

# Verbal Morphology and Identity in Majorca: The Manifestation of Attitudes in Writing

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## 1. Introduction

The Spanish island of Majorca presents a complex case of multilingualism with clashing identities linked to the presence of both Catalan and Spanish on the island. Both sociopolitical and demographic factors have played an important role in shaping the sociolinguistic reality in Majorca; the end of the Franco dictatorship in 1975 allowed the use of Catalan in public life, so both standard and regional varieties have coexisted in Majorca. Speakers vary not only by their own language dominance, but by their language(s) of education and personal identification with Majorcan cultural autonomy and a separate, Majorcan linguistic identity.

A considerable body of literature has concentrated on the political and linguistic changes of the last few decades in Catalan-speaking regions and on the circumstances in which Catalan and Spanish are used. Thus, much sociolinguistic research has been devoted to language attitudes in Catalonia (Badia i Margarit, 1969; Doyle, 1996; Sanz, 1991; Strubell, 1984; Woolard, 1984, 1989; Woolard and Gahng, 1990), Valencia (Blas-Arroyo, 1994; Ros i Garcia, 1984; Triano-Lopez, 2005, 2007), and Majorca (Melià, 1997; Pieras, 1999). These studies have focused on the social evaluation, competence, and use of Catalan and Spanish in these Catalan-speaking territories; however, at the dialectal level, the attitudes of these bilinguals towards the standard variety have been relatively underinvestigated. While Standard Catalan (SC) is present in the Catalan media and in the education system through textbooks, Majorcan Catalan (MC) is present in the local media in Majorca (except in written texts) and is the language spoken on the island; because SC and MC are used in mutually exclusive contexts, more research on non-standard varieties of Catalan and their influence on regional identity is merited.

As a result of using SC in the classroom and through the Balearic government's promotion of a well-established –however not undisputed– standard variety, there has been a significant improvement in the ability to write in Catalan, compared to earlier generations who were not exposed to Catalan in the classroom. However, Majorcans must today address the differences between the standard they are expected to use in writing and the local dialect, MC, which they typically use orally. Since language is intimately linked to identity, given that speakers embrace the identity of a particular community, or group within the community, through the language they use (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1982; Bucholtz, 1999; Spolsky, 1999), Majorcans may resist, in writing, using the forms of SC that differ from MC and which they associate with another community (i.e., Catalonia). Particularly, for Majorcans who strive to reinforce their identity separate from Catalonia, using the less-standard written forms may be preferable; Jaffe (2000) elaborates that “written forms of a language and its varieties are in themselves selective representations of the meanings of linguistic differences and similarities [and this] selection process makes statements about the status and relationship between languages, language varieties, and their speakers.” Furthermore, Doyle and Song (2005) claim that a speaker's identity is more deliberately represented in writing than in speaking, and specifically, in multilingual communities, writing is not just about conveying content but is also about the representation of self (Ivanic, 1998). This representation is always within a comparative framework; that is, the non-standard has meaning in comparison to and in contrast with the standard variety. For Majorcans, a non-standard orthography based on the local dialect (MC) can be in competition with the standard variety (SC). This study considers the variation in writing between morpheme reduction (typical in spoken MC) and morpheme maintenance (typical in SC) in first person singular present indicative verb forms. Other varieties of Catalan include an overt morpheme (in SC, *-o*, for example, *compro* ‘(I) buy’), but MC has only a null morpheme, e.g. in MC, *compr* ‘(I) buy.’ These orthographic

conventions, which also reflect a difference in oral production, bring us to consider the following questions: which variety of Catalan are these speakers showing allegiance to when they write in a non-academic setting? And how do individual opinions on the use of MC and SC in separate contexts influence subconscious (and conscious) choices in writing? Do these choices reveal regional identity and the desire to establish differences from other varieties (specifically, from the standard)?

The present paper focuses on Catalan language and identity in Majorca by exploring how Catalan-Spanish bilinguals project identities through language performance, specifically by examining the occurrence of morphemic reduction in written production. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents an overview of the linguistic situation in Majorca, the presence of Catalan in the education system of the Balearic Islands, the standardization of Catalan, and traits differentiating MC from Central (Standard) Catalan. Section 3 describes the research questions, hypotheses of the experiment and the design of the study (participants, procedure, and analysis). Section 4 presents the results from the multivariate analysis of the data. Finally, Section 5 discusses the findings, summarizes, and presents conclusions.

## 2. Majorca: a case study

### 2.1. Linguistic situation in Majorca

Catalan has been present in Majorca since the arrival of King Jaime I of Aragon, in the thirteenth century. The island was repopulated by people from other Catalan-speaking eastern regions of Rosellón, Gerona, and Barcelona, and this explains why the Balearic inhabitants then started speaking Catalan in its eastern variety, and continued doing so for many centuries (Blas-Arroyo, 2007). During the three centuries that followed the conquest of the island in 1229, Catalan was the main language of the territory with certain scarce traces of language contact with Latin, the main culture language, as well as with the language spoken by some ethnolinguistic minorities such as Arabic, Hebrew, Langued'oc, and Aragonese (Miralles i Monserrat, 1989). In addition, it is claimed that Spanish was practically unknown on the island until the end of the fifteenth century.

After several centuries of Spanish and Catalan coexistence in Majorca, a repressive period under the dictatorship of General Franco (1939-1975) followed. During Franco's dictatorship, all uses of the Catalan language were prohibited, including the use of Catalan in books, magazines, radio, names of establishments, religion, private and family correspondence, and, significantly, schools (Vann, 2002). Catalan was thus banned from official functions and was relegated to the familiar domain, with discriminatory dispositions and orders against the use of Catalan in public life, school, and linguistic landscape.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the language indigenous to Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia was endangered. However, with the beginning of Spanish democracy (1975) and institutional efforts to normalize local languages (Language Normalization Law, 1986), Catalan, along with Galician, Basque, Valencian, and Aranese in other regions of Spain, has become a co-official language recognized by the state. As such, Catalan has now recovered most of its social functions, and the linguistic rights of Catalan speakers are guaranteed by legal statute (Huguet, 2006); its use is also protected in public administration, education, cultural production, and communication media. The regaining of prestige has resulted in an increased presence of Catalan in the linguistic landscape and in daily life, now reaching areas that were previously exclusive to Spanish, including cultural production and communication media.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Miralles i Monserrat (1989) provides some examples: signs that read: “Se prohíbe hablar en catalan” (It is prohibited to speak in Catalan) or “No se vende a los catalanes” (No sales to Catalans). In addition, an order of the civil governor in Majorca, Mateu Torres Bestard, reads “Todas las clases se darán en castellano” (All classes will be taught in Spanish).

<sup>2</sup> Regarding television, apart from the public Spanish channels, there are two channels from Catalonia which are televised in the Balearic islands and are emitted completely in Catalan (*TV3* and *Canal 33*), and two channels from Valencia (*Canal 9* and *Punt 2*), which are almost entirely in Catalan. In terms of television channels from Majorca, there is the recent creation of *IB3* in March of 2005, and the two channels (*M7* and *Canal 4*) that were already broadcasting in Catalan. With respect to the written media, there is a reduced offering: the only newspaper written in Catalan is the *Diari de Balears*. However, magazines and newspapers in Catalan produced in Catalonia are also readily available (*Avui*, *El Temps*).

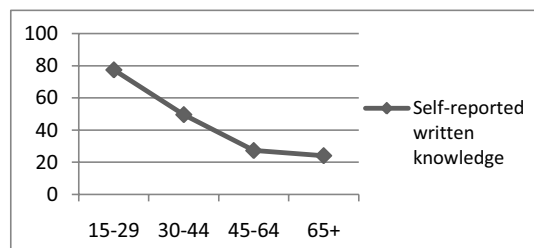
Indeed, this gain has been accompanied by noticeable changes in the attitude of Majorcans toward Catalan and Spanish (Romera, 2003). The expansion of Catalan in Majorca is not homogeneous, since SC and MC are both present in different contexts, with formal registers utilizing SC, present in the Catalan media and in the education system, and MC being used elsewhere. In addition, political factors have also played a role in the shaping of identification with Majorcan cultural and linguistic autonomy, distinct from Catalonia. Namely, the concept of *Països Catalans* ‘Catalan countries’ (Catalan-centered nationalism), which is a political term that argues for a common national identity and promotes unity and political independence among Catalonia, Valencia, and the Balearic Islands, has enjoyed an increasing following in Catalonia, although not necessarily supported in the islands. The widespread Majorcan perception of the Balearic Islands as an autonomous community with an independent historical personality not necessarily related to Catalonia may also interfere with the adoption of a standard variety associated with another community.

## 2.2. Expansion of Catalan in society: the role of the education system

In this context of bilingualism in Majorca it is important to highlight the promulgation of the Language Normalization Law (*Llei de normalització lingüística a les Illes Balears-Llei 3/1986*) in 1986, which had a strong linguistic impact in the Balearic Islands. Because of the political and legal dominance of Spanish before 1975, oral and written knowledge of Spanish was universal, but illiteracy in Catalan was widespread since Catalan was restricted to very specific oral settings. The Language Normalization Law strengthened the spread of Catalan to domains that were exclusive to Spanish. This language policy followed previous efforts from other Catalan-speaking areas, such as the 1979 educational policy in Catalonia which aimed to promote the use of Catalan in areas that were exclusive to Spanish, to reduce illiteracy in Catalan, and to promote passive knowledge of Catalan to Spanish-speakers.

More than twenty years after the enactment of the Language Normalization Law (*Llei de normalització lingüística*), progress has been noted in terms of use of Catalan in daily life, and Catalan literacy has shown a significant improvement. At the beginning of the 1990s, 66.7% of the Balearic population declared that they spoke Catalan, and this figure increased to 76.7% in 2002 (Blas-Arroyo, 2007). However, according to the latest census, 93.1% of the population understand Catalan, 74.6% can speak it, and 79.6% can read it<sup>3</sup>. As a result, since 1986, there has been a significant improvement in literacy in Catalan, which can be attributed to the presence of Catalan in the Balearic school system; in 1991 only 25.9% of the Balearic residents acknowledged that they knew how to write in Catalan, but this figure increased to 31.1% in 1998, and to a considerable 51.3% four years later (Melià, 2002). Both Spanish and Catalan are now compulsory in schools, and in fact, by the time they leave school, all students are expected to know both Spanish and Catalan with native fluency. The historical process behind these changes explains why almost all young Majorcans are able to speak, read, and write Catalan. Most adults born prior to 1975, however, cannot write Catalan because they did not learn it in school or in public life (Boix-fuster and Sanz, 2008); thus, I find that self-reported knowledge of written Catalan correlates with age (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Self-reported written knowledge in Catalan (adapted from *Enquesta sociolingüística*, see footnote 3)



<sup>3</sup> Adapted from *Enquesta sociolingüística*. Directorate of Language Policy. Government of the Balearic Islands.

Source:

[http://dgpoling.caib.es/www/user/menuweb/enquesta%20sociolingüística%202003/enquesta\\_sociolingüística\\_2003.htm](http://dgpoling.caib.es/www/user/menuweb/enquesta%20sociolingüística%202003/enquesta_sociolingüística_2003.htm)

The Language Normalization Law passed by the Balearic Islands' parliament in 1986 expanded the use of Catalan to that of language of instruction. In particular, article 18 guarantees that students have the right to be educated in their own language. In 1997, the total exposure to Catalan and Spanish in the classrooms was regulated to ensure that the amount of hours of Catalan as a vehicular language of instruction amounted to at least as many hours dedicated to Spanish which meant that a minimum of 50% of Catalan use was guaranteed (Decree 92/1997, article 10: *Decret de minims*). This law was passed to assure that all students could use both languages by the end of their mandatory education. As a result, students entering the University of the Balearic Islands must demonstrate proficiency in both languages, and teachers in the islands are required to know both, with language courses offered to new teachers who do not have sufficient command of Catalan. There appears to be a significant increase in Catalan-language training among Spanish-speaking teachers in the years following the promulgation of the law (Cajkler, 1993), and the *Obra Cultural Balear*<sup>4</sup> claimed that in 1991 3,000 adults were enrolled in its language courses in Catalan.

Undoubtedly, the education system has contributed to the consolidation and dissemination of Catalan, endowing the language with prestige and expanding its use while creating a sense of loyalty (Vila-Pujol, 2002). In addition, Cajkler (1993) highlights the rapid transformation that took place in the island's schools and colleges in the years immediately following the enactment of the Language Normalization Law; between 1985 and 1990, the number of schools in which Catalan was the medium of instruction rose from 38 to 105. According to the *Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia* 'Ministry of Education and Science' (MEC), during the 2003-2004 academic year, 49.3% of primary and secondary education students had bilingual instruction and 50.7% of those students had Catalan as language of instruction with Spanish restricted to a subject of study. From this data it is important to note that 70.1% of private institutions favor bilingual education, whereas public institutions tend to favor Catalan as the vehicular language of instruction (64.2%). Table 1 shows the distribution in percentages of the language of instruction in public and private schools in the Balearic Islands for the 2003-2004 academic year (adapted from *Institut Balear d'Estadística*<sup>5</sup>):

**Table 1.** Language of instruction in public and private schools in the Balearic Islands (2003-04).

%	Academic year 2003-2004			
	Spanish only	Spanish as instruction language and Catalan as a course	Bilingual education	Catalan as instruction language and Spanish as a course
All schools	0.00	0.00	49.30	50.70
PUBLIC SCHOOLS	0.00	0.00	35.80	64.20
PRIVATE SCHOOLS	0.00	0.00	70.10	29.90

### 2.3. Standardization of Catalan

According to Thomason (2001), in a new and (relatively speaking) linguistically homogenous nation, the official language can help to establish a national identity. Specifically, when referring to the formation and expression of social identity it is important to consider the process of standardization. Riley (2007) states that standard languages are related to identity in a number of important ways. First, they are seen as symbolic of the nation. Second, they are used, often exclusively, as the medium of communication by most important institutions, including the legal and educational systems, the political administration, and the church, each of which "plays a role in defining, providing, and

<sup>4</sup> *Obra Cultural Balear* (OCB) is an association committed to the defense, promotion, and spreading of Catalan in the Balearic Islands.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from *Institut Balear d'Estadística*. Source: <http://www.caib.es/ibae/dades/catala/educaciom.htm>.

distributing the positions, roles, and identities available in the society in question” (Riley, 2007: 234). Third, a standard language results in the creation and acceptance of attitudes toward language use and its users. Therefore, the standardization of a minority language such as Catalan, together with its newly co-official status, would be expected to unite attitudes toward the language in the Catalan-speaking territories through the codification of a prestigious standard language.

However, the standardization process in the Catalan-speaking regions of Spain has faced some difficulties. There has not been consensus regarding the term to be used to refer to the language(s) spoken in Valencia and the Balearic islands (e.g. *valencià*, *mallorquí*, *menorquí*, *eivissenc*, *balear*, *català*) and there has been some resistance to the imposition of SC in some areas (Bibiloni, 2002). In language planning contexts where there is internal dialect variation, the expectations of loyalty to local language varieties “often make the process of standardization difficult because people are reluctant to accept graphic forms that do not index the way they speak” (Jaffa, 2000). This fact has favored the codification of parallel models, in different communities, instead of a homogeneous normative variety for all Catalan-speaking territories. In addition, Bibiloni (2002) stresses that the fragmentary promotion of Catalan in the last two decades has reinforced the regional models as a result of deficient planning in the standardization of Catalan:

- (1) *Barcelona, possible i desitjable capital del país, és l'únic centre des d'on s'hauria pogut i es pot impulsar i difondre un estàndard nacional, sempre que aquesta opció sigui corresposta amb una bona disposició per part de la perifèria, cosa que no succeirà si no es tracta d'un autèntic estàndard nacional. Barcelona, però, sembla que només vol promoure un model regional pensat per a la seva àrea i ignorant completament la resta del país. Aquesta és la gran desgracia de l'estandardització del català.* (Bibiloni, 2002: 45)

“Barcelona, possible and desirable capital of the country, is the only center from where a national standard could and can be promoted and spread, which would only be possible if there is a good disposition from the periphery. This will not happen if it is not an authentic national standard. Barcelona, however, seems to only want to promote a regional model thought of for their area and completely ignoring the rest of the country. This is the big misfortune of the standardization of Catalan.”

#### 2.4. Majorcan Catalan

Majorcan Catalan (MC) is a dialect of Catalan spoken by over 600,000 speakers in Majorca, according to sociolinguistic data collected by the government of the Balearic Islands in 2003. This dialect of Eastern Catalan is considered a subdialect of insular (Balearic) Catalan together with *menorquí* and *eivissenc* (spoken in the islands of Minorca and Ibiza, respectively). This variety of Catalan also has some differences with respect to SC in that the phonetics and phonology exhibit some conservative features from Old Catalan and features of other Romance languages with which the variety was in early contact, such as Occitan and Italian (Recasens, 1998).

In terms of phonology, MC maintains /ə/ in stressed position (Recasens, 1991), e.g. *cas[ə]ta* ‘little house,’ or *p[ə]ra* ‘pear’ and /o/ in unstressed positions, e.g. *c[o]seta* ‘little thing,’ and *p[o]ntet* ‘small bridge’. In addition, there is elision of final /ə/ in words with stress on the antepenultimate syllable (e.g. *gabi* instead of *gàbia* ‘cage’; *histori* instead of *història* ‘history’). Furthermore, lexical differences are also noticeable not only with respect to continental Catalan but also with the other Balearic varieties, Minorcan and Eivissan Catalan, as well; for example *al.lot* ‘kid/youngster’ (Majorca) vs. *boix* (Eivissa) and *fiet* (Minorca), or *xerrar* ‘to speak’ (Majorca) vs. *rallar* (Minorca), etc. These usage and lexical differences together with the retention of conservative features can be expected because of the relative isolation of this variety in comparison to the dialects spoken in the mainland. Finally, some features in the verbal morphology of this variety of Catalan are different from Standard Catalan: the maintenance of the verbal endings *-am*, *-au* for the present indicative first and second person plural in the verbs ending in *-ar*, instead of *-em* and *-eu* in SC, and importantly for this paper, the lack of an overt inflectional morpheme for first person singular present indicative verb forms, e.g. *compr* /kompr/ in MC, but in Catalonia *compro* /kompru/ ‘(I) buy’.

### 3. The Experiment

#### 3.1. Research questions and hypotheses

As stated above, the differences in verbal morphology between MC and SC are salient, especially with respect to the inflectional morpheme for the first person singular present indicative forms. Because SC has a palpable existence in writing and the written code may be biased towards the speech forms of one group of speakers over another, this paper specifically addresses the occurrence (in writing) of morpheme reduction in the first person singular present indicative verb forms, a feature in MC that contrasts with normative SC which maintains an overt morpheme *-o*: in Majorca, *compr* ‘(I) buy,’ *obr* ‘(I) open,’ *entr* ‘(I) enter,’ and *mescl* ‘(I) mix,’ but in Catalonia *compro* ‘(I) buy,’ *obro* ‘(I) open,’ *entro* ‘(I) enter,’ and *mesclo* ‘(I) mix.’ This dialectal difference leads to the following research questions: which variety of Catalan will these speakers show allegiance to when they write in a non-academic setting? More specifically, is morphemic reduction (MC) or maintenance (SC) going to be preferred? Is there a correlation with individual internal and external sociolinguistic factors such as gender, language of dominance, level of education, and language of instruction? Finally, can individual opinions on the use of MC and SC in separate contexts, which may reveal regional identity, influence choices in writing?

The results are expected to indicate a general trend toward morpheme reduction by speakers who are in favor of recognizing MC as an independent variety from SC with an official status. Also, Majorcans who claim that they use the MC variety in writing are predicted to favor morpheme reduction. In addition, other social factors that I predict will favor the elimination of the overt morpheme in the written form will be to have a lower level of education, and to not have been exposed to SC (normative Catalan) as the language of education. I expect that speakers who have had Catalan as a vehicular language throughout their education will have been more influenced by normative Catalan, and will be less likely to reduce the morpheme, while those speakers that have not received as much input or exposure to Catalan in the education system will be more prone to reducing the morpheme because of exposure to the MC variety. In addition, Spanish-dominant speakers might be less likely to reduce the morpheme; because of previous observations (Bibiloni, 2002) that describe speakers from Spanish-speaking households to be those who use a variety of Catalan which is closer to the normative model or the variety prevalent in the media. Finally, gender should also play a role based on previous sociolinguistic research; women have been shown to be more likely to approximate prestige dialects (Trudgill, 1972; Abu-Haidar, 1989; Gordon, 1997; Wang and Ladegaard, 2008) – here, Barcelonese Catalan (SC), in which the verb root is followed by the first person singular inflectional morpheme *-o*. I also expect linguistic factors such as word frequency and complexity of the consonant cluster to have an effect on the reduction or maintenance of the morpheme. Because of frequency of use (in this case spoken MC) there is the possibility that certain frequent verbs might reduce the morpheme more often (as in spoken MC) while infrequent verbs could be more likely to maintain the *-o* morpheme, e.g. *desintegro* ‘(I) disintegrate’). The complexity of the cluster may also have an effect, since MC stems appear without additional morphology and maintain final consonant clusters that appear to violate the syllable restrictions imposed by the Sonority Sequencing Principle (SSP) (Dols, 1993; Dols and Wheeler, 1996; Serra, 1996; Pons, 2002, 2006, 2007; Amengual and Blanco, 2010). In these controversial verb forms, morpheme maintenance may be the best option to avoid ill-formed clusters (in violation of the SSP), while verbs with a non-controversial syllabic structure would not be an impediment for morpheme reduction. Avoidance strategies (cluster simplification) for these controversial verb forms in MC have been reported for oral translations (Amengual and Blanco, 2010).

#### 3.2. Method

##### 3.2.1. Participants

Thirty-five Catalan-Spanish bilingual residents of Majorca (Spain) participated in the present study. Their average age at the time of testing was 29.1 (range 18-62 years) and included 25 women and 10 men. All participants were born and educated in the island of Majorca, had extensive exposure to both languages on a daily basis, and resided in urban and rural areas of the island. The youngest participants had completed the majority of their secondary school and most of their primary school in

Catalan while older participants (age 32 and up) completed their education exclusively in Spanish. These participants spoke Catalan and/or Spanish in the household and were not native in another language.

A language history questionnaire (LHQ) was administered to the 35 Catalan-Spanish bilingual participants. The participants responded to questions regarding demographic information such as gender, age, place of birth, location of primary school, location of secondary school and university (if applicable), and place of birth of mother and father. Additionally, they were asked several language background questions: (1) “Which language do you use to speak with your mother, father and sibling(s)?” (2) “Which language do you use mostly in your daily life?” (3) “How many and which languages do you use at home?” (4) “Which language do you consider to be your native language?” (5) “Which language(s) do you use: (i) with your best friend/partner, (ii) mainly at work, (iii) when shopping, (iv) if you need to write a list for yourself (6) “Which language do you feel more comfortable with when: (i) writing, (ii) speaking, (iii) reading (7) “In which language have you read most in your academic career?” (8) “Which language do you prefer to listen to?” (9) “If you could choose to watch a movie in Spanish or Catalan, which would you prefer?” Participants were classified in a group based on the responses given in the LHQ (Catalan-dominant and Spanish-dominant). A bilingual speaker was classified as Spanish-dominant if he/she mainly spoke Spanish at home, considered Spanish his/her native language, and favored the use of Spanish in their daily life. A classification as Catalan-dominant applied when Catalan was answered in response to these questions.

In addition to the LHQ, participants were asked open-ended questions to collect the participants’ opinions, linguistic identity, and attitudes towards Spanish, Catalan, and the variety of Catalan spoken in Majorca. In order to divide the participants into two groups, either favoring or disfavoring MC with an official status distinct from SC, participant responses to the question “Do you think that Majorcan Catalan should have an official status being distinct from SC, and why?” was considered. For the participants who answered in favor of MC having an official status being distinct from SC, the group “favorable attitude toward MC” was assigned. For participants who answered that MC was a dialect of SC and that SC must be the official variety used in the island the group of “favorable attitude toward SC” was assigned. Participants were asked to expand on their opinion of the dialects and were presented with follow up questions to avoid a vague answer, thus ensuring an accurate classification. Finally, participants were asked “In formal writing, would you use Standard Catalan or the Majorcan variety?” The purpose of this question was to classify participants in two groups: those who claim they use MC to write and those that claim to use SC when writing.

### 3.2.2. Procedure

Participants each performed a series of translation tasks in which they were asked to translate Spanish sentences to Catalan in written form. Participants were asked to silently read sentences written in Spanish and to write translations in Catalan matching the Spanish as closely as possible. If a participant asked what variety of Catalan to use, the experimenter responded “just in Catalan” and gave no further instructions. The stimuli consisted of thirty-eight (38) experimental verbs in the first person singular present indicative form. From these verbs, eighteen (18) contained cluster sequences in violation of the Sonority Sequence Principle (SSP) when the first person singular present indicative morpheme is reduced in speech, e.g. *compr* ‘(I) buy.’ The remaining 20 verbs did not include a controversial syllabic structure, e.g. *cant* ‘(I) sing.’ Word frequency of the target verb forms was determined using the frequency measure in Rafel i Fontanals (1996) and were classified into three levels (high, medium, and low) according to the absolute frequency in the dictionary. Specifically, items were categorized as being low frequent when their absolute frequency was lower than 500. A medium frequency was assigned to those items with an absolute frequency between 500 and 2000. Finally, lexical items with an absolute frequency of 2000 or above were considered high frequent verbs.

#### (2) Sample translation sentence.

Spanish presented in writing: *El profesor me ha dicho que no me concentro suficientemente en clase*

Catalan expected in production: *El professor m'ha dit que no me concentr(o) suficientment a classe.*

‘The professor has told me that I do not concentrate enough in class.’

### 3.2.3. Analysis

In the multivariate analysis of the data I used the statistical analysis program GoldVarb X (Sankoff, Tagliamonte, & Smith, 2005). Factor groups and individual factors within groups were tested, and results are reported as factor weights, with weights between 0 and .5 disfavoring the use of a variant, in this case morpheme reduction, and weights between .5 and 1.0 favoring morpheme reduction.

For this analysis all instances of morphemic reduction and morpheme maintenance from the data were extracted yielding a total of 1279 out of the possible 1330 tokens. Of the 1330 tokens, 3.8% of the tokens (N=51) were discarded from the analysis due to avoidance of the target form in the present indicative form, especially by use of the progressive instead (e.g. *estic entrant* ‘(I) am entering’). The dependent variable for this analysis is morpheme reduction/morpheme maintenance. The independent, linguistic variables include verb frequency (high, medium, low) and complexity of the consonant cluster (violation of SSP, non-controversial syllabic structure). The independent, social variables are language dominance (Spanish, Catalan), level of education (primary, secondary, tertiary), language of education (Spanish, Catalan), attitude toward MC as being official (agree, disagree), variety a participant claims to write in (MC, SC), and gender. The results are discussed in the following section.

## 4. Results

The results show a greater number of occurrences of morpheme reduction, occurring in 74.1% (N=948) of productions, compared to the less frequent morpheme maintenance at 25.9% (N=331). The results indicate that Catalan-Spanish bilinguals in Majorca show a strong tendency to represent the MC morphemic reduction in writing, a significant finding, given that SC is the standard used in writing at school and in the written media.

**Table 2.** Morpheme reduction vs. morpheme maintenance.

Morpheme reduction		Morpheme maintenance	
%	N	%	N
74.1	948	25.9	331
<b>Total N</b>	<b>1279</b>		

The multivariate analysis returned as significant the following factor groups: complexity of the cluster, attitude toward MC as deserving to be the official language, level of education, language dominance, variety claimed to be used in writing, and gender. On the other hand, the factor groups not selected as significant were word frequency and, interestingly, language of instruction in the education system.

The only linguistic variable that was statistically significant was the complexity of the cluster (and not word frequency). As predicted, the complexity of the cluster has a strong effect on the maintenance of *-o*, which, as argued above, is an option to avoid leaving the verb stem bare and ending the word in a sequence of consonants in violation of the SSP. Again, this result follows the observation of other avoidance strategies (cluster simplification) for these controversial verb forms in MC in oral speech (Amengual and Blanco, 2010). Indeed, verbs without ill-formed clusters do not present an impediment for morpheme reduction. Despite not being selected as significant, word frequency still produced the expected tendency, that morphemes in the infrequent verbs were least likely to be reduced (.46), and that high frequency verbs were most likely to be reduced (.52), presenting a symmetrical distribution.



**Table 3.** Multivariate analyses of the contribution of internal and external factors selected as significant to the probability of morpheme reduction; factor groups not selected as significant in square brackets.

	Corrected mean		.781
	Log likelihood		-607.874
	Total N		1279
	Factor weight	%	N
<b>Complexity of the cluster</b>			
Simple	.65	84.5	573
Complex	.32	62.4	375
<i>Range</i>	33		
<b>Level of education</b>			
Primary	.59	85.2	92
Secondary	.72	90.9	308
University/College	.39	65.9	548
<i>Range</i>	33		
<b>Variety used to write</b>			
Majorcan Catalan	.71	82.2	364
Standard Catalan	.38	69.9	584
<i>Range</i>	33		
<b>Language dominance</b>			
Catalan	.59	78.7	633
Spanish	.35	66.3	315
<i>Range</i>	24		
<b>Attitude toward MC as official</b>			
Favorable attitude toward SC	.37	75.8	363
Favorable attitude toward MC	.57	73.1	585
<i>Range</i>	20		
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	.58	81.8	310
Female	.46	70.9	638
<i>Range</i>	12		
<b>Word Frequency</b>			
<i>High</i>	[.52]	78.6	429
<i>Medium</i>	[.50]	75.6	306
<i>Low</i>	[.46]	64.9	213
<i>Range</i>	6		
<b>Language of education</b>			
<i>Catalan</i>	[.51]	72	478
<i>Spanish</i>	[.48]	76.4	470
<i>Range</i>	3		

Input: 0.793    Significance: 0.005

The social factors of level of education, language dominance, gender, and attitude towards and identification with Majorcan autonomous linguistic identity influence the choice of morpheme reduction or maintenance; importantly, language of instruction in the education system was not a significant factor in reducing or maintaining the morpheme in these verb forms. This confirms that morpheme reduction cannot be simply associated to a lack of input in normative Catalan at school. In contrast, a factor that played a role was the level of education. As shown in Table 3, level of education is a significant factor in morpheme reduction or morpheme maintenance: participants with a college education disfavored morpheme reduction (.39), while participants with only a primary or secondary education level favored morpheme reduction (.59 and .79, respectively). This can be explained by the fact that the highly-educated classes in Majorca have traditionally favored the standardization of Catalan (Bibiloni, 2002), and thus, use normative Catalan in place of a substandard variety. Another

factor that showed a significant effect on the independent variable was gender: males favored morpheme reduction (.58) while women did not (.46). This result is predicted by previous sociolinguistic research; in general, women are more sensitive to overt social correction and use more prestige forms than men (Labov, 2003) and are therefore more likely to approximate prestige dialects, in this case, Barcelonese Catalan. Language dominance was also selected as a significant factor, showing that Catalan-dominant speakers were more likely to reduce the morpheme (.59) than Spanish-dominant speakers (.35), who clearly disfavored the reduction of the morpheme. These results are in line with the claims in Bibiloni (2002), in which bilinguals who have not been exposed to Catalan at home and have acquired Catalan in school and in the media use a variety of Catalan much closer to the normative standard variety than those speakers from a Catalan-speaking household.

Finally, the results of this study confirm that Majorcan linguistic identity is reflected in the choice of maintaining or reducing the morpheme in these verb forms. Those speakers in favor of recognizing MC as an independent variety from SC with official status favor morpheme reduction (.57), while those that believe that MC should not be recognized as an official variety in the island disfavor morpheme reduction (.37). Also, Majorcans who claim that they use the MC variety in their writing favor morpheme reduction (.71), while Majorcans that resort to the standard variety in writing disfavor morpheme reduction (.38). As explained earlier, verbal morphology is a clear and identifiable marker in Catalan, not only orally (the inflectional vowel is represented by the morphs /u/, /o/, /e/, or /i/ in other dialects of Catalan), but also in written form (SC *-o*, Valencian Catalan *-e*).

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

This study considered the variation in writing between morpheme reduction (typical in spoken MC) and morpheme maintenance (typical in SC) in first person singular present indicative verb forms, which in other varieties of Catalan include an overt morpheme (in SC, *-o*), but which in MC has only a null morpheme. The written production of Catalan-Spanish bilinguals in Majorca was tested by means of a translation task in which participants were asked to translate Spanish sentences to Catalan in written form. By performing a multivariate analysis of the written translation data using the statistical analysis program Goldvarb X, it was determined that a number of extragrammatical factors affected the choice of one variant (reduction or maintenance) over the other, suggesting that speakers are resisting the written standardized form with *-o*. Significant social variables included gender, language dominance, level of education, variety claimed to be used in writing, and attitude toward MC as being distinct from SC and deserving an official status, and the only significant linguistic variables was complexity of the cluster. Language of education and verb frequency did not significantly influence morpheme maintenance or reduction. From the data collected, there is morpheme reduction in 74.1% of productions, distinguishing this variety from other varieties of Catalan, including the standard. The data have clearly demonstrated that morpheme reduction by MC speakers is pervasive in writing. These results confirm that Majorcan linguistic identity is reflected in the choice of maintaining or reducing the morpheme in these verb forms. Those speakers who are in favor of officially recognizing MC as an independent variety distinct from SC favor morpheme reduction (.57), which most closely represents spoken MC, while those that believe that MC should not be recognized as an official variety in the island disfavor morpheme reduction (.37), since maintenance imitates SC production and standards.

Majorcans, since the beginning of the 1980s, have had access to administrative documents, cultural products (books, magazines, newspapers), and audiovisual media in Catalan, which may be local or from Catalonia or Valencia. Majorcan speakers born since the 1980s have also had more contact with normative standard Catalan because of the education system, in comparison to older generations, born prior to 1980, who grew up in a bilingual society in which Spanish was the only language that was present in all formal spheres of communication and for whom Catalan was exclusively used in informal settings. In addition, older generations are used to having a written language separated from their oral language, since before the Law of Linguistic Normalization (1986) Spanish was the only language permitted in writing. However, increased literacy in Catalan has not been able to narrow the gap between the oral language used in the community and the written variety used at school; today, it is a matter of competing dialects. When asked “In formal writing, would you use Standard Catalan or the Majorcan variety?” several participants included answers that demonstrate that SC is seen as the language to be used in writing, and MC is the variety favored in the oral domain:

(3) *La lengua es catalán, no es mallorquín. El mallorquín es un dialecto del catalán. Los profesores hablan mallorquín, pero deben enseñar el catalán estándar.* (Part. 9)

The language is Catalan, not Majorcan. Majorcan is a dialect of Catalan. Teachers speak Majorcan, but they should teach Standard Catalan. (*written in Castilian Spanish*)

(4) *Català estàndar es sa llengua oficial. Es mallorquí es una manera de xerrar i no una manera d'escriure.* (Part. 12)

Standard Catalan is the official language. Majorcan is a spoken form and not a written form. (*written in Majorcan Catalan*)

(5) [...] *a un text formal sempre s'ha d'escriure en català estàndar. No pots escriure així com xerres.* (Part. 16)

...a formal text always has to be written in Standard Catalan. You can't write the way you talk. (*written in Majorcan Catalan*)

(6) [...] *Cuando intento escribir en mallorquín es como si hiciera faltas de ortografía porque me han enseñado la gramática en catalán.* (Part. 32)

...When I try to write in Majorcan it's as if there are writing errors because they've taught me grammar in Catalan. (*written in Castilian Spanish*)

(7) [...] *un profesor es pot expresar en mallorquí oralment, però en el registre escrit s'ha de fer servir l'estàndar. La llengua mallorquina no és una llengua separada del català central. Ambdues són la mateixa, cadascuna en sa varietat dialectal, i comparteixen el mateix estàndar.* (Part. 7)

...a teacher expresses himself orally in Majorcan, but in the written register it's necessary to use the standard. The Majorcan language isn't a separate language from Central [standard] Catalan. They are both the same, each one is a dialectal variety, and they share the same standard. (*written in Majorcan Catalan*)

The quotes above are of particular interest because many of these participants state that SC is more appropriate in *formal* contexts but responded using MC features in writing, e.g. the singular feminine definite article (known as the *article salat*) *sa* (MC) instead of *la* (SC) 'the', or the verb *xerrar* instead of *parlar* ('to speak'). However, this might suggest that their written responses may vary according to formality. It would be interesting to repeat this study with written language elicited in several contexts ranging from less to more formal.

Additionally, this allegiance to SC as the normative variety in place of MC is not the only view, and other Majorcans challenge this perspective and acknowledge the influence from Catalonia while stressing the maintenance of their vernacular in all contexts of use and highlight the differences with respect to the standard:

(8) [...] *hi ha formes pròpies del català de Mallorca que, tot i no coincidir amb l'estàndar, també són normatives.* (Part. 22)

...There are forms that are typical of Majorcan Catalan, that even if they do not coincide with the standard, are also normative. (*written in Majorcan Catalan*).

(9) *El mallorquín no es lo mismo que el catalán. Viene de la misma raíz, pero nosotros ya hemos evolucionado el idioma, lo hemos hecho nuestro. Al hacerlo nuestro, nosotros podemos entender mejor a los catalanes, pero ellos no nos entienden a nosotros. Nosotros tenemos un acento mucho más cerrado y palabras más difíciles. Nosotros con la televisión de Catalunya hemos aprendido mucho catalán y con la escuela.* (Part. 32)

Majorcan isn't the same as Catalan. It comes from the same root, but we have already evolved the language, we have made it ours. Making it ours, we can understand Catalans better, but they cannot understand us. We have a much more distinct accent and words that are harder. We have learned a lot of Catalan with the television from Catalonia and with school. (*written in Castilian Spanish*)

Historically, there has been a conflict between Catalan and Spanish in which two genuinely different, mutually unintelligible languages are involved, with centuries-old political, cultural, linguistic differences roots. However, a similar conflict has developed in recent years between Majorcan (and Balearic) Catalan and Standard Catalan, two very similar varieties. During the 1970s there was a movement in Majorca called *gonellisme* (the parallel linguistic secessionist movement in Valencia is the *blaverisme*), which claimed to defend Balearic identity from *catalanismo*, the perceived intrusion of Catalonian culture and language (Bibiloni, 2002). At present, this movement, which promotes linguistic secession and opposition to the need for a Standard Catalan, has received little political support<sup>6</sup> in comparison to that found in Valencia. However, this paper presents evidence that there is still a divide among the youngest speakers in the community, and that the attitude and identification with Majorcan autonomous linguistic identity plays a significant role in written production. Specifically, morpheme reduction as a salient dialectal feature of MC which surfaces as an identity marker in Catalan (e.g. SC *-o*, Valencian Catalan *-e*, MC *-ø*) encodes a positive attitude towards the local variety and a resistance to the standard from Catalonia. Therefore, in contrast to the written rules of SC, Majorcans are showing a strong tendency to represent the MC morphemic reduction in writing. This is particularly relevant since morpheme reduction is not presented in written input, since SC is the variety of language used in formal written texts and in the academic setting.

Further research should be carried out to study different types of written forms, e.g. formal academic writing, text messaging, blogs, etc, to find out if dialectal Catalan writing is pervasive in this community. Finally, the results in Majorca should be contrasted against other Catalan-speaking regions, especially Valencia, where there is a well-established ‘secessionist’ anti-Catalanist movement whose discourse includes the dangers of political dependency as well as the threat to the Valencian language from the hegemony of Catalan (Casesnoves Ferrer and Sankoff, 2004).

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<sup>6</sup> Clau de Mallorca is the political party supporting *gonellisme* (comparable to Unió Valenciana with *blaverisme*). *S'institut Clau de Mallorca* (<http://www.institutclau.com/>) and *Circulo Balear* (<http://www.circulobalear.com>) are the cultural associations which promote Majorcan Catalan.

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