapter described the survey administered to the interviewees and how the questions were selected.

Finally, the fifth chapter focused on a detailed analysis and comparison of the data collected.

Following what we have found analyzing the data, we can state that immigrants seem to be strongly motivated towards a full integration. The majority of them wishes to stay in Italy in the near future if the economic context makes it possible. Nonetheless, there seems to be a lack of knowledge regarding the ways through which they can find a job or improve their current work position, as it can be demonstrated by the very low percentage of immigrants who knew what continuing education courses were and how they could be found.

From a linguistic perspective, immigrants (especially those who have a job) result to be confident of their linguistic skills except for writing, also due to the fact that they scarcely have the need and the chance to write at work.

We have also seen that the workplace is the main context of their linguistic learning, especially and not surprisingly, when associated to a strong presence of Italians.

Lastly, regarding the peculiar diglossic environment of the Veneto region, they affirmed that the presence of another language – that they perfectly perceive – interferes with their learning of Italian.

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APPENDIX – Original draft of the questionnaire by Guglielmi

**INDAGINE SUI BISOGNI LINGUISTICI IN L2 DELLA PRIMA
GENERAZIONE DI MIGRANTI. GHANA, ROMANIA, MAROCCO,
ALBANIA, BANGLADESH A CONFRONTO NEL COMUNE DI
PORDENONE.**

Sezione I/A Dati biografici:

Età:

Sesso: M/F

Paese di provenienza (passaporto):

Nome (facoltativo)

Cognome (facoltativo)

Contatto e-mail/telefono (facoltativo):

Lingue parlate: lingua madre: ____ ;
altre lingue conosciute _____

Cittadinanza italiana: SI/NO

Situazione professionale: occupato/ in cerca di lavoro/cassa integrazione
Tipo di lavoro attualmente svolto:

Situazione familiare: sposato/ convivente/ single/divorziato/
numero figli in Italia ____ / numero figli in età scolare in Italia ____ .
figli all'estero
domanda di ricongiungimento

Periodo totale di vita trascorsa in Italia (in caso di periodi di allontanamento
dall'Italia per motivi di studio/lavoro/scadenza visti etc. sommare il totale dei
soggiorni):
3-5 anni / 5-10 anni / oltre 10 anni

Percorso migratorio: dopo aver lasciato il tuo Paese di origine ha vissuto in altri
Paesi oltre all'Italia? Per quanto tempo? E in Italia in quali altri luoghi ha lavorato e
vissuto?

Sezione I/B: Percorso formativo

Corsi di italiano frequentati: SI/NO

Dove? CTP/Agenzie interinali/lezioni private/scuole private/

Durata del corso:

Certificazione linguistica italiano LS/L2 : SI/NO

Se sì, barrare il tipo di certificazione

CILS/CELI/PLIDA/altro

A quale livello del Common European Framework? A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2

Conosce il Common European Framework/Quadro Comune Europeo per la lingua italiana?

No, non ne ho mai sentito parlare / Sì, ne ho sentito parlare, ma non sono in possesso di materiale informativo/ Sì, sono in possesso del materiale informativo

Percorso di istruzione/formazione nel Paese di origine

Istruzione elementare/media/superiore/università/corsi professionali/master/dottorato

Scuole e corsi frequentati in Italia oltre ai corsi di lingua:

Sezione II : grado di soddisfazione sul livello raggiunto nelle abilità primarie

Rispetto al livello raggiunto nelle 4 abilità linguistiche, Lei si ritiene:

Capire

Per niente soddisfatto / abbastanza soddisfatto / soddisfatto/ molto soddisfatto

Parlare

Per niente soddisfatto / abbastanza soddisfatto / soddisfatto/ molto soddisfatto

Leggere

Per niente soddisfatto / abbastanza soddisfatto / soddisfatto/ molto soddisfatto

Scrivere

Per niente soddisfatto / abbastanza soddisfatto / soddisfatto/ molto soddisfatto

In tempi recenti, hai pensato di frequentare dei corsi di lingua italiana di livello più avanzato?

Mai / ogni tanto / abbastanza di frequente/ spesso

Sezione III/A: Analisi situazionale dei contesti di pratica della L2 dell'adulto immigrato:

"Vita familiare, relazioni amicali e lingue parlate"

1) Nella vita familiare e con gli amici più vicini quali lingue parla più di frequente? Classifichi in ordine di importanza:

1 ____ 2 ____ 3 ____ 4 ____ 5 ____ 6.....

"Frequenza delle interazioni informali in lingua italiana"

2) Nel tempo libero, quante volte Le succede di conversare o discutere in lingua italiana (in situazioni non formali, al bar, a scuola, in negozio, etc.) con amici e/o conoscenti madrelingua italiani o di altri gruppi nazionali?

Al massimo una volta alla settimana) / al massimo 1-2 volte alla settimana) / 3-4 volte alla settimana) / quasi ogni giorno

"Luoghi extralavorativi dove avvengono più di frequente le interazioni in lingua italiana"

3) Quali sono i luoghi dove ha più occasioni per comunicare in italiano?

Esprima in numero un giudizio da 1 a 4 (1=per niente, 2=un poco, 3=abbastanza, 4=molto)

a) Bar, discoteche, club, etc. __ b) Uffici pubblici __ c) Nella scuola dove vanno i miei figli __ d) Sul lavoro __ e) Attività sportive, ricreative e culturali __ f) Luoghi di shopping __ g) Per strada e nelle piazze __ h) Nei rapporti di vicinato __ i) Altro... __

Sezione III/B: l'autonomia dello studente

"Percezione della propria autonomia di apprendimento in relazione ai luoghi di interazione comunicativa"

4) Rifletta su come ha imparato la lingua italiana fuori dalla classe di lingua. Quanta lingua ha imparato da solo in queste situazioni?

Esprimi in numero un giudizio da 1 a 4 (1=per niente, 2=un poco, 3=abbastanza, 4=molto)

Uffici pubblici e rete servizi territoriali ____

Corsi di formazione professionale ____

Sul lavoro

Nei bar, nelle piazze, nei negozi

Durante le attività ricreative e culturali (cinema, teatri, associazioni, discoteche, sport, etc.)

A scuola dove vanno i miei figli

Nella vita di quartiere

Altro

"Percezione dell'utilità degli strumenti per l'apprendimento autonomo"

5) Oltre a un bravo insegnante, quali sono secondo Lei gli strumenti più utili per imparare la lingua italiana? Esprimi in numero un giudizio da 1 a 4 (1=per niente utile, 2=un poco utile, 3= abbastanza utile, 4=molto utile)

Televisione ____

Musica ____

libro di grammatica pratica con fraseologia ____

manuale ____

dizionario ____

corsi audiovisivi di autoapprendimento ____

libri (saggi, narrativa, poesia, ecc.) ____

riviste, giornali ____

internet ____

Altro _____

Situazioni di difficoltà nella lingua e strategie

6) Quando si trovi in difficoltà con la lingua italiana che strategie usa?

Barrare in corrispondenza della strategia utilizzata

Mi faccio aiutare dagli amici più esperti

Mi faccio aiutare dal coniuge o da un parente

Mi siedo davanti al computer, cerco su internet modelli documenti simili e in un secondo momento mi faccio aiutare

Chiedo aiuto a mio figlio/a, che frequenta (o ha frequentato) la scuola e conosce meglio la lingua

Mi affido a un servizio specializzato privato a pagamento tipo agenzia

Chiedo aiuto all'associazione di riferimento della mia comunità

Chiedo un mediatore culturale

Cerco di fare da solo e, se non sono sicuro, chiedo una spiegazione

Sezione IV: Percezione dell'investimento della società di accoglienza nei corsi di L2

1) Secondo Lei i datori di lavoro e i manager delle aziende sono interessati a promuovere l'avanzamento linguistico del lavoratore straniero?

per niente interessati - abbastanza interessati - interessati - molto interessati

2) I corsi di lingua hanno orari compatibili con i turni di lavoro e con i ritmi di vita familiari

quasi mai - a volte - spesso - quasi sempre

Sezione V: Percezioni rispetto all'ambiente di apprendimento della L2 e aspettative sul futuro

1) Secondo Lei la diversità nei livelli di competenza linguistica in una classe è:

- negativa, perché rallenta gli studenti più bravi
 positiva, perché lo studente eccellente ha più occasioni di riflettere sulla lingua e di esercitarla quando lo studente in difficoltà
 Né positiva né negativa, dipende dal clima di classe
 Positiva, ma solo quando l'insegnante sa come renderla utile

2) Secondo Lei, la diversità dei gruppi nazionali in un corso di lingua:

- ha effetti negativi, perché ogni gruppo nazionale ha esigenze diverse
 ha effetti positivi, perché se sto con gruppi di lingua di provenienza diversa è più facile comunicare tra noi in italiano può essere positiva oppure negativa, ma dipende dall'atmosfera della classe e dalle capacità dell'insegnante
 altro _____

3) Immagini di ricevere l'offerta di iscrizione per un corso di lingua italiana presso un CTP della tua città. Per quali aspetti della tua

vita vorrebbe avere un beneficio maggiore?

Segni con un numero: 3 molto importante / 2 : importante / 1 : poco importante / 0: per nulla importante

Favorire il mio orientamento sul territorio della città (negozi, ricerca della casa, relazioni di quartiere, ospedale, uffici pubblici, scuole, associazioni etc.), della provincia e della regione ____

- Conoscere l'Italia, la sua cultura e le sue diversità regionali ____
- La lettura di giornali, riviste, libri ____
- La visione di programmi televisivi e di film ____
- L'ascolto di programmi radio ____
- La consultazione del web ____
- Esprimere e far conoscere la mia cultura e le mie tradizioni ____
- Fare nuove conoscenze e amicizie con madrelingua italiani sul territorio ____
- Fare nuove conoscenze e amicizie con le persone delle altre comunità sul territorio ____
- Le relazioni nel mio condominio e nel quartiere ____
- Le occasioni sportive, culturali, ricreative ____
- La comunicazione parlata con i servizi pubblici (ospedale, posta, questura, sportelli, etc.) ____
- La traduzione di documenti necessari alla vita quotidiana ____
- Interpretariato e traduzione per amici, familiari e connazionali in caso di bisogno negli uffici pubblici, in questura, in ospedale, etc. ____
- Seguire i figli nelle attività di studio ____
- Parlare e confrontarsi con insegnanti, presidi, e altro personale scolastico ____
- Parlare, confrontarsi e conoscersi meglio con le famiglie dei compagni di scuola dei miei figli ____
- Sviluppare idee e attività nel mondo dell'associazionismo culturale, religioso e di volontariato ____
- Partecipare ad assemblee, incontri, dibattiti su temi politici, sociali, economici di tuo interesse ____
- Negoziare in modo più efficace con il datore di lavoro e con i superiori (contratti, paga, giorni liberi, ferie, etc.) ____
- Comunicare i propri bisogni e opinioni ai colleghi e discutere con loro ____
- Scrivere e aggiornare un curriculum vitae in modo autonomo e corretto ____
- Sostenere un'intervista di lavoro in modo fluente e con sicurezza ____
- Scrivere una lettera di presentazione o un documento per la burocrazia in modo autonomo e con il linguaggio appropriato ____
- Tenere rapporti di corrispondenza in italiano (e-mail, lettere, fax, etc.) ____
- Partecipare a corsi di formazione professionale e/o proseguire nel mio percorso di scolarizzazione (recupero anni, diploma, università, master, etc.) ____
- Sviluppare idee e attività imprenditoriali (business, commercio, impresa, servizi vari, etc.) ____

- Partecipare alle attività sindacali per la tutela dei diritti del lavoro
- Altro_____ numero ____