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**Sources of variation in Galician multilinguals' attitudes  
towards Galician, Spanish, English and French**

**Fuentes de variación en las actitudes de los  
multilingües gallegos hacia el gallego, el castellano, el  
inglés y el francés**

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**ABSTRACT**

In this study we investigate the sources of individual differences in the language attitudes of 125 students enrolled in a language school in La Coruña (Galicia). Adopting a multicompetence perspective (Cook, 2012), we assumed that the presence of a particular language in the mind of a multilingual may affect attitudes towards the other languages. Considering the unique status, prestige and history of Galician, Spanish, English and French in La Coruña, we also assumed that differences in attitudes towards these languages could be linked more or less strongly to various background variables in participants such as self-perceived proficiency, type of upbringing (monolingual or bilingual), age of onset of learning, exposure to foreign languages through television and visits to the foreign country, gender and age. The results of statistical analyses confirm that connections exist in the attitudes toward the different languages, and that the independent variables have different effects on the attitudes towards the four language.

Keywords: Attitudes, multilingualism, Galicia

## RESUMEN

*En este trabajo se investiga la variación de las diferencias individuales en las actitudes de lenguaje de 125 estudiantes matriculados en una escuela de idiomas en La Coruña (Galicia). Siguiendo la teoría de la multicompetencia (Cook, 2012), establecemos que la presencia de una lengua concreta en la mente de un multilingüe puede variar su actitud hacia otras lenguas. Teniendo en cuenta el estatus único, el prestigio y la historia del gallego, castellano, inglés y francés en La Coruña, establecimos la premisa de que las diferencias en las actitudes hacia estos idiomas podrían estar relacionadas con variables del contexto tales como la autopercepción de la competencia, el tipo de educación (monolingüe o bilingüe), la edad de inicio del aprendizaje, la exposición a idiomas extranjeros a través de la televisión, así como los viajes al extranjero, el género y la edad. Los resultados de los análisis estadísticos muestran que existe relación entre las actitudes hacia los diferentes idiomas, y que las variables independientes tienen diferentes efectos sobre las actitudes hacia los cuatro idiomas.*

*Palabras clave: actitudes lingüísticas, multilingüismo, Galicia*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study of linguistic attitudes, which are speakers' opinions, ideas and prejudices about a language, has been a key area in sociolinguistic studies for the last 40 years. It gives researchers an insight into the process of what speakers actually think about their speech production and their identity. Language is not neutral and from the moment we deliver an utterance we are also consciously or unconsciously expressing our views, judgements and thoughts. As Tabouret-Keller (1997: 315) states "the language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of this language is inseparable. [...] Language acts are acts of identity." This process affects not only the individual everyday interactions, but also at a

macrosociological level. Being this fundamental in any linguistic community, when more than one language is spoken in one same community, attitudes acquire a greater importance, as they normally not only include attitudes towards the language itself but towards speakers of a particular language (Fasold 1984: 148). Furthermore, the status and importance of a language in a particular society are individual but originate in-group behaviour. For this reason, Baker (1988) stresses the importance of attitudes in the discussion of bilingualism.

In regions where different languages co-exist, linguistic choices become marked and can either simply reflect social group behaviour, personal preferences, traditional or customary use or ideological positioning, amongst others.

Spain has a linguistic diversity comparable to Switzerland, Belgium or Canada. However, it does not have a state language policy of protection and promotion of its internal linguistic diversity, but each bilingual region regulates its own linguistic policy and is in charge of protecting and promoting its minority language. As is normally the case in this type of socio-linguistic context, there is an important difference between the perspectives of monolingual Spanish language users and that of plurilingual other languages users (Catalan-Valencian, Galician and Basque). Spanish is the common language for all Spanish citizens and on the other hand, the common languages of the four different regions<sup>1</sup> which are officially bilingual, Catalonia and the Valencian Community, Galicia and the Basque country. As in other diglossic and bilingual areas of the world, conflicts arise from the setting in which the common language (Spanish or *Castellano* in this case) is considered a taboo by a significant part of the population in the monolingual regions where monolinguals find it suspicious that there are bilingual regions and see them as possible separatists and also in the bilingual ones, where people find it difficult to accept that no matter which the first language is, all citizens in Spain can understand each other perfectly in Spanish.

The aim of this paper is not to report on the language attitudes in a mini-census approach but rather to investigate to what extent sources of individual differences are comparable across languages and whether the language attitudes of Galician students towards Spanish, Galician, English and French are interrelated. It also assumes that just as linguistic systems influence each other in

the mind of multilingual users (cf. Cook 2012), attitudes towards various languages also exert an influence on each other (Dewaele 2016).

## 2. SOCIOHISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Galician is a co-official language of the North-western region of Spain called Galicia. The *galego* language belongs to the Romance language group –like French or Catalanian– and it is the result of the evolution of Latin introduced by the Romans on the north west of the Iberian Peninsula. Galician's consolidation did not take place until the 20th century. A recovery of Galician as literary, cultural and historical language was confirmed towards the end of 20th century. Galician was not standardized yet and this had a negative effect on social prestige and affected its geographical spread (less widely used in cities).

Since the middle of the 12th Century, when Galicia became part of the Castilian Crown, Galician started its differentiation from Portuguese, slowly losing its prestige with regard to the dominant Castilian classes and language (Ramallo 2007: 21). There were attempts to strengthen its status (*Rexurdimento*), but the middle classes imitated the habits of the more prestigious Spanish upper classes, for whom Spanish was the language of choice. Spanish was the only language considered official during Franco's reign and Galician thus became considered a dialect used by the rural lower classes. With the promulgation of the Statute of Autonomy of Galicia in 1981 and the transition into democracy, Galician was given the status of co-official language and its normalization began to take place in all fields of public institutions and powers, especially administration, education and media, however, as Herreiro-Baleiro (2002: 297) states, according to the Law of Linguistic Normalization, Galicians have the right to know Galician and the duty to know Spanish, which places Galician in a disadvantageous position with regard to the Spanish language.

The legislative setting in which different orders and decrees regulate the use of Galician in local, judicial, military and administration allow the use of Galician with local and autonomic administrations who must write all their official documents in Galician; it has been incorporated into education from primary level and the promotion of the Galician language is guaranteed where

there are immigrants and in the territories bordering the Community.

The *Secretaría Xeral de Política Lingüística* (General Secretariat of Linguistic Policy) is the organism monitoring Galician use at every level of public life. It is also responsible for the promotion of the use of Galician in society, providing the means to achieve a full "*galeguización*" (change into Galician), fighting against the traditional prejudices and promoting positive attitudes.

Galician is the language of almost two and a half million of the 2,800,000 inhabitants of Galicia. According to *A Sociedade Galega e o Idioma: a evolución sociolingüística de Galicia (1992-2003)*, published by the Language Section of the Council for Galician Culture, the majority of people still learn to speak in Galician, although nearly half the population learns to speak in Castilian or in both languages. This publication also states that although nearly all of the older generation said their first words in Galician and consider it their first language, it is not the case amongst younger people. In general, it is in the rural setting, i.e. in villages and in the coastal areas, that more people use Galician whereas in cities and inland areas Spanish is generally more widely used. A decrease in the number of people who learn to speak in Galician has been observed over the last few years, and more and more people are now being brought up as bilingual speakers.

Since the co-official status was granted, there has been a greater presence of Galician in areas where it had been traditionally been absent. The Social-linguistic Map of Galicia, *MSG*, an important work done thanks to an agreement between *Xunta de Galicia* (the regional government) and the Social-linguistic seminar of the Royal Academy of Galicia, shows a change in values with respect to the language: 72% of the population have a good attitude towards Galician; 68,7% think that Galician is similar or more useful than Spanish, and 66% think that Galician should be the language used in schools. This study, which constitutes the most reliable tool for the sociological analysis of Galician language, was elaborated from polls which projected the opinion of a representative example of the population and collected information from the different social, cultural and geographical dimensions. It was introduced in 1992 and the last results are from the year 2004, although published completely in 2009. Concerning linguistic attitudes, the most striking feature was that in contrast with the general positive results

found towards Galician, the number of speakers is lower amongst the young population who have a positive attitude yet speak relatively Galician (O'Rourke 2005). In further studies taken from the same MSG data<sup>2</sup>, it was found that youngsters who normally speak Spanish have more negative views towards Galician than expected; it was also revealed that Galician in general played a discrete role in young people's identity, they valued negatively those who code-switched, and even pretended to have a lower level of linguistic competence in Galician than they actually had. The younger people also had prejudiced and negative stereotypes of Galician speakers. On a more positive note, the research did show a favourable attitude towards linguistic diversity and plurilingualism and an improvement in the social prestige of Galician.

Summarising the results, the number of people who normally speak Galician has gone down from 61% to 39%. The opposite has happened to Spanish. The main difference which has occurred between the MSG from 1992 and 2004 is in the monolingual population, the Galician monolinguals were over 30% in the 1992 MSG whereas only 16% now. With Spanish, figures have shown an increase from 13% to 25.8%. Although there does not seem to be a direct link between the use of Galician and ideology, the use of Galician increases among those with left-wing inclinations and the use of Spanish increase on the other side of the political spectrum.

There are three broad types of speakers in Galicia: monolingual Spanish speakers, Galician speakers and the bilingual ones. Each will be described.

### *Monolingual Spanish*

In the first group are those who usually speak Spanish, understand Galician, but were brought up speaking only Spanish and it is their everyday language of use. However, despite the fact that they publicly show positive attitudes towards Galician, they do not actually consider it as important as Spanish or even English and may not teach their children Galician. Their preference for their children's schooling is the denominated "bilingual" education in which Galician and Spanish are used on a 50% basis<sup>3</sup>. These speakers mainly live in cities or larger towns. During the Spanish Transition, an important part of a whole generation was brought up as Spanish speakers although their parents' main language was Galician. They normally have a strong Spanish national identity and consider Spanish as the

language that will allow them to study and work both inside and outside Galicia.

### *Galician speakers*

The Galician speakers can be subdivided into two further groups: the monolingual Galicians, those who live in rural areas and who have problems speaking Spanish and those who choose to speak Galician all the time even though they are fully bilingual. The first are normally older people who have never left their place of origin and have problems communicating in Spanish. Whichever their attitude is, they are less likely to speak Spanish. The latter are on the opposite side of the scale, i.e. younger generations with higher levels of education and living in cities or larger urban centres. They may have been brought up in Spanish or Galician, but have a strong Galician identity, can speak Spanish but prefer and choose to use *normativo* Galician (the standardised official variety) perfectly and raise their children in Galician. They would also opt for more teaching hours in Galician at school. Their choice of Galician over Spanish typically reflects their political ideology. This group is a good example of how changes in social values affect the attitudes and intergroup relations. As Galician is used by intellectuals and socially empowered individuals, the social value of the language is increased in this group and so is its prestige. Not all varieties of Galician are equally appreciated. Loureiro-Rodríguez, Boggess and Goldsmith (2013) found significant differences in Galician high school students' attitudes towards standard Galician, non-standard Galician and Spanish. They particularly disliked non-standard Galician and a Galician accent in Spanish.

### *Bilingual speakers*

The bilingual group is the largest and it includes different socio-cultural classes, age groups and geographical areas. They use Galician or Spanish depending on the situation and context. Normally if an interlocutor uses either, the bilingual will answer in the same language. O'Rourke's (2005, 2006) study of 725 Galician university students in Vigo showed that positive attitudes towards Galician were strongly linked to Galician national sentiment and that these contributed to changes in the language behaviours of younger users of Galician.

### 3. SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN GALICIA

As in the rest of Spain, students study a first foreign language in primary education, typically English, and can choose a second foreign language (French, Portuguese or German) at secondary level. French is the preferred option for this second foreign language.

Older generations may have received most of their schooling in Spanish with Galician as an obligatory subject throughout their primary and secondary education. Education curricula before the nineties included the study of foreign languages at ages ranging from 8 to 10 years old.

The first foreign language is, to a very wide extent, English. In fact, in 2009 the Galician government introduced a "plurilingual education" CLIL project similar to those in Madrid or Andalucía, in which 144 Primary and Secondary schools use English (80% of all the schools), French (15%) or Portuguese (5%) as one of their languages of instruction in a third of their school hours (in subjects such as art, mathematics, music, biology, geology and physical education). This programme wants to make most Galician schools "plurilingual". This issue has become quite controversial, as those who want more teaching hours in Galician claim it will reduce them. Concerns have also been voiced about the negative effects of CLIL on academic performance. González Gándara's (2015) study of academic grades of 747 pupils from 13 primary schools in Galicia over a two-year period showed that "there were no negative effects on academic performance caused by CLIL" (2015: 13).

A study by Dewaele (2012) on variation in self-perceived proficiency in Spanish, Galician, English and French among 122 Galician students (i.e. the sample on which the current study is based) showed that they felt maximally proficient in Spanish, somewhat less so in Galician, and less still in English and French. Early Spanish-Galician bilinguals scored significantly higher than the participants who had been brought up monolingually on comprehension and writing in Galician and in speaking, reading and writing in French. The language(s) of upbringing had no effect on self-perceived proficiency in Spanish nor English, nor on speaking and reading Galician. Participants who had had their education in bilingual Spanish-Galician schools felt significantly more proficient

in Galician compared to those who had gone to monolingual schools. Age of onset of acquisition was found to have an effect for Galician, English and French, with an early start being linked to high level of proficiency. Participants with more positive attitudes towards Galician, English and French (but not Spanish) reported significantly higher levels of proficiency. Participants who had stayed in French- or English-speaking countries or watched television programmes regularly in these languages rated their proficiency in these two languages significantly higher than those who had not been abroad on a number of skills. No gender differences emerged, but older participants were found to score lower on oral self-perceived proficiency in Galician, English and French but not in Spanish.

#### **4. LANGUAGE ATTITUDES**

Gardner (1985) defined attitude as “an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual beliefs or opinions about the referent” (1985: 9). Attitudes are at the core of his model, yet they are not attitudes towards a particular language but rather attitudes towards its speakers and towards speaking that language. As Dörnyei, Cziser and Németh (2006) have shown, attitudes towards various languages are linked to macrocontextual and geopolitical factors (2006: 423).

Lasagabaster (2001) has shown that the knowledge of previous languages affects attitudes towards subsequent foreign languages. In his study on Basque university students with Basque L1, Spanish L1 and bilingual speakers, he found that the different first languages affected not only attitudes towards Spanish and Basque (the two official languages in the Basque Autonomous Community) but also towards English (the foreign language), which had been learned in instructed settings. Further studies in the same context showed that Basque students’ most positive attitudes were towards English and their own L1 (Basque or Spanish) (Ibarraran, Lasagabaster and Sierra 2007; Lasagabaster 2004, 2005).

A study by Huguet, Lapresta and Madariaga (2008) on language attitudes towards regional and foreign languages in three Spanish regions (Huesca, Teruel and Zaragoza) in Aragon showed that school children have, on average, the most positive attitudes towards Spanish, followed by Aragonese, English, French and Catalan (which is spoken in the eastern fringe of the province).

Further analysis showed that attitudes towards Aragonese and English were similar across the three regions, but that Catalan and French were more popular in the east while participants had more positive attitudes towards Spanish in the Teruel region (2008: 286). Age was not related to language attitudes. Participants who attended Catalan classes had more positive attitudes towards that language. The social status of the family had little effect on attitudes, except on English, which were more positive among children from higher social status families. The participants' home language had no effect on their attitudes towards Aragonese, English and French, but it did have an effect on attitudes towards Spanish and Catalan. Children from bilingual homes scored lower on attitudes towards Spanish than those from monolingual Spanish homes and higher on their attitudes towards Catalan (2008: 287).

Dewaele (2005) found a similar pattern in attitudes towards foreign languages among Flemish high school students: attitudes towards English were much more positive than those towards French. Participants with a strong regional identity (i.e. Flemish) displayed more negative attitudes towards French than participants with a stronger national identity (Belgian). The more negative attitude towards French was attributed to the tense socio-political relations between the Dutch and French-speaking communities in Belgium while English is generally perceived to be a 'cool' lingua franca. This departure point could be used as a hypothesis of what occurs in Galicia.

The effect of age of onset of learning on language attitudes and motivation has been studied in a number of studies. The early introduction of English (at the age of 4) seems to have exerted a positive influence on Basque students' attitudes (Cenoz 2001; Cenoz & Gorter 2005, 2017). However, Tragant (2006) reported that Catalan students who had started learning English at 11 had more positive attitudes towards the language than participants who had started at age 8. Learners who had had more hours of exposure to English also held more positive attitudes (Tragant & Muñoz 2000).

In a more decontextualised study of multilinguals' perceptions and attitudes towards their languages, Dewaele (2010a, b) found that languages that have been acquired later in life typically score lower on affective dimensions such as perceived emotionality, richness, colourfulness, warmth but not necessarily on more instrumental dimensions such as perceived usefulness. The use of

languages acquired later in life typically elicits higher levels of foreign language anxiety (Dewaele 2010a).

## **5. MULTICOMPETENCE**

Vivian Cook pointed out that learning a new language has consequences beyond the linguistic realm. The L2 user gains multicompetence which “involves the whole mind of the speaker, not simply their first language (L1) or their second. It assumes that someone who knows two or more languages is a different person from a monolingual and so needs to be looked at in their own right rather than as a deficient monolingual.” (2012: 1). Dewaele and Pavlenko (2003) highlighted the dynamic nature of an individual's multicompetence. It is constantly evolving through use and exposure to different languages. As a consequence, we posited that no two individuals can have perfectly isomorphic multicompetence. Comparing languages in contact in the multilingual's mind with liquid paint on a canvas, the authors argued that: “two liquid colours that blend unevenly, i.e. some areas will take on the new colour resulting from the mixing, but other areas will retain the original colour while still other may look like the new colour, but a closer look may reveal a slightly different hue according to the viewer's angle” (2003: 137). In other words, the languages in the mind of the multilingual constitute a highly complex system in a state of flux, as new linguistic input can cause widespread change with some parts of the system remaining unaffected (Dewaele & Pavlenko 2003).

## **6. METHOD**

### **6.1 Participants**

The sample consists of 92 women and 30 men (aged 15-65, mean age = 34) who were students at the Escuela Oficial de Idiomas in La Coruña (Galicia, Spain). As such they cannot be seen as a representative sample of the Galician population, because all had voluntarily enrolled in the language school and are therefore expected to have more favourable attitudes towards foreign

languages than the general population. However, there is no reason to believe that their attitudes towards the local languages would differ from other inhabitants of the region of La Coruña. Forty-eight participants grew up with Spanish as their L1, 17 grew up with Galician as their L1, and the remaining 57 grew up with both Spanish and Galician from birth. The sample consists of 3 trilinguals, 97 quadrilinguals, 20 pentalinguals, and 2 sextalinguals. All had studied -or were studying- French and English at secondary school, and were studying French. A majority ( $n = 81$ ) had spent some time in an English-speaking country and 30 watched an English programme on television at least once a week. Similarly, a large group ( $n = 84$ ) had spent some time in France and 49 watched a French programme on television at least once a week.

Twelve participants had studied another Romance language (Portuguese or Catalan) and 10 had studied another Germanic language (German).

The mean Age of Onset of Acquisition (AOA) of learning of Spanish was 1.5 years ( $SD = 2.1$ ), it was 5.5 years for Galician ( $SD = 8.5$ ), 12.3 years for English ( $SD = 12.0$ ) and 18.2 years for French ( $SD = 10.1$ ).

A look at the distribution of AOA shows an important shift across languages. A majority of participants had started with Spanish before age 3 (87.6%) compared to 60.9% for Galician, 5.6% for English and only 1.9% for French.

The largest proportion of participants (52%) had started English between the age of 8 and 12. This bulge fell in the next AOA bracket for French, where 36.8% started between the age of 13 and 18 and another 31.1% started learning French after their secondary education (see table 1)

| AOA   | Spanish |      | Galician |      | English |      | French |      |
|-------|---------|------|----------|------|---------|------|--------|------|
|       | N       | %    | N        | %    | N       | %    | N      | %    |
| Birth | 52      | 43.0 | 37       | 32.2 | 0       | 0.0  | 0      | 0.0  |
| 1-3   | 54      | 44.6 | 33       | 28.7 | 7       | 5.6  | 2      | 1.9  |
| 4-7   | 12      | 9.9  | 18       | 15.7 | 24      | 20.0 | 1      | 0.9  |
| 8-12  | 3       | 2.5  | 12       | 10.4 | 64      | 52.0 | 31     | 29.2 |
| 13-18 | 0       | 0.0  | 7        | 6.1  | 15      | 12.8 | 39     | 36.8 |
| 19+   | 0       | 0.0  | 8        | 7.0  | 12      | 9.6  | 33     | 31.1 |
| TOTAL | 121     | 100  | 115      | 100  | 122     | 100  | 106    | 100  |

Table 1: Distribution of participants according to AOA brackets for the different languages

Seventy participants had had – or were having – their secondary education in Spanish-medium school, 42 had been– or were– in bilingual Galician-Spanish schools.

Participants rated their proficiency levels in speaking, comprehending, reading and writing on a 4-point Likert scale. The highest average score was for Spanish (*mean* = 3.96), followed by Galician (*mean* = 3.46), English (*mean* = 2.54), and French (*mean* = 2.23).

## 6.2 The research instrument

The study received ethical approval at the first author’s research institution. Attitudes towards the different languages were measured through scales consisting of 10 items (from Lasagabaster 2007, who based it on Baker 1992) with 4-point Likert scales, ranging from “totally agree to “totally disagree”. These were the items: I like hearing X spoken; X should be taught to all pupils in the region of Galicia; I like speaking X; X is an easy language to learn; There are not more useful languages to learn than X; I prefer to be taught in X; Learning X enriches my cultural knowledge; I would not mind marrying a speaker of X; X is a language worth learning; If I have children, I would like them to be speakers of X regardless of other languages they may know.

Cronbach alpha analyses revealed strong internal consistency reliability for the attitude scales in the different languages: Spanish (alpha = .87), Galician (alpha = .89), English (alpha = .77) and French (alpha = .73).

A series of one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests revealed that the attitude values for the four languages are normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z values vary between .8 to 1.2, all  $p = ns$ ). As a consequence, parametric statistics were used, with the exception of self-perceived proficiency values, which were not normally distributed.

Printed versions of the anonymous questionnaire in English were collected by Flor Gonzales who was a teacher at the Escuela Oficial de Idiomas.

### **6.3 Research design**

The following independent variables were selected in the present design: 1) self-perceived proficiency; 2) type of upbringing (monolingual or bilingual); 3) monolingual vs bilingual schooling; 4) age of onset of learning the language; 5) exposure to foreign languages through television and visits to the country; 6) gender; 7) and age. Sample sizes may vary across the analyses because some participants did not provide data for all the dependent variables.

#### *Hypotheses*

- 1) Attitudes towards the four languages will differ.
- 2) Higher levels of self-perceived proficiency will be linked to more positive attitudes in all languages.
- 3) Bilinguals from birth (Spanish/Galician) will have more moderated attitudes towards both languages.
- 4) Monolingual versus bilingual schooling will have an effect on attitudes towards the two local languages but not the foreign languages.
- 5) Independent variables of a more general nature, such as Age of onset of acquisition (AoA), exposure to the languages, could equally affect the local and the foreign languages.
- 6) Gender and age may affect language attitudes towards the local languages.
- 7) Attitudes towards the four languages will be connected.

#### *Analysis*

Attitudes were most positive towards Spanish, followed by English, French, and finally Galician (see figure 1). A series of paired t-tests

revealed that the attitudes towards Spanish were significantly higher than for Galician ( $t(123) = -6.7, p < .0001$ ). The attitudes towards English were also significantly more favourable than those towards French ( $t(125) = 3.9, p < .0001$ ). No difference existed between attitudes towards Galician and French ( $t(123) = -0.74, p = ns$ ).

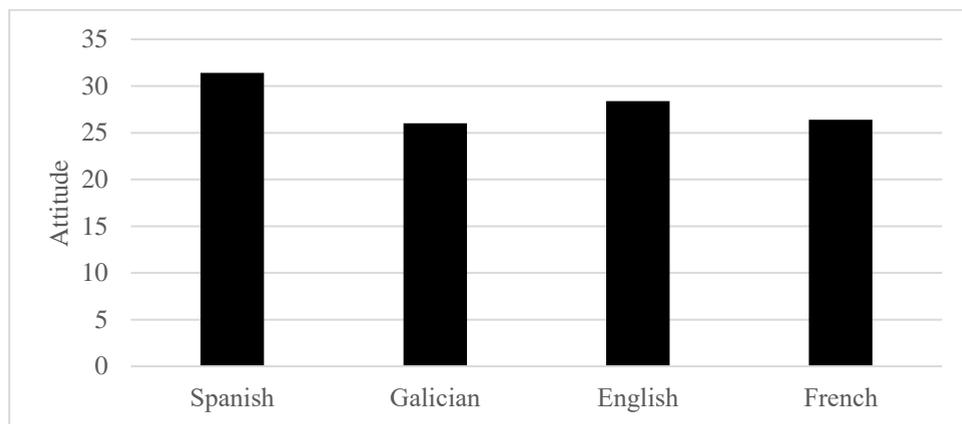


Figure 1: Attitudes towards the four languages

We hypothesised that participants with more positive attitudes towards a language would rate their proficiency higher in that language. A Spearman rank correlation analysis revealed a highly significant positive relationship between attitudes to Galician, English and French and self-perceived proficiency in the four skills in these languages (table 1). However, no such link existed between attitudes towards Spanish and self-perceived proficiency in that language.

|            | Spanish | Galician | English | French  |
|------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| Speak      | 0.05    | 0.47***  | 0.41*** | 0.38*** |
| Comprehend | -0.01   | 0.42***  | 0.40*** | 0.34*** |
| Read       | -0.04   | 0.41***  | 0.35*** | 0.41*** |
| Write      | 0.00    | 0.45***  | 0.43*** | 0.33*** |

\*\*\*  $p < .0001$

Table 1: The relationship between language attitude and self-perceived proficiency (Spearman Rho)

Participants who grew up in bilingual (Spanish/Galician) families had significantly more positive attitudes towards Galician ( $t(115.3) = -2.0, p < .046$ ) and more negative attitudes towards Spanish ( $t(115.3) = 2.1, p < .036$ ) compared to participants who grew up in monolingual families. There was no significant difference between both groups in their attitudes neither towards French nor towards English. As the group of participants in monolingual families included both Galician and Spanish-speaking families, we decided to dig a little bit deeper by examining the effect of the first language(s) of participants on their attitudes towards their languages. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) indicated a significant effect: Wilks' lambda = 0.71,  $F(8, 224) = 4.83, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.16$ . A closer look at between-subject effects showed a significant effect of first language(s) on attitudes towards Galician ( $F = 10.9, p < .0001$ ) and Spanish ( $F = 10.7, p < .0001$ ), but not on English ( $F = 0.9, p = ns$ ) nor French ( $F = 0.7, p = ns$ ).

As expected, the scores for both Galician and Spanish of the bilinguals from birth were halfway between scores those who had been brought up in one language only. It is striking also that the attitudes towards Galician of the Spanish monolinguals were considerably lower than that of the Galician monolinguals towards Spanish.

The type of schooling turned out to have no effect on language attitudes: participants who went to monolingual or bilingual schools had similar attitudes towards Galician ( $t(120) = -1.0, p = ns$ ), towards Spanish ( $t(117) = 1.4, p = ns$ ), English ( $t(119) = 1.3, p = ns$ ), and French ( $t(119) = 0, p = ns$ ).

Age of onset of acquisition correlated negatively with attitudes towards Galician ( $r = -.273, p < .003$ ), in other words, those who had started with Galician at a younger age had more positive attitudes towards that language. No such relationship emerged between AoA for Spanish ( $r = -.18, p = ns$ ), nor English ( $r = -.12, p = ns$ ), nor French ( $r = .13, p = ns$ ).

Participants who had more exposure to English through television and film had significantly more positive attitudes towards that language ( $r(122) = .383, p < .0001$ ). The same pattern emerged for French ( $r(122) = .347, p < .0001$ ).

The 83 participants who had spent some time in an English-speaking country also had more positive attitudes towards English ( $mean = 29.6$ ) compared to the 43 participants who had not been

abroad ( $t(122) = 2.89, p < .005$ ) ( $mean = 26.6$ ). Surprisingly, no such pattern was found for French where the 86 participants who had spent some time there had no more favourable attitudes towards French ( $mean = 26.9$ ) compared to the 40 participants who had not been in France ( $t(122) = 0.92, p = ns$ ) ( $mean = 26.1$ ).

Gender was not found to have any significant effect on attitudes towards the various languages. Male and female participants did not differ in their attitudes towards Galician ( $t(122) = -.114, p = ns$ ), Spanish ( $t(122) = 1.0, p = ns$ ), English ( $t(122) = -1.1, p = ns$ ), nor French ( $t(122) = -.442, p = ns$ ).

Age was correlated negatively with attitudes towards Galician ( $r(122) = -.29, p < .001$ ) but positively with Spanish ( $r(122) = .20, p < .035$ ). No significant relationships emerged between age and attitudes towards English ( $r = -.06, p = ns$ ), nor French ( $r = -.16, p = ns$ ). In order to see more clearly where the age differences were situated in the attitudes towards the local languages, we divided our sample in three groups: the young group (aged 16-21,  $n = 17$ ), the medium group (22-47,  $n = 80$ ), and the older group (48-65,  $n = 19$ ). An ANOVA revealed a significant effect of age group on attitudes towards Galician ( $df = 2, F = 4.3, p < 0.015, \eta^2 = .07$ ) and a non-significant effect on Spanish ( $df = 2, F = 1.8, p = ns$ ). A Scheffé post-hoc analysis showed that the attitudes of the older group towards Galician were significantly less positive ( $p < .01$ ) than those of the two younger groups (see figure 2).

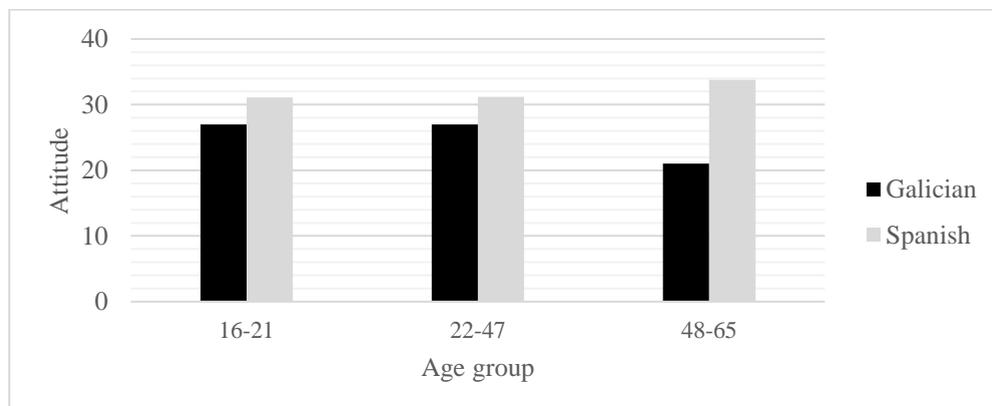


Figure 2: Differences in attitude towards Galician and Spanish among three age groups

Finally, we wondered whether attitudes towards the various languages would be connected. A Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between attitudes towards Galician and attitudes towards French ( $r = .23, p < .01$ ), between attitudes towards Spanish and attitudes towards English ( $r = .36, p < .0001$ ) and French ( $r = .25, p < .006$ ). There was also a significant relationship between attitudes toward French and English ( $r = .40, p < .0001$ ). Interestingly, no relationship emerged between attitudes towards Galician and Spanish ( $r = -.10, p = ns$ ).

## 7. DISCUSSION

The findings in the present study mirror to a certain extent those for variation in self-perceived proficiency on the same population (Dewaele 2012). Indeed, attitudes, just as proficiency levels, were highest for Spanish and significantly lower for English and French. Only the position for Galician is different: while participants rated their proficiency in Galician half-way between Spanish and the two foreign languages, their attitudes towards Galician are the least positive of the four languages. The most positive attitudes towards Spanish reflect the pattern uncovered in Aragon for Spanish and Aragonese (Huguet, Lapresta & Madariaga 2008). The relatively low score for Galician also resonates with the following observation by O'Rourke (2018): "While official language policies in Galicia since the 1980s have increased the potential for language use through bilingual educational policies, these policies have failed to convert the large pool of potential speakers amongst a younger generation of Galicians into active language users" (2018: 407).

Sources of variation in attitudes towards to the four languages turned out to be quite different (see table 2 for an overview).

| Independent variable | Spanish | Galician | English | French |
|----------------------|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| Proficiency          | ns      | ***      | ***     | ***    |
| Early bilingualism   | *       | *        | ns      | ns     |
| Schooling            | ns      | ns       | ns      | ns     |
| AoA                  | ns      | **       | ns      | ns     |
| Exposure to media    | NA      | NA       | ***     | ***    |
| Lived abroad         | NA      | NA       | **      | ns     |
| Gender               | ns      | ns       | ns      | ns     |
| Age                  | *       | **       | ns      | ns     |

NA: not applicable, ns: not significant, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 2: Overview of the relationships between independent variables and attitudes towards the four languages

Participants who were brought up bilingually in Spanish and Galician had more nuanced attitudes towards these two languages compared to those with monolingual upbringings. This was the same pattern that Huguet, Lapresta and Madariaga (2008) found in Aragon. However, the language(s) of upbringing had no effect on French or English. Participants who had had their education in bilingual Spanish-Galician schools did not differ in their language attitudes compared to those who had gone to monolingual schools.

Participants with more positive attitudes towards Galician, English and French rated their self-perceived proficiency in the four skills in these languages higher. No such relationship was found for Spanish. This could be explained by the fact that both self-perceived proficiency in Spanish and attitudes towards that language were near ceiling. It is likely that a dominant and very frequently used language rules the hearts and minds of users, and that the language therefore occupies a unique position. Little investment is needed to maintain proficiency and positive attitudes in the dominant language. However, given the possibility of **not** using Galician, English and French in Galicia, participants need to make a conscious effort to attain a high level of proficiency in the language, and a positive attitude towards these languages will thus be linked to a higher level of (self-perceived) proficiency (cf. Gardner 1985), though not necessarily a higher frequency of use (cf. O'Rourke 2006).

Age of onset of acquisition was only found to have an effect on attitudes towards Galician, with younger starters displaying more positive attitudes towards that language.

The quantity of exposure to foreign languages through television and film was linked to more positive attitudes towards these languages. This is obviously not a direct cause-effect relationship, as more positive attitudes towards French or English might be the reason why participants would tune in to these channels rather than channels in the local languages. The same argument applies to the link between stay abroad and attitudes towards the foreign languages. Those who had stayed in English-speaking countries displayed more positive attitudes towards the language, but that was not the case for French. It is possible that participants had actually been discouraged by negative feedback by French speakers on their performance (Dewaele 2010b). Indeed, English speakers seem to have a less normative view on accuracy of expression, while the French might react more strongly to non-target-like features.

While gender was not linked to attitudes towards the local and not the foreign languages, participants' age was correlated with attitudes towards the local languages. A closer look at three age groups revealed that the more favourable attitudes towards Spanish and the less favourable attitudes towards Galician were most pronounced in the oldest group of participants, reflecting the findings in O'Rourke's (2001, 2005, 2006). This difference might be linked to the finding in Dewaele (2012) that the older participants felt significantly less proficient in oral Galician and more proficient in Spanish. In that case it could be argued that older participants' lack of proficiency in the language caused them to have less favourable attitudes towards Galician (which seems to be a universal phenomenon, i.e. unknown is unloved), rather than an active dislike of the language. Older participants had less schooling in Galician and could only study it formally as one more subject in their curricula, whereas younger participants received bilingual education with more teaching hours in Galician than previous generations, thus less proficiency being directly linked to less favourable attitudes.

Participants felt more proficient in Spanish, which is not surprising as it is the language to which they are mostly exposed to, and it is also the language that is mostly used. Galician is used by a

significant percentage of participants, but mostly by bilinguals and not as their only language of everyday use. An important number of participants were what was previously denominated “monolingual speakers”, i.e. those who had been brought up in either language/s but who have a strong Galician identity and choose to make Galician their everyday language, the language in which they were brought up is not a significant variable. The results might have been different if the research had been conducted on a wider sample of population. However, as could be expected, education in a bi- or multilingual school boosts proficiency in all languages (Dewaele 2012) and Basque (Cenoz & Gorter 2017), but surprisingly, not the attitudes towards that language. It is equally important to remember that our participants’ attitudes towards the foreign languages might not be shared by the rest of the Galician population. Since our participants were enrolled in foreign language courses, one might expect that their attitudes towards these languages were substantially more positive than that of the general population in Galicia.

Finally, attitudes towards the four languages were significantly positively correlated, with the exception of the relationship between Galician and Spanish. This provides evidence that with the exception of the default language (Spanish), language learners have broadly similar positive attitudes towards all the lesser used or foreign languages. This could be a reflection of their unique multicompetence (Cook 2012; Dewaele 2016), i.e. the appreciation of the uniqueness and beauty of the languages they might not yet fully master.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The present study investigated the sources of individual differences in the attitudes of 125 Galician multilinguals towards Galician, Spanish, English and French. Patterns not only diverged between the “local languages”, Galician and Spanish, but also between the two foreign languages, English and French. Self-perceived proficiency, type of upbringing, age of onset of learning, language exposure through television, visits to the foreign country and age had different (or null) effects on attitudes towards the four languages. With the exception of the relationship between Galician and Spanish, positive relationships existed between attitudes towards the other languages. This confirms previous findings that

language attitudes are linked to a wide range of micro and macrocontextual and geopolitical factors and well as unique learner-internal sociobiographical variables and linguistic profiles (Dewaele 2010b; Dörnyei et al. 2006; Huguet et al. 2008; Lasagabaster 2001).

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## NOTES

1 The term "regions" refers to the Comunidades Autónomas, the geopolitical territories into which Spain is divided.

2 <http://www.consellodacultura.org/arquivos/cdsg/loia/socio.php?idioma=2&id=5#h742>

3 This is the most recent linguistic law (Decreto 79/2010 from 20th May 2010) which regulates the languages used in non-university education levels.

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