The influence of the ideological significance of the concept of "language" in inclusion policies for asylum seekers and refugees

A bottom-up approach

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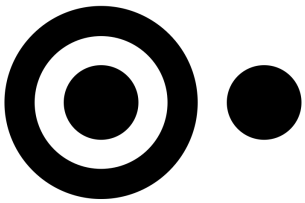

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates how the vision of the linguistic reality influences asylum seekers and refugees inclusion policies with attention on attitudes, prejudices and phenomena of "banal nationalism" and "banal colonialism" related to languages. By focusing on micro-level actors, i.e. people who carry out the activity of reception of asylum seekers and refugees and their linguistic ideologies and attitudes, the research wants to add some epistemological reflections form the sociology of language to the study of political science and to contribute to reanalyse some of the conditions that can help implement successful inclusion policies. The research is oriented towards the ideologies and "taken for granted" ideas on language that influence general integration and inclusion policies, with an eye on its repercussion on general political issues like human rights or democracy. The theoretical background has its roots on the recent literature about linguistic justice and language rights as human rights and has been applied through a qualitative comparative field research in Rome and Stockholm.

Questa tesi indaga il modo in cui la visione della realtà linguistica influenzi le politiche di inclusione dei richiedenti asilo e dei rifugiati, con attenzione agli atteggiamenti, ai pregiudizi e ai fenomeni di "banal nationalism" e "banal colonialism" legati alle lingue. Concentrandosi sugli attori di micro-livello, cioè sulle persone che svolgono l'attività di accoglienza di richiedenti asilo e rifugiati e sulle loro ideologie e atteggiamenti linguistici, la ricerca vuole apportare alcune riflessioni epistemologiche della sociologia del linguaggio allo studio delle scienze politiche e contribuire a rianalizzare alcune delle condizioni che possono aiutare a implementare politiche di inclusione di successo. La ricerca pone attenzione alle ideologie e alle idee "date per scontate" sulla lingua che influenzano le politiche generali di integrazione e inclusione, con un occhio alle ripercussioni su questioni politiche generali come i diritti umani o la democrazia. Il background *teorico affonda le sue radici nella recente letteratura sulla giustizia linguistica e sui diritti linguistici in quanto diritti umani ed è stato empiricamente applicato attraverso una ricerca qualitativa comparativa sul campo a Roma e Stoccolma.*

I denna avhandling undersöks hur uppfattning av den språkliga realiteten påverkar asylsökande och flyktingars "inklusions"-politik med fokus på attityder, fördomar och fenomen som "banal nationalism" och "banal kolonialism" i samband med språk. Genom att sätta uppmärksamheten mot aktörer på mikronivå, dvs. människor som tar emot asylsökande och flyktingar och deras språkliga ideologier och attityder, vill forskningen lägga till några epistemologiska reflektioner från språksociologin till studiet av statsvetenskap. Arbetet vill också lägga till nya reflektioner om några tillstånd som kan bidra till att genomföra en framgångsrik integrationspolitik. Forskningen är inriktad på de ideologier och "självklara" idéer om språk som påverkar den allmänna integrationspolitiken, med tanke på dess återverkningar på allmänna politiska frågor som mänskliga rättigheter och demokrati. Den teoretiska bakgrunden har sitt ursprung i den senaste litteraturen om "linguistic justice" och om språkliga rättigheter betraktade som mänskliga rättigheter. Och denna bakgrund har tillämpats genom en kvalitativ jämförande fältstudie i Rom och i Stockholm.

Keywords

Inclusion policies, language ideologies, refugees

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Introduction

Immigrant inclusion targeting asylum seekers and refugees as part of the governance of "others" taking place within the borders of nation-states are voluntarily and involuntarily influenced by a notion of language as a compact monolithic object. An idea that is taken for granted because of its strict relation with ideologies of nation-building, but that does not correspond to the human linguistic reality which is, instead, a system of linguistic codes whose use is ruled by strict social norms, as it has been described and analysed by the studies of sociology of languages and of language planning in the last decades. Normally policies that target refugees, and immigrants in general, are founded on the idea of making newcomers culturally and linguistically integral part of the majority. And even when these policies are guided by the aim of including them economically and politically into the host society and, at the same time, protecting their cultural and linguistic identities, the traditional national idea of language as a compact object challenges the fulfilment of the aim. In this study we want to investigate whether this "misunderstanding" of the linguistic reality pervades not only the rationale of the inclusion policies at macro-level, but whether it also exists at micro-level, in particular among people who are involved and directly implement the process of inclusion of the refugees on a daily basis. And when it exists, our attention focuses on identifying prejudices and phenomena of "banal nationalism" and "banal colonialism" caused by this ideology; and when instead those people are aware of the multifaceted nature of the socio-linguistic reality, how they report the negative impact on the inclusion process caused by this misunderstanding at macro-level. Previous research in the field that is known as "linguistic justice" has demonstrated that, since language issues have become increasingly important in inclusion policies, misunderstanding the social dynamics underlying the language realities, both those existing in the countries of origin of the refugees and in the host countries, may undermine policies targeting to the inclusion (involuntarily) perpetuating homogenising nation-building processes that economically and politically marginalise the newcomers. And it is particularly important because of the function of the language as "gatekeeper" controlling the access to social and political rights in integration and inclusion policies.

This research is based on semi-structured interviews and participative ethnographic observations conducted in Rome and Stockholm through a qualitative approach of action research combining a theoretical aim with a more empirical one. Namely with direct interaction with people who carry out the activity of reception of asylum seekers and refugees as micro-level actors of wider inclusion policies that can implement bottom-up social

inclusive solution. By focusing on micro-level actors and their linguistic ideologies, this comparative work would like to add some epistemological reflections that stem from the research of the sociology of language in the study of political science focusing on asylum seekers and at the same time, concentrating both theoretically and empirically on a often neglected issue, contribute to reanalyse some of the conditions that can help implement successful inclusion policies.

With asylum seeker we understand here a person who is leaving the country of origin for another country in order to seek protection from persecution and human right violations. If his/her request of protection is accepted by the host country he/she gets the status of refugee. And under the label of inclusion policies we mean policies in which linguistic and cultural rights are linked to other ones, such as political rights, welfare, access to education and health services.

In detail thus this dissertation starts with this general introduction on aims and purposes of the research which target to the impact of the meaning of the concept of language in the context of inclusion policies for asylum seeker and refugees. A research that focuses on the question of how cultural prejudices influence the welcoming and the inclusion of refugees in host societies. Some key concept in which the work is grounded are then described, in particular who are asylum seeker and refugees, i.e. the target of our case study, what is meant with inclusion and which is the position of language in the issue. The second part is devoted to the positioning of the study within the previous research, for instance on what has been written in the last decades about language justice and language rights crossed with questions of human rights, migrant rights and democracy in general. The third chapter discusses the research design of the empirical work with attention to methodology and theory of field research. Ethics, access and research quality follows and the description of the open questionnaire used for the semi-structured interviews closes the section. The final parts are divided in two chapters dealing respectively with the discussion of the empirical findings and the general conclusions.

1. Purpose of the study and research question

Through a qualitative field research on people working for the reception of asylum seekers and refugees, this work wants to understand how particular ideology on language influence the implementation of inclusion policies at micro level. The study intends to offer a contribution of knowledge integrating and proposing a perspective of language as a system with a perspective of linguistic justice that fits as background tool for the inclusion of migrants into the host societies. In light of the general purpose of the study, the following research question is formulated:

How do attitudes, prejudices and taken for granted ideas on language, as a particular dimension of cultural ideologies, influence the reception and the inclusion of refugees in host societies? In particular, the point of view of the analysis is those prejudices and those misunderstandings related to language that unconsciously appear among people who work for helping and welcoming refugees. The importance of this issue is demonstrated through the ideas of linguistic justice and language rights as human rights.

The work then revolves around the concepts of "language as system" vs. "language as a monolithic (entity)", "language as human right" and "linguistic justice" in order to analyse how different interpretations of the concept of language can influence policies and actions for the reception of migrants and refugees and their subsequent inclusion in the target society. We assume here that a pre-defined definition — even at a scientific level — influences the ideas and ideologies diffused in society, i.e. that there is a biunivocal relationship between, on one side, the definition of the concept of language and, on the other side, ideologies, attitudes and social prejudices towards linguistic reality (which in turn does not exist *per se* but can only be observed through a given theory (Iannàccaro 2000). Hence the reason why in the following we will use 'language concept' and 'linguistic ideologies' almost synonymically, the former applied to scientific treatment, the latter to social perception (for the relationship between the interpretation of concepts and its ideological and social implications, see Strandbrink 2019).

Moreover the research discusses the prerequisites for inclusive reception in terms of practices of mutual cultural recognition and linguistic awareness. By conducting such a discussion, the work aims to contribute to the knowledge of the conditions for an inclusive practice of asylum seekers and refugees that stems from an awareness of the limits and subsequent potential of language representation and perception. In order to answer to the research question this work wants to shed light to how the discrepancy between the complexity of the sociolinguistic reality and the (sometimes necessary) simplified vision of

language can have repercussion in scientific and political approach to some aspect of the societies related to the global migration phenomenon. Further, in this way, it will be shown how the theories of one field of research, for instance sociology of languages, can be successfully applied to respond to the problems of another field, political science (King – Keohane – Verba 1994: 16-17).

Empirically this work identifies the diversification and complexity of the system of inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees within and between comparatively studied contexts. Through the analysis of the different representations of the linguistic reality, the dissertation investigates the different degrees of knowledge and awareness of the linguistic reality from the point of view of the actors of inclusion policies, knowledge that influences the migration policies that can voluntarily or involuntarily omit the language rights as human rights.

Methodologically it shows how the process of inclusion of refugees provides a useful lens for the understanding policies that do not seem to completely achieve the goal of protecting human rights. These policies may actually reflect the position of the host society regarding linguistic reality within mainstream national narrative about language. Through the explicitation of the misunderstandings and prejudices that the monolithic mainstreaming view of language causes, this research points out that the interpretation of the linguistic reality as a system of social norms (Berruto 1995: 11-32) sheds light to social inequalities and different degrees of empowerment of parts of society ruled by linguistic habits (for the philosophical roots of the study of language in society, see Williams 1992).

Theoretically, it shows how the integration of theories coming from different fields of research can provide hints for appropriate policies that affect the entire civil society. Through the intersection of different fields of research, it is possible to propose guidelines that can help the policy makers to limit and even prevent situations that create social discomfort and indeed recognise specific rights as universal rights. The work argues that the inclusion of vulnerable subjects such as asylum seekers and refugees can be understood through a layered perspective that passes through the recognition and awareness of the multifaceted cultural and linguistic reality and has normative effects on the process of reception and inclusion.

It is important to note here that the focus of this research are not (explicit) linguistic policies but how language ideologies can influence general integration and inclusion policies, with an eye on its repercussion on general political issues like human rights, democracy etc. Our interest therefore dwells on social inclusion policies and how these are driven by an idea of language, idea given as a postulate, possibly not matching with the linguistic reality. The point in fact does not concern one of the many language problems that can be encountered in

the process of social inclusion but how these, and consequently the policies implemented, are often constrained by a view taken for granted of the concept of language. This mainstream concept — the "Westphalian model" (for a recent discussion about the concept, see Beaulac 2005) —, that envisages that in a nation-state citizens are monolingual and that the possible relations between languages and their use within the society are a secondary issue, is not a European peculiarity, but it is well spread through the world. In this conception the linguistic reality appears flattened: it let the conception of state underestimates and misunderstands its importance within the society (Gobbo – Marácz 2021: 78). Here we would like to explore some possible implications of this underestimation and misunderstandings on the a particular kind of policy.

Through ethnographic action and fieldwork we want to see how the idea of language as a monolithic object influences the representations assigned to language and how these in turn condition social inclusion policies even at the micro level. Working with and for a better understanding of the phenomenon, making use of a targeted multidisciplinary bibliography, which integrates and includes issues from different aspects, helps us to reflect on the complex social reality and on possible gaps and inconsistencies also in social inclusion policies aimed at civil society that start from the bottom up.

1.1. Asylum seekers and refugees, inclusion and the language issue

Thus the research concerns some aspects that can better improve the reception and the inclusion of asylum seekers with a focus on linguistic habits and attitudes both of European host societies and those of asylum seekers. Recent literature on the subject argues that a non reality-fitting idea of language can hinder inclusion (MIME 2018) and explores how a good implementation of inclusion policies takes into account the notion of "linguistic justice", explicitly applied to the normal multilingual human environment can be useful in the context of migration. In order to fully understand these topics, we believe it is worth to first define some basic concepts.

The research focuses on a particular kind of migrant, that is on asylum seekers. An asylum seeker is legally defined as a person who is leaving the country of origin for another country in order to seek protection from persecution and human right violations. Since seeking asylum is considered a human right every person is allowed to move to a particular country to seek protection. If his/her request of protection is accepted by the host country he/she gets the status of refugee, a status that gives right to international protection. The situation of asylum

seekers and refugees is both legally and socially very different from that of a "pure" migrant, i.e. of people who decide themselves to move or who are pushed to move for economical reasons. "Normal" migrants are entitled to have all their human rights protected but they are not subject to international protection and thus they are not included in our research (see at least the *Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*).

Social inclusion indeed is a widely discussed topic on the agendas of neo-liberal democracies. It is nowadays understood as a mainstreaming idea that starts from the economic notion according to which everyone should have fairly paid employment opportunities, that passes through the right to education and that considers as fundamental the conscious participation of the individual in community decisions with relative empowerment. This broad interpretation of the concept of inclusion reflects the multifaceted issues of application of the term and their categories of reference. In this work, inclusion is meant as touching on aspects of cultural human development as language realities and personal linguistic experiences and in its sense of belonging and right to participation in the community without losing its personal or original linguistic background (for an overview on the term "inclusion" from a sociolinguistic point of view, see Houtkamp 2015 and MIME 2018). Although the issue of social inclusion has been widely discussed and connected enforcement policies have been implemented, these have often neglected the ways in which language skills and language ideologies mediate social inclusion. And even when language has been taken into account it has been treated with a top-down approach, i.e. an approach based on monolingual ideologies rather than on a conception of linguistic reality as a system of social norms and on language as a tool for inclusive practices that value diversity (Piller – Takahashi 2011: 379).

To consider the question of language, we ought to realise that there is a possible misunderstanding of the meaning of "language", both in the (European) civil societies and among scholars working in many fields related with social justice and migration. The social approach to language of the last fifty years has made explicit that human language reality is structured as a complex system of norms that rule the relations among multiple linguistic varieties — the linguistic repertoire —, intermingled with each others within and outside each (speech) community and "in this sense, the notion of repertoire goes beyond the very isolability of different languages and is not even linked to the recognition of individual language varieties"[1] (Berruto 1995: 62). This evidence is often irrelevant in the social vision

[1] "In questo senso, la nozione di repertorio travalica la stessa isolabilità di lingue diverse e non è legata nemmeno al riconoscimento di singole determinate varietà di lingua"

of the language even if the variation is implicitly well known, especially in Europe where the equation one state = one (standard) language is the normalcy while institutional multilingualism — like that existing in Norway or in Switzerland — is considered the exception. And in the scientific discussion (that is not directly linked to the relation between language and society) the sociolinguistic complexity is normally neglected. Indeed a symptom of unjust linguistic social settings is the so called "language unease", i.e. the situation in which gaps exist between the individual repertoire of the speaker and the collective repertoire of the community (Iannàccaro – Gobbo – Dell'Aquila. 2018: 367).

2. Positioning of the study within previous research

Issues concerned with refugees and asylum seekers have become a key question in the present international globalised panorama and recent scientific literature has focused on language related effect on that. In this section, we position the scope of the study within the scientific literature with a focus on studies on social inclusion, justice and human rights with attention to the intersection between political science and the sociology of language.

Blommaert (2009: 415) argues that, for example, in asylum application procedures the concept of language is still "dominated by frames that refer to static and timeless (i.e., uniform and national) orders of things" even if the actual population movement go beyond this rigid skill. And this fact, he argues, causes problems of justice, part of which are emphasised by linguistic misunderstanding. Indeed the scientific literature has highlighted that in every society subjects can be placed "in or outside normalcy, depending on how "normal" their language repertoire is" (Blommaert 2009: 421) in relation to an idea of language as monolithic, or, as Silverstein (in Blommaert 2009: 421) defined as a "monoglot ideology". This approach to language reality postulates compact nuclear language objects defined by clear-cut name tags, static in time and space, and presented as "natural, neutral, acontextual, and nondynamic" (Blommaert 2009: 421). These languages are treated as fixed units of notes and information not only by the institutions but also, even in many cases in an unconscious way, by the population: "a documentation or description is not *of* a language; it *creates* a language" (Lüpke – Storch 2013 in D'Agostino 2021: 43).

And this involuntary perception of the linguistic reality is source of "banal nationalism", "banal colonialism" (Billig 1995; Carlsson 2020) and possibly of prejudices against all those whose linguistic behaviour do not fit in to this normalcy. "But in reality sociolinguistic life is organised as mobile speech, not as static language" (Blommaert 2009: 425), as a system of linguistic varieties whose use within and outside the speech community is ruled by strict social rules, rules that, like any social norm, establish relations of power and subordination within the community in which they act.

The assumption that the natural linguistic situation of every human society consists in a set of social norms built on existing internal variations, needs an approach that keeps in mind the social and economic values of power relations and inequalities that cannot be reduced and contrasted if they are not explicitly taken into account. If this is not kept in mind "it fails to detect and address important sources of injustice and to offer a viable path for justifying or realising the egalitarian values that it claims to support" (Birnbaum 2021: 188). It must

therefore be borne in mind that an individualised view of language cannot be disconnected from the social value it holds: a vector of social relations.

2.1. Social inclusion

While the issue of social inclusion is widely debated, the policies that derive from them tend to exclude the linguistic aspects that mediate social inclusion, that of refugees and asylum seekers. Even when language is considered in social inclusion policies this is the result of top-down actions that reflect ideological representations of monolingualism and "linguistic discreteness" that exclude an informed understanding of the realities of communication based on a system of norms (Piller – Takahashi 2011: 371).

Our empirical case study would like to show how the lack of explicit understanding of socio-linguistic norms has a negative impact on social inclusion: our aim is to explore the intersection between social inclusion and language ideology. To this end, we use an idea of language as "a set of resources which circulate in unequal ways in social networks and discursive spaces, and whose meaning and value are socially constructed within the constraints of social organizational processes, under specific historical conditions" (Heller 2007: 2). Piller – Takahashi (2011) argue that language as a tool mediating access to social inclusion has a multifaceted role in its essence of natural multilingualism and the different evaluation of this characteristic can lead to non-functional or even deviant inclusion policies.

Inclusion, as the opportunity for everyone to be able to be part of a fair society not only in terms of income and paid employment opportunities but also on the certainty of equal access to basic services and education is, however, a broad concept that varies in relation to the subjects who are entitled to it, the contexts in which it takes place and in relation to the policies that implement it. It is clear, therefore, that although social inclusion is recurrent on the agenda of the policy framework, the ways in which language mediates the success of such policies and of social inclusion itself has received limited attention. The effort to understand the phenomenon through an interdisciplinary approach could therefore be helpful in reflecting on the complexity of social inclusion: the sociology of language and political science strive in this sense to address these complexities as well as intersectionally with language (Caidi – Allard 2005; Piller- Takahashi 2011; Kraus 2012).

This work therefore declines through this intersection between language and social inclusion and explores how the definition of language influences the outcomes of policies aimed at achieving social inclusion. It is interesting to note that the term social inclusion

reflects the complexity of the phenomenon itself and even at the terminological level it enters the literature fairly recently, trying to encompass the terms previously used for social inclusion. Similarly, although the term "language" is not considered to be as recent as that of social inclusion, and indeed a milestone and cornerstone of political evaluations in relation to the social phenomena it moves, the debate on the semantic scope of the term is still the cause of diatribes in the academic world. The most recent studies (for example Piller – Takahashi 2011: 372) show that the monoglot bias (language as a monolithic object) of institutions is one of the fundamental problems of exclusion (Blommaert 2009: 421). And it is not a question here of judging the content of inclusion policies that deal with language, because their content or functionality could also be functional in itself: the problem lies in the object to which the policy is applied, namely an idea of language that in general does not correspond to the social reality of language. "It is not only mainstream politicians who are prone to succumb to this fallacy but the linguistically excluded themselves tend to buy into it" (Piller – Takahashi 2011: 376).

2.2. State of the art on linguistic justice

The normative issues that language policy raises have, due to the recent demographic events, gained attention in relation to many of the topics of political theory such as democracy, citizenship, the nation and the state (De Schutter 2007; Schmidt 2014). Linguistic diversity is the centre around which language policy is shaped, and political theorists have over the years addressed the claims of language rights (see in particular Skutnabb Kangas – Philipson 1994) and investigated how these rights fit into theories of justice, freedom and democracy policies touching in particular questions related to individual freedom, civic equality and social justice, values that may even conflict with each other (Kymlicka – Patten 2003: 7).

Thus the point of view of language planning can be considered as a cross-point between sociology of languages and the political science approach. It aims to find how the sociolinguistic approach to linguistic justice could be of help for a more focused analysis from the point of view of political sciences since the subject offers a multidisciplinary framework where a high variety of insights can mesh into a policy oriented perspective. Thus since the beginning of the 21th century language planning and language policy have become an explicit subject of study within political sciences as well as sociology of language with authors applying wider theories on multiculturalism and cultural recognition to the relation

between institution and language and focusing on "the normative political reaction toward languages" (Alcalde 2018: 66). Similarly to how the debate about environment or economy within political sciences have been referred as "environmental justice" and "socioeconomic justice', this new field of interest in political sciences has been developed under the name of "linguistic justice'. This concept is rooted in the complexity of the social relations within a community and possibly among different communities on the same territory: in any communicative setting there are language varieties that are inevitably perceived not only more adequate for particular situations, but also more useful and even more beautiful than others with social, political and economic inequalities.

However, the actual approaches from political and social sciences' point of view are based on a vision of languages as discrete and geographically defined phenomenon ignoring that monolingualism is an exceptional situation for the human society and that language use are continuously influenced by (involuntary) social and (voluntary) political manipulation (Berruto 1995: 20). Human beings naturally should have a linguistic repertoire that includes the codes known by the community they belong (whatever they are called—languages, dialects, accents etc.) and the binding social norms that rule their use. Language can be seen as a system of linguistic codes and not as one single object. (Blommaert 2009; Piller – Takahashi 2011)

The widespread tendency to separate the linguistic dimension from the social dimension and the necessarily incomplete theoretical unification among the different scientific approaches about of the meaning of "language" in the concept of "linguistic justice', the nature of the social network and the nature of language use, perception and contact, is partly compensated by studies in the field of sociology of language, which however generally remain on the side of observation and are in any case mostly the prerogative of the academic world. These studies have started to change the low consideration of language as a factor of well-being or discomfort. In each study concerned with the achievement of linguistic justice, an in-depth analysis of the concrete sociolinguistic conditions, needs and ideologies is of fundamental importance: the analysis of linguistic justice out of sociolinguistic methodology should start from the identification of the whole range of linguistic varieties that are present within a given speech community at multiple levels. (Gazzola – Wickström – Templin, 2018: 57-58). The relationship between sociology of languages and the other disciplines has developed a big potential for synergy in studying, interpreting and explaining detailed information about language diversity in the world, phenomena of bilingualism and multilingualism and in particular diglossia, the more common linguistic situation in the world

(Berruto 1995: 11-32). Policies that target to an inclusive society should therefore take into consideration the hints this synergy has suggested even if these values can appear quite abstract, and it is not immediately clear how they fit into inclusion policies (Kymlicka – Patten 2003: 7). In an attempt to identify the idea that comes closest to the epistemological concept of justice, we believe it is useful to start from a specification of its opposite: injustice. That is a way of conceptualising justice that refers to a fairly universal process in which the individual (researcher or object of the research itself) tends to recognise more easily a malaise or psychological discomfort in a given concrete situation rather than recognising an abstract non-quantifiable justice. A concept that linguistically encapsulates these concerns is that of "linguistic unease" (Iannàccaro 2019). This particular interpretation recalls the idea of "freedom as non-domination" (Pettit 1997: 4 ff.) insofar as the situation of unease threatens and reduces the freedom of those who find themselves in a condition of discomfort, generating the possibility of being not only psychologically but also concretely dominated by those who are not. The situation of unease therefore makes the individual object dependent on those who are not in a given situation. These "non-just" settings are however more evident when and where strong migration movements imply particularly complex linguistic reality within the society, realities that are different from the traditional multilingualism of a particular community (Blommaert 2009; Vertovec 2007; Kraus 2012). However linguistic aspects are strictly connected with other social factors and therefore the situation of non-just linguistic setting is a kind of "social discomfort" that, as such, must be taken into account by the institutions. This perspective, crossed with the evidence that individuals are very seldom monolingual, allows us to cross the traditional taxonomy of linguistic varieties normally classified as official languages, national languages, regional languages, minority languages, dialects, patois, etc. and assume that the individual may experience situation of unease whatever the linguistic community to which he or she belongs. It also places language behaviours at the centre of social practices giving it an important role in the evolution and transformation of society in the direction of the development of democracy (Agresti 2018: 89).

A heterodox version of linguistic justice refers to Van Parijs' idea (2011; 2016). He applies the same approach used to economy (for example in dealing with the issue of the "basic income") and to linguistic justice by advocating the global spread of English not only as a *lingua franca* but even as the first (if not the only) language of instruction. Also concerning language policy, libertarianism assumes that a single simple political act is sufficient to solve a particular problem of social inequality and it relies on the ability of the individual to access

a socio-economic empowerment independently from the social context she/he lives, assuming away the "many complexity of real world societies" (Birnbaum 2021: 191). Further criticalities can be traced back to the solving limit of the spread and improvement of a "powerful" language; indeed the language "as system" itself is embedded within a complex social structure in which power relations are declined through the use of certain linguistic varieties to the detriment of others. Indeed in almost every society it is possible to observe languages in dominant position, often in terms of power or of demography, and other linguistic varieties in position of dominated subjects (Pettit 1997; Dell'Aquila – Iannàccaro 2004: 170-172). They are then persons who experience domination since they (and their language uses) are dependent on a relationship in which a third person (or other norms of language uses) arbitrarily intervene over them without their consent or without taking into consideration their legitimate preferences (De Schutter – Stojanović – Morales-Gálvez 2017: 154-155). The concept of "linguistic justice", thus, is rooted in the complexity of the social relations within a community and possibly among different communities on the same territory.

Let us therefore turn to the practical consistency of the different definitions of language applied to the concept of linguistic justice and its potential not only as a heuristic tool to better explain society but as a means for an applied approach to particular situations (Blommaert 2009: 416).

2.3. Language rights and democracy

The scientific interest on policies that aim to identify and define fundamental and inalienable human rights is growing and is affected by the need to include language as a human right among them. Studies in this sense have been made to demonstrate the prominence of linguistic discrimination that persists in our world. The first traces of interest in the matter and a reversal of the discriminatory tendency that also affects linguistic rights can be found in various legal documents, on which a solid basis is laid for the practices of conferring validity on the commitment to recognise linguistic rights among fundamental human rights. These include for example the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (draft 1991) and Articles for a Universal Charter of Basic Human Language Rights. (Skuttnabb-Kangas – Philipson 1994)

The most widespread tendency in the discourse of language rights is to enclose minority communities among the discriminated categories, referring mainly to those communities recognised as such on a territorial basis. Only more recently, with the need to come to terms with migratory flows that are not only a consequence of the globalisation phenomenon, but are linked to more extreme causes of necessity such as environmental disasters, conflicts and economic poverty, has the need arisen to include immigrant minorities, hitherto excluded, among the recipients of fundamental human linguistic rights (Skuttnabb-Kangas – Philipson 1994). This new situation "gives rise to a new category of minorities, who base their legitimacy not on a historical link with the piece of land on which they find themselves living, but on a non-territorial right to the maintenance of cultural and linguistic identity" (Grin in Skutnabb-Kangas – Phillipson 1994: 31).

It is interesting here to remind one of the first scientific definitions of linguistic rights, that of Kloss (1971), that makes a distinction between rights "oriented towards tolerance" and rights "oriented towards promotion", that — he argues — cover different fields of action. Tolerance-oriented rights include the right to protection from state interference in private language decisions and thus the right to speak the language one wants at home and in the institutions of civil society. Promotion-oriented rights are instead those related to the use of language in and by the public institutions. Kloss — he wrote in the '70s — argues nevertheless that immigrants should enjoy the former, and thus be free to use their mother tongue at home and in civil society, but they should adapt to the language of hosting national groups and consequently not enjoy the second ones, i.e. promotion rights (Kloss 1971). Today, instead, we can consider that tolerance rights should be only the minimum level of enjoyment of language rights present in every democratic state (Kymlicka – Patten 2003).

2.4. Human rights, migrant rights, linguistic rights

Within the discussion in the philosophy of politics on global justice, it is interesting to observe the moral uncertainty that different positions have assigned to migrants in relation to countries where they live but are not citizens. This moral uncertainty mirrors the legal uncertainty and consequent difficulty in identifying and assigning the rights migrants should have. The lack of clarity that affects migrants as a legal category that does not belong to the citizenship of the country in which they are located necessitates even more the defining intervention of the justice system and the relative injustice it suffers. Precisely in response to this definitional uncertainty, rights assume a fundamental role in managing this unstable

balance and its different interests. A further point is precisely the different value assigned to the interests of migrants as opposed to those of citizens (Garcia 2016), which disturbs the possibility of reaching a broad consensus on the distribution of rights and the limits of politics within the migration issue (Grey 2013: 516-517).

In this sense the question on how to normatively manage the linguistic rights of immigrants without discriminate (positively or negatively) *vis à vis* long-settled groups arises. The pivotal point here is to examine the fundamental interests both immigrants and long-settled groups have in language recognition (De Schutter 2022).

> *The recognition of immigrant language interests is as morally important as those of national language groups. The equivalence objection therefore does not apply. But that does not mean that immigrant languages are to be equally recognised. Immigrants usually benefit from proficiency in the local language, and they are not insulted by the greater status given to it. At the same time, they do need some special recognition of their linguistic difference, for life-world access and dignity purposes* (De Schutter 2022: 15)

2.5. Language policies for inclusion

Based on these assumptions it is now important to try to frame what a public policy aiming at the reduction of inequalities caused by language should be based on and what are some of the possible ways to achieve it. The principle of sufficiency, which states that public policies should ensure that as few people as possible fall beneath a particular threshold, could be functional starting point for this approach. This minimum could be a person's welfare, his or her income, the extent to which his or her human rights are fulfilled in relation of his or her personal linguistic repertoire *vis à vis* the societal language landscape. Another principle is the priority principle, which suggests that public policies should prioritise the satisfaction of the needs of the least advantaged part of the population: it means that modest improvements to the situation of a small number of linguistically disadvantaged people are of greater moral significance than large improvements to the situation of the majority. Or, in a wider definition, it could mean to ensure that every individual not only has the effective opportunity to exercise his or her thought in the languages he or she prefers, but also and more importantly, that he or she feels "at ease" in the majority of circumstances of the everyday life (Shorten 2018: 154-155).

3. Method

The chapter describes the methodological position of this study. After a description of the theoretical methodological framework of the research, analysis and account of the empirical material of the study follows. The phases and actions of the fieldwork, the collection of data and observations as well as the role of the researcher are then presented. Finally, the process of analysis, the credibility of the study and ethical considerations are discussed.

3.1. Method and logic of inquiry

The often traumatic conditions of migration phenomena constitute a political problem and require practical research initiatives not only in the initial phase of studying the phenomenon itself but also in the field of inclusion.

The methodological choices in this study are developed through the intersection of two research objects, namely research on inclusion through the lens of understanding linguistic reality in reference to the study of migration flows with the aim of addressing contemporary vicissitudes. An ontological assumption in this study is that migrant inclusion practices are constantly evolving as a result of contemporary changes: Catarci (2014: 71) describes this phenomenon as "the litmus test for understanding what response one is able to offer in the face of those global processes that cause the dissolution, social disintegration and impoverishment of entire areas of the planet"[2]. Hence the need to support a more epistemic approach that overturns the assimilationist perspective of mere integration. An epistemic approach in fact implies a reflective and knowledge-based attitude that makes explicit hidden knowledge, identifies capacities that are expressed through action and stimulates conscious professional knowledge (Mattsson 2004: 69). In the specific case of the research, reference is made to a deeper knowledge of the linguistic reality of both migrants and the target society.

A prerequisite for promoting such a reflection in the context of migrant inclusion is to allow the research to take place close to the figures who carry out the activity of reception in the different phases that subsequently lead to the final social inclusion.

The qualitative approach is the methodological foundation underlying both the theory of action-research and that on the interpretation. The qualitative approach of action research

[2] "[…] la cartina di tornasole per comprendere quale risposta si è in grado di offrire di fronte a quei processi globali che causano la dissoluzione, la disgregazione sociale e l'impoverimento di intere aree del pianeta" (Catarci 2014: 71)

combines in this study a scientific aim with a more empirical one. Namely, on the one hand, the direct interaction with people who carry out the activity of reception of asylum seekers and refugees, people who become actors in the practical implementation of the process of inclusion, and at the same time, to develop a theoretical model that serves as a best practice.

As already mentioned above, the postulate that there is a societal and political misunderstanding about the concept of language and that this misunderstanding can generate negative impacts on society in terms of power relations, discrimination and exclusion, will be experimented in a small field research on asylum seekers and refugees. But the main target of this case study are the persons that help and receive the migrants and not directly migrants themselves. Explication and identification of linguistic unease and lack of linguistic justice on one hand and the awareness of this condition on the other hand, could be a tool to allow the part of the societies suffering discrimination caused by language "to identify and resist social subordination and oppression in social life" (Birnbaum 2021: 191) if considered in strict "intersectional" relation to other social and cultural characteristics, like skin, gender, origin or level of education. We will try here to clarify how the misunderstanding of the concept of language, by entities working for reception and inclusion can hinder or, in some way, reduce the effectiveness and timing of inclusion itself. We argue that the lack of awareness (and even of knowledge) of the linguistic situation both of the migrants and of the host societies can lead to an possible integration and inclusion negative situations.

3.2. Research design

The field research on the case studies consists in three kinds of practices: the "passive observation", the "participative observation" and the semi-structured interviews with operators that work with refugees.

The passive observation consists of observing the interactions between refugees and operators in the reception centres, paying attention to explicit and implicit behaviour regarding language. On the one hand, observing whether the operators try to identify positive, inclusive attitudes, attitudes of learning and understanding of migrants' languages, and on the other hand, their attitudes, towards corrective teaching, disinterest towards migrants' linguistic expressions or even of more or less explicit negative consideration or uselessness of migrants' repertoire as well as of banal nationalism and banal colonialism (Antonsich 2015; Carlsson 2020; Carlsson 2021). In the observation of migrants an attempt is made to identify the main points of unease — in these cases necessarily explicit —, unease linked both to the social

context of arrival and to the expectations in relation to the operators. In addition, when the phenomenon is sufficiently evident, we can observe the possible subordination of refugees caused by linguistic situations both in the relationships with the members of original community and with other refugees, as well as with the operators and the receiving society (for Italy see Catarci 2016). Explaining these elements, already taken into consideration in the literature on linguistic justice and in particular on linguistic unease, is necessary for their identification: it is indeed important to be able to discern between unease and a position of social subordination due to linguistic causes from those due to other social factors (Iannàccaro 2017: 151).

The same elements of explicit or implicit judgement on languages are identified during participatory observation in a master course in "migration and reception"[3] I have followed where volunteers active in several Italian and international associations working for the reception of refugees have participated as teachers and experts.

The last phase consists of semi-structured interviews based on a broad canvas that develops around the same elements as passive and participative observation. Its focus is on inferring and explaining ideologies, images, attitudes and possible prejudices about language in general and about the language of migrants and the host country in particular.

3.2.1. The case studies

Let us now specify the case study about which we have already given some hints. It consist in professional and volunteers which are working for refugees and, secondarily, the refugees themselves when in contact with helpers.

With "case study" we understand the particular intensive observation of a set of empirical cases (Gerring 2017: 28; Kohlbacher 2006: 5): for us the dynamics of interaction between each interviewee and his/her representation of language is our "case", i.e. the minimal unit of analysis of our scientific study. Actually from a pure comparative point of view the cases should be (the interviewees in) Stockholm on one side, and (those in) Rome on the other. However, as we have already mentioned, the choice of the two cities, that fall into two basically different migration policies, has been dictated by a tentative to find a wider horizon of observations in order to allow a better generalisation (at least at European level) and not

[3] "Migrazione e accoglienza: attività e professioni a sostegno dei migranti" ISPI - Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale. Distance learning: 10-11-12 e 24-25-26 febbraio 2022.

simple to compare them. Indeed we take the case study approach as a methodology that has the particular strength to give access to social data that other kinds of approaches do not (Mosley 2013: 37): science needs to observe regularities in the real world to construct theoretical models and passive observations, participant observations, and semi-structured interviews are good tools for producing deeply observed information that are useful for causal arguments (Schatz 2009a: 313). Moreover a case study has the aim to explain phenomena and behaviours happening in our selected "population" (Gerring 2017: 30).

Logics in case selection within social science is sometimes implicit, indeterminate or even atheoretic (Lijphart 1971: 691; Tarrow 2010: 247; King-Keohane-Verba 1994: 118) and the selection of cases to be studied strongly depends on the aim of the research (Mosley 2013: 113). If the grounding idea is that of developing a comparative method the selection must take into consideration the relationships among the selected variables and, at the same time, holding some others under control. For our research, which is deeply qualitative, clearly delimited to the variables "helper" and "refugees" and comparative between Rome and Stockholm, the choice of the cases is almost obligate. With the aim to try to generalise as much as possible the results out of the observations conducted among people working for refugees in Europe we have decided to choose them in two different countries conducting basically different inclusion policies. One in Italy because the system is almost entirely entrusted to private bodies and voluntary associations, and therefore civil society seems to play a crucial role in the reception system, especially in Rome, which is one of the first cities that have started activities merging into bottom-up policies, namely through what is called "humanitarian corridors"[4]. The other in Sweden where the realities of civil society involvement are mainly supplementary to public state policies. In this sense, humanitarian corridors, as a complementary tool to public migration policies (Parusel 2021a; 2021b), are interesting for its continuous support and accompaniment of the migrants at micro level towards their inclusion into the host society.

This comparison between two different systems gives us an advantage for the individuation of causal inferences between social behaviours, being the comparative method a way to discover empirical relationships among variables (King – Keohane – Verba 1994: 45): observing data through the lens of covariation, even in a qualitative way, can justify causal inferences when the relationships among the studied cases is methodologically grounded and the considered variables are clearly under control (Beach 2019: 167). Nevertheless it is worth

[4] https://www.humanitariancorridor.org/en/homepage/

to recall here that our small size research, even if its boundaries are clearly defined, does not pretend to give access to a general and more holistic interpretation of the reality that exists about the world of refugees, but only to give hints and suggestions on behaviours that only further wider studies can prove as true.

In line with what we have explained above our investigation is directed in particular "to silent and silenced discourses" (Yanow 2007: 116) with the aim of identifying a critical approach to realities taken for granted about the concept of language, which in turn subtend national and even colonial ideologies that are not explicit but dominant at least in Europe. According to the theory of interpretation applied to political science (see for example Lynch 2013), this kind of approach requires an act of identification of dominant narratives and the consideration of alternative interpretative possibilities; in our case, language as a system as opposed to language as a monolithic or unitary object, the latter being a conception derived from the post-Romantic idea of nation. And again, how this interpretation influences the perception of the integration of refugees and asylum seekers both in the more concrete practices of inclusion in the territory of arrival and at the level of more general inclusion policies. The material then is collected and analysed with a focus on making these dynamics visible using different and complementary methods depending on the phenomena observed and considered. The practical approach to action provides the opportunity to support the intention and premise of aid actions aimed at achieving social inclusion through a scientific approach that contributes to the knowledge of the phenomenon. Similarly, the interpretation of phenomena through ethnographic observation in these settings serves the purpose of identifying the hidden motivations that drive the figures considered to support the inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees. Among the most important insights gathered through observations is that complexity of the language relations, their layers, and how questions of identities are only one, aspect in the complexities of life.

3.2.2. Data collection

On the basis of these criteria, the observations are made in the environments where initial reception of refugees takes place, in the schools where the language of the host country is taught and in the situations in which the mediator facilitates relations with the surrounding society. The initial contact in Rome takes place within one of the associations promoting the humanitarian corridors and in Stockholm within centre in which Swedish language tuition for refugees and immigrants is provided. The fieldwork in this study includes the collection of

empirical material through semi-structured surveys of operators, teachers and mediators. The surveys have as their object the image of language, which becomes a means of observation and a tool of awareness to understand the type of inclusion towards which these figures and the structures they represent are projected. In addition to these, there are field observations through visits to reception facilities, in particular one in Rome that welcomes refugees from humanitarian corridors, with particular attention to the ways in which operators relate to the refugees and asylum seekers present in the facility. And finally, participatory observation during a master's degree course organised by the Italian Institute of Political Science, where speakers from organisations and various professionals reported on practical experiences of "migration and reception". Participatory observations and field notes were conducted during all phases. The field notes supported the semi-structured surveys: these were taken in different ways with the inclusion of interpretative extracts on episodes that caught the attention. For each category, a different canvas was prepared to support the discussion.

3.2.3. Semi-structured interviews

A total of eleven interviews were conducted, including four teachers, a mediator, a lawyer, four "operatori" and an interpreter. The interviews were conducted informally, mainly live, through zooms and, in a couple of cases ,by telephone and, in someone in particular, the setting where the conversation took place, a café, helped the colloquility of the circumstance. During the interviews written notes were taken in reference to interpretive issues such as facial expressions and gestures that were captured and perceived as interesting.

In Rome the interviews were conducted thanks to the collaboration of a colleague working in the context of migration and reception. Through personal contacts and snowball sampling, it was possible to approach and contact structures that deal specifically with refugees and asylum seekers in the different stages of inclusion. The interviews were conducted in Italian and lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. In Stockholm, contacts with the interviewees were made through web pages and social media of schools offering courses of Swedish for immigrants (Svenska för Invandrare) or Swedish for asylum seekers (Svenska för Asylsökande) and of the Swedish migration agency (Migrationsverket). Interviews were conducted in Swedish with a duration of 20 to 30 minutes. As I am not a native Swedish speaker, the outline was prepared slightly more carefully by inserting cues in case the interviewee tended not to articulate the discussion. Remarks were also made with regard to the linguistic unease perceived by me, and possibly by the interviewee, in conducting the

interviews in Swedish and at the same time about the reactions the interviewees had in talking to a person who had participated in the very path of social integration proposed by the Swedish state through public language courses (Svenska för Invandrare and Svenska som Andra Språk). Moreover, the use of a language that is not the researcher's first language during the interviews probably creates a position of otherness on the part of the interviewee, a position which, on the other hand, makes it possible to pick up elements that would otherwise be difficult to receive from a person who does the interviews as a "majority member". This latter position becomes mine at the time of the interviews in Rome instead, all the more so since my variety of Italian is perceived to be closer and more familiar than a speaker from the northern Italy for example. In both Rome and Stockholm the interaction was facilitated by the location of the conversation: in some cases the conversation went on for more than an hour becoming almost part of the ethnographic observation and ended with a friendly "keep in touch". In the telephone case on the contrary, the conversations were quicker but loaded with targeted information.

3.2.4. Ethnographic observation

When considering composite phenomena and processes such as social inclusion, reflection requires an analysis of the environment in which the research material is produced. Through passive and participant ethnographic observations it has been possible to analyse the environment in which the research material is produced. With the interviews instead it was possible to access the experiences and motivations of people who implement reception and inclusion policies at a local level and to analyse complex social issues and processes.

If in fact observing others is something natural for human beings, observing people according to scientific theories is the basis of ethnology (Pripp – Öhlander 2011: 113) and these allow a better understanding of the social phenomena analysed. Ethnographic observation is therefore one of the methods used in our research to collect and analyse data useful for the intended purpose and that is "to find out what are the important experiences, problems, values and ideas of the people studied" (Ehn – Löfgren 1996: 114) in line with the interpretative concept of extrapolating the tacit and taken for granted aspects. In order to capture the limitations and representations attached (through language) to the host communities and in reference to refugees and asylum seekers, the observations helped in "making the invisible visible" (Pader 2013: 199) within the social inclusion process. In accordance with what is known as the "etnologiska blicken", i.e. "the particular cultural

perspective that applies to everything human" (Ehn – Löfgren 1996: 109), it was kept in mind that as an observer one can and does become the very subject of the observed and that, particularly in situations of observation in a group, presence itself influences the behaviour of the group (Pripp – Öhlander 2011: 131). "The oscillation between proximity to the thing or things studied and the scientific distance of the analysis requires a particular awareness of what is going on in the research process"[5] (Ehn – Löfgren 1996: 90). Through observation the aim was to "capture the uniqueness and the most recurrent aspects of the different phenomena" that constitute the process of social inclusion, to provide information "about what is so given and self-evident for the people" who contribute to this process (Pripp – Öhlander 2011: 114). We tried through these to approach knowledge of the context by guiding data collection towards relevant paths to answer the research questions and to describe manifestations that cannot be told in words. Observation allowed us to discover what people consciously and unconsciously do not want to tell about themselves, especially those phenomena that are too sensitive or controversial. But on the other hand we remain aware of the fact that through observation one cannot have direct access to feelings, thoughts, experiences, unless they are experienced through gestures (Pripp – Öhlander 2011:141) which were noted, interpreted and reported in written form in the cases of the semi-structured interviews. On the other hand, however, gestures themselves are not always transparent and through them the researcher risks drawing false conclusions about what people want to express.

This approach has made it possible to capture non-explicit, otherwise undetectable contextual elements about standardised and homogenised categories concerning language and the linguistic landscape in their political essence (see Pachirat 2009; Schatz 2009b). And to understand how this standardisation can produce unconscious prejudices against the different and consequent phenomena of banal nationalism and banal colonialism (Antonsich 2015; Carlsson 2021).

The strength and weakness of ethnographic observation is the transformation of the event into a readable text, a text that necessarily contains and excludes information; in some cases, however, it was considered appropriate to leave the mere observation of what one sees, hears and witnesses aware of the filter of observation skills, rather than forcing one's hand on people who have probably already experienced traumatic situations. The focus of these

[5] "Pendlingen mellan närheten till det/dem som studeras och den vetenskapliga avståndet i analysen ställer särskilda krav på medvetenhet om vad som händer i forskningsprocessen"

observations, further supported by notes, is on the explicit and implicit linguistic behaviour between the interviewer and the persons observed among themselves in the different contexts considered. Even at this stage, however, it was kept in mind that the interpretation of the observation is given through consciously writing down what one thinks one should write down excluding what theory teaches us to exclude, but one also does this unconsciously through one's own preconception (Pripp – Öhlander 2011: 131). In fact, interpretations and the conclusions derived from them are biculturally constructed (Ehn – Löfgren 1996: 116), i.e. they contain cultural information (usually explicitly considered) about the observed subjects and cultural information (usually implicit) about the observer himself. Indeed, ethnographic observation also incorporates empirical limitations, such as the relatively indeterminate nature of the observation itself, its object and its indistinct boundaries. Indistinct boundaries that contrast with individual observations that are quite limited in time and space (Pripp – Öhlander 2011: 126). This limitation, in our specific case, can be overcome by referring to the dynamic character of the observations of the phenomena taken into consideration. In fact, our observation is based on the micro level in which single individuals act within a macro policy of reception and inclusion. Through this micro approach we try to understand the final part of the macro political process of reception and inclusion and then project it onto the same macro political level (Schatz 2009b: 11). This is of course only one of the possible images that descends from the macro to the micro (the meso being the entity that is activated by the policy) and its dynamic character is given in turn by the adaptation of the actions of the person observed both to the situation and the moment but also to the constant practical and moral learning during his activity in the field.

The most intensive and structured passive observations were made in relation to the visit to the reception centre in Rome. Participating in the visit to the facilities allowed me to enter into the way the inclusion and integration of refugees arrived through the humanitarian corridors is discussed, what representations are assigned to language and what issues through this were questioned as well as to define an outline of the actors and their roles in the field. The interviews with operators in contact with refugees and asylum seekers, mediators and L2 teachers were preceded by observation in the centre and participatory observation during the "migration and reception" course. In both cases, the observations serve to give an idea of the presence of practices of banal nationalism and banal colonialism and to understand how a certain interpretation of language can lead to prejudice and influence forms of unease in the process of social inclusion.

3.3. Ethics and quality

3.3.1. Ethics

Research involving empirical fieldwork aimed at investigating human behaviour and social phenomena in direct contact with people involves attention to ethical conduct in research. In social science research, attention to research integrity, trust and ethical behaviour are fundamental. Through ethical behaviour it is possible to build bonds of trust with the people involved in the research facilitating the achievement of the research objective and at the same time promoting the integrity of the research (Israel and Hay 2006). On this same trust is based the confidentiality and the choice of this research to maintain the confidentiality of informants and the anonymity of the institutions and associations observed. This choice ties in with one of the fundamental principles of research ethics, namely that research participants are not harmed physically, psychologically, emotionally, legally or socially by the involvement in the research. (Israel – Hay 2006: 96 ff). This principle is valid, more than in any other field of research, in the field of migratory phenomena and of consequent issues of social inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers, with awareness and particular attention to the protection of vulnerable subjects. This reason for the choice of passive observation of refugees and asylum seekers and the choice of anonymity of the associations visited, in order to avoid the possible recognition of the subjects taken care of by the respondent (D'Agostino 2021: 224). The associations are therefore not explicitly named but only the roles played by them and the interviewees within them are defined. The level of confidentiality is therefore an attempt to balance the commitment to anonymity, the integrity of the research through the transparency of the positions (Carlsson 2021: 61). At the same time, confidentiality has potentially harmful dimensions: confidentiality poses ethical dilemmas in terms of it being something protecting secrecy and thereby hindering transformative political action (Baez 2002; Guenther 2009).

Respondents were informed about the nature of the research at the time they were contacted and allowed to make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in the interview. My details were distributed at the time of contact and I remained available for clarification by email or telephone. The colloquial nature of interviews encourages the voluntary nature of consent and field observations establish a more collaborative understanding (Israel – Hay 2006). Even if many of the interviewees were positive to be recorded and let their names known, in order to avoid problems with the GDPR, we have decided to only take hand written notes and not add any link to the informants after the citations reported in this text, not even through pseudonyms.

3.3.2. Access

Being able to get positive feedback on contacting associations and bodies working in the different stages of inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers was initially relatively easy, more problematic however for associations on Rome where access was mostly possible through personal knowledge and with the help of a colleague, than in Stockholm. Meetings were arranged by sending emails to their corresponding address or by phone when contacts were made by snowball sampling. In Rome, not all associations responded to the email sent and cases of denial of access were justified with ambiguities concerning the areas the associations deal with. In Stockholm, access difficulties tended to be less even if the waiting times more or less correspond to those of Rome and also here there have been cases where the scheduled appointment was later cancelled. Here too, the longer waiting times correspond to the higher hierarchical structured position of the entity contacted (such as Migrationverket), which passed on my contact to the party dealing with the matter. This probably did not happen in Italy because the procedural and reception system is more fragmented and the individual entities and associations work independently.

The difficulty arose in the middle of the research with the outbreak of war between Ukraine and Russia and the consequent migration crisis of the Ukrainian population into the EU. At that point, in the midst of the drafting of the paper and the process of establishing contacts for the fieldwork, difficulties arose both on the part of the researcher (on my part) in managing the contact arrangements and also on the part of some associations who postponed, cancelled or refused the meeting due to lack of time or available staff as their efforts and personnel were directed towards the urgency of the Ukrainian reception.

3.3.3. The role of the researcher

For the qualitative and interpretative purpose of the research, that is, again, to extrapolate the analysis of migratory social inclusion policies, the researcher himself becomes "meaning-makers" and "actors in these meaning-making processes as they conduct their analyses" (Yanow 2007: 111). Yanow analyses the interpretative approach by outlining the schools of thought on which it is based: hermeneutic argumentation and phenomenological thinking, supporting the reflexive nature that research assumes. These schools of thought that embody lived experience as a fundamental element justify both the use of conversational and semi-structured interviews in order to understand how policy issues are interpreted by the

interviewees and observation to identify the context where the discussion takes shape and how this is represented. The researcher as an observer is part of the reality he/she wont to understand and therefore elaborates and maintains an awareness of the possible effects that his/her lived experiences shape and filter within the research. The reflexivity of the inevitable presence of the researcher's own interpretation is an awareness that accompanies interpretive research. Indeed, the researcher, like any other individual, infuses meanings onto those artefacts (or reads their meaning) as they engage them. It is precisely this conception that rejects a single, fixed interpretation and encourages the researcher to investigate different possible interpretations of the political phenomenon studied (Yanow 2007: 113-116).

3.3.4. Research quality

The qualitative approach on which this research is based develops its own quality criteria, partially diverging from the classic criteria of quantitative research such as reliability and validity. Through these quality criteria, it is possible to identify reliable knowledge of representations through reflexivity with particular attention to uniqueness and content. In relation to the social sciences, reference is therefore made to alternative criteria of research reliability such as: "credibility which parallels internal validity, transferability which resembles external validity, dependability which parallels reliability, and confirmability which resembles objectivity" (Wahyuni 2012: 77).

Indeed, in this research, credibility, which deals with the accuracy of the data, is related to the transparency of access to the field and data collection. In fact, the population taken into consideration is clearly delimited — it consists, namely, in those people who are active in the reception of refugees and asylum seekers — and strictly defined — the element of interest around which the data is collected is the perception of linguistic reality as a tool to understand possible negative impacts on the inclusion of refugees. Through the use of a broad canvas, supporting the semi-structured interviews, correspondence is created between the measures and the purpose the study aims to do (Wahyuni 2012: 77).

The criterion of transferability is identified with an effort to obtain an understanding of the specific situation that leads to a subsequent recognition and adaptation of events in similar situations. Although a description concerning the environments and characteristics of the organisations in the case would seem necessary for the transferability criterion, in our research this criterion clashes with the ethical necessity of the protection of vulnerable persons who could presumably be identifiable through a detailed explanation of the

respondents. On the other hand, even though we are dealing with data from a qualitative study and, therefore, not reproducible, through the description of our sample we give information and suggestions to apply, in future research, this qualitative study within a different environment (Wahyuni 2012: 77).

Dependability, therefore, goes hand in hand with taking into account the changes that occur in a setting and how these affect the way the research is conducted. The formulation of our canvas and the description of the *ratio* behind the discussion of questions could be used by future researchers for similar studies even when they are not strictly aimed at obtaining similar results. However, as our research is a small case study, limited in time and space, we cannot have a confirmability of the research before publication: of course, the detailed content of this dissertation may lead to further studies which, in the worst case, may even contradict our results.

Having outlined the methodological considerations guiding this work, this introduction now proceeds to a new part, where the interview question are explained and classified according to the scope for the research.

3.4. The questionnaire

The semi-structure questionnaire provides a broad and flexible basic framework with the aim of creating a discussion and putting the speaker at ease. The interlocutor should feel as at ease as possible and should have the impression that the questions asked are on superficial points concerning the language. When the interviewees are language teachers, the overt focus will be on language teaching and language learning. When the interlocutor is a "cultural translator", the overt interest will mainly focus on personal language experiences. However the covert deep aim is to grasp from the interviewees' attitudes towards and comments on languages and their social representations. In particular, the purpose here is to interpret, through the analysis of interviewees' explicit or implicit positioning towards the linguist environment they deal with, the values they assign to it and consequently their interpretation of the social reality. Specifically, we will identify the presence of their own linguistic unease, their interpretation of migrants' one, the presence of prejudices towards themselves and the migrants and the presence of phenomena of banal nationalism and banal colonialism.

The interviews are structured in three different ways depending of the typology of interviewee, i.e. language teachers, cultural translators and other volunteers not explicitly working with languages. The canvas follows the following schemes:

For teachers of L2 (Italian or Swedish): focus on language learning and language acquisition.

- In which language do you teach Italian/Swedish?
  - (if they teach in Italian or Swedish) Wouldn't it be better to teach in an international language e.g. English?
  - (if they teach in English) Wouldn't it be better to teach Italian/Swedish of instruction?
  - (if they don't discuss their choices) Do you think this is the best option? Did you choose the criterion yourself or were you forced to do so by the institution you work for?
- Are there many people who cannot read and write? Do they have major problems in learning the language?
- Have you noticed if there are people who have an easier time learning the language in relation to the country they come from?
- What are the main problems in learning Italian/Swedish? Are there different problems depending on different language background?
- But are there people among your students who have learned or started to learn Italian/Swedish informally, on the street or watching TV or listening to radio? And if so, does their spontaneous learning in the classroom affect their acquisition of Italian/Swedish?
- Do you explicitly correct their "language errors" or do you simply repeat sentences in the way you think is correct or you only answer explicit questions on grammar or lexicon?
- Do you think that the official language tests are useful to meet the needs of refugees? In your opinion, what is the purpose of an Italian/Swedish language test?
- How important is it for refugees to speak the Italian/Swedish and why?
- How important is it for refugees to know an international language like English?
- (this applies to Italy) Do you know any refugees who speak dialect? see if they laugh/react.
- How important is it for refugees to be able to keep their original languages?

For cultural translators (*mediatori culturali*): focus on refugees linguistic background.

- From which country do the people you work with come? Which institutions do you work for? What languages are required for your job? Which languages do you work with?
- Do you speak other languages (than those mentioned above)?
- Which language(s) do you speak at home? with your parents? with your partner?
- What is your mother tongue?
- How did you become a "mediator"?

  - (if they speak languages other than Italian/Swedish at home) Are you perceived as a foreigner when you speak Italian/Swedish?
  - (if they speaks Italian) Do you speak dialect?
- If you work for a particular community, nationality or ethnic group, are there people in the group who do not speak the supposed ethnic or original national language?
  - (for people working with Arabic speaking refugees) Do you speak all variants of Arabic? Are there Arabs whose dialect you find difficult to understand?
  - (for people working for refugees from French-speaking Africa) Do you speak French with them?
- How important is it that the refugee speaks Italian/Swedish and why?
- How important is it that they know an international language like English?
- (in Italy) Do you know any refugees who speak dialect?

Volunteers not explicitly working with languages: focus on the use of languages during the interactions.

- What languages do you use in contact with the refugee?
- Are there many who speak Italian/Swedish, English or French?
- How do you try to communicate with people who don't speak any of the languages you know?
- In which languages migrants use to communicate with each other?
- How important is it that the refugees speak Italian/Swedish and why?
- How important is it that the refugees know an international language such as English?
- (in Italy) Do you know any refugee who speaks dialect?
- Do you think that the official language tests are useful to meet the needs of refugees? In your opinion, what is the purpose of an Italian/Swedish language test?

In illustrating the rationale of the questions and their place in the plot, as mentioned above, we follow the "emotional" path of the interviewee, as one might imagine it. Actually, every point of discussion, even if apparently superficial, is useful and interesting for the deepening of not explicit attitudes and ideologies underlying the answers themselves. The interview starts with a generic approach, purely based on personal experience, in order to put the interviewee at ease and distract him, in a first phase, from the main aims of the survey. The interviewees are faced with apparently objective questions asking them to evaluate linguistic situations in which they find themselves involved. But the discussion prompts the respondents towards increasingly ideological reflections with reference to positive and negative attitudes towards their own language and that of others.

The naming of languages is also a delicate point: during the interview one tries not to influence the interviewee with standardised categorisations and language names: it is to be

expected that standardised language names and categorisations appear immediately, while, during the interview these are revised, corrected and commented on by the interviewee — think for instance of the label of Arabic which can be, during the interview, articulated in the form of various names of local dialects and standard written forms.

Let us see below how the questions are grouped around the focal points of the investigation. The first point investigated is that relating to the knowledge and possible awareness linked to the linguistic situations in which the interviewee is involved: "*Do you know any refugee who speaks dialect?*" or "*From which country do the people you work with come? Which institutions do you work for? What languages are required for your job? Which languages do you work with?*" or "*In which languages migrants use to communicate with each other? How do you try to communicate with people who don't speak any of the languages you know?*". Attitudes, on the other hand, are focused on by questions like "*Have you noticed if there are people who have an easier time learning the language in relation to the country they come from?*" or "*What are the main problems in learning Italian/Swedish? Are there different problems depending on different language background?*". Again, the nuances of unconscious interest in attitudes can be seen in the questions about work of our interviewees: "*How did you become a "mediator"?*" or "*In which language do you teach Italian/Swedish?*". On the contrary, prejudices are highlighted by the questions on illiteracy and on the difficulties of some people to learn Italian/Swedish: "*Are there many people who cannot read and write? Do they have major problems in learning the language?*". Ideas of banal nationalism and banal colonialism can appear in the answers to the questions about the language used by teachers during Italian/Swedish lessons (again "*In which language do you teach Italian/Swedish?*" or "*(if they teach in English) Wouldn't it be better to teach Italian/Swedish of instruction?*") and from the comments about the migrants' duty to know Italian/Swedish properly with negative attitudes towards the informally learned language ("*But are there people among your students who have learned or started to learn Italian/Swedish informally, on the street or watching TV or listening to radio? And if so, does their spontaneous learning in the classroom affect their acquisition of Italian/Swedish?*" or "*Do you know any refugees who speak dialect?*") and finally about the importance of speaking Italian or Swedish: "*How important is it that the refugees speak Italian/Swedish and why?*" or "*How important is it that the refugees know an international language such as English?*". The discourse concerning language tests can give us an indication of the respondent's position with regard to integration or inclusion of migrants: "*Do you think that the official language tests are useful to meet the needs of refugees? In your opinion, what is*

the purpose of an Italian/Swedish language test?" or "*How important is it that the refugee speaks Italian/Swedish and why?*". Finally, unease is a kind of common thread through the respondent's behaviours and unspoken statements through the interpretation of "silent and silenced discourses".

4. Empirical findings

Assessing how cultural prejudices influence reception actions and integration policies even at the micro level is not a simple task. Not only the resulting observations and representations are many and varied, but these have also to do with deep reflections on the nature of the individual and his capacities as a social being. Moreover, the results are often conditioned by the basic action in which the research question is placed: the reception and acceptance of refugees stage *per se* is, or should be, in the beginning a positive act. In the following, therefore, the research question will be answered and, starting from the inputs of the semi-structured interviews, the results of the field research will be presented.

Our case studies have revealed differences on two levels, on the one hand between Rome and Stockholm, and on the other hand between the institutional level, which we have called "macro", and the level of day-to-day activities with refugees, i.e. at the "micro" level.

In the case of Rome, the process of social inclusion related to asylum seekers and refugees reflects the highly fragmented system, a fragmentation that accompanies the entire process, from the initial phase of applying for international protection to the subsequent stages until the asylum seeker's refugee status is recognised or denied. Different actors and organisations are involved in the process and do not always follow it continuously, clearly conditioning the final outcome. This fragmentation also has repercussions on images, ideologies and representations concerning the linguistic reality. In Stockholm, on the other hand, where the process related to asylum seekers is highly centralised and managed by the state, two concomitant phenomena seem to be evident: the first is a greater awareness of linguistic diversity also at the institutional level; the other is that there is less divergence between the micro and macro levels. In different ways, therefore, the two case studies show how the mainstreaming image of language is also present at different levels of inclusion policies even if this image varies according to a greater or lesser awareness and depending on the type of role played by the subjects interviewed.

Let us now look at some of the key points that emerged during the fieldwork, through a discussion of the observations in order by typology of questions in the questionnaire. The first typology taken into consideration is the one concerning the operators' awareness of language variation and its possible influence on the inclusion process. This level is so different in our interviewees that it directs their approach to the reality in which they come into contact with asylum seekers and refugees towards different modes. We found ourselves confronted with diversified narratives confirmed in all the observations. We heard accounts of actions in the

foreground in the form of activism, almost bordering on legality, where the interviewees' awareness of the situations in which they are involved is so well developed as to allow almost an equal collaboration between them and the refugees in inclusion activities. The blurred border between legality and illegality is also caused by the lack of clarity that concerns asylum seekers and refugees as a category that does not belong to the citizenship of the host country, a fact that influences the intervention of the justice system and the relative injustice it suffers (Grey 2013: 524).

In other cases, on the other hand, an "annoyance" transpires in the actors for linguistic situations that do not fit into a predefined scheme in which each person must correspond to a well-defined language and in which the language of arrival, in this case Italian, in its standard form is the cornerstone of the inclusion process. An example is what has reported by an interviewee who has participated in the creation of a multilingual radio station based in an non-official self-organised (read "illegal") camp for refugees (called "ghetto") that uses Italian to communicate with the local Italian population and French and other African languages for internal community communication. We were told how the multilingual reality of refugees has been used as an information tool that links the new and the old social reality: in this case, the interviewee states how the diversified "richness" of the linguistic reality present among refugees is an advantage that must be exploited to ensure that an awareness of the reality that migrants face upon arrival is developed within the departure communities, a means to directly narrate and share not only the expectations, the longings for affection and dreams of a better life, but also the obstacles, the violence often suffered and the discomforts that prevent the development of one's abilities. On the other hand — he continues — this linguistically diverse reality could be positively exploited to reach a wider audience and break down some barriers in society. All this is because the interviewee realises that the migrant does not bring with him or her only one language but a set of codes, which are his or her normal reality, to which the languages of the arrival society are added. The informant transforms this multilingualism into an "information medium" to make the Italian situation known also in the migrants' countries of origin. And this can also be useful in the country of arrival, Italy in this case, where the native linguistic variation is wide and certainly does not correspond to the Italian taught at school. Here we find an explicit recognition and awareness by the respondent of the multifaceted cultural and linguistic reality and its effects on the process inclusion.

On the contrary, we found ourselves, in a couple of cases, faced with situations of almost refusal to recognise a diverse reality of the linguistic landscape present. And the ethnographic approach has let us remark, through attention to "silent and silenced discourses" (Yanow

2007: 116), the influences that representations assigned to language also have on social inclusion acts at micro level. In one case for instance, in observing the direct interaction between the operator and the refugees, we were faced with a situation in which in communicating with the refugee who had problems expressing himself in Italian, the operator was not at all interested in the codes of departure or the languages known by the refugee, but first pointed out to him that his Italian was not comprehensible and he should make an effort to learn it better. This was expressed with a strong Roman accent and with phrases such as: "you have arrived to Italy: you must make an effort to speak Italian" and an attitude — perceived by me at least — of over-ordination as if it were a relationship between a strict teacher and a naughty pupil. At that point, however, the operator tried in vain to communicate in English; then in French, looking around for someone ready to act as interpreter, but to no avail. Finally, in order to solve the communication problem, the operator stopped a young refugee who had arrived in Rome more recently, asking her to act as interpreter since he believed that the language spoken by the latter (Arabic) corresponded to that of the other. The situation did not improve much, both because the variants of Arabic used by the two did not correspond perfectly and, in particular, because at this point, a linguistic approach was required according to monoglot criteria with precise and institutionally well-defined codes, a situation that did not foresee any level of multilingualism. A situation that, among other things, created a strong sense of unease in all those present during the interaction.

In another case, the recognition of the linguistic landscape took on less distinct nuances as in the case of an Italian teacher who defined Italian as "the language learned in the country where it is correctly spoken". One can see here an overlap between the role of educator and that of "facilitator". Attitudes of awareness alternate between the need to "meet the communicative needs of the beneficiary" and the idea that learning the language, "Italian (which) is always and only one", is fundamental. At the same time — she argued — "the Italian teacher who does not educate but teaches" has the task of "facilitating by providing a linguistic repertoire" to approach the needs of the refugee student. Refugees also seem to be allowed to bring into the classroom linguistic inputs related to the reality they live in the street, made up of variants and dialects, and the teacher to respond through the same sub-standard code because "the needs of the beneficiaries change and the educational pathway is not comparable to what Italians do". What appears, therefore, is a discordance between the position the teacher occupies and himself as a person: as a "facilitator" she realises that there is a great deal of variety in the target territory as well, but as an institutional teacher she feels obliged to defend and disseminate the institutional monoglot idea.

The same splitting is found in another case where, although there is a greater awareness concerning the presence of different codes in the linguistic reality and their different use according to the situation, here too this awareness is crushed by the institutional role held by the interviewee. There is a recognition of "an incongruence between language teaching and the language spoken on the street", but the role is that of teaching Italian. It therefore seems that in the role of a teacher one must respect the institutional purpose of learning the language as a "correct code", but at personal level one recognises not only the different needs of refugees, in particular that of "entering the community", but also the complexity of the linguistic reality of arrival and therefore one allows oneself "just once", at least, to teach "starting from" the language learned on the street. We notice thus a shift from the attempt to keep at the margins the variation of which one is aware and from which the refugees must "deviate", because what they learn on the street must be "deconstructed", to the awareness of the presence of different linguistic registers and therefore the advantage of teaching how to use them, such as how the dialect learnt on the street should be used in certain situations and "la giusta dicitura" — "the right wording" — in others (it is interesting to note that the Italian mother tongue interviewee uses the word "dicitura" in a sense that is not acknowledged in the Italian dictionaries, i.e. with the meaning of "wording" or "pronunciation" while in standard Italian it means "short text or caption used in labels, publicity for similar written purposes"). We find here some ideological statements of the interviewee with reference to positive and negative attitudes towards her own language and that of others.

Our questions also aimed, through a focus on perceived learning difficulties or illiteracy issues, to investigate the presence of more or less negative prejudices and attitudes. In this case, the results show a connection and often an overlap between "ignorance" and prejudice *per se*. By ignorance, for instance, we mean here the lack of knowledge of a phenomenon that we could define as objective, such as information on the official language of a country, both on the part of our interviewees and of the institutions as it appears from the interviewees' own accounts. For example we were told of a direct experience of one of our interviewees while working as an interpreter in a court. The Arabic-speaking defendant, for whom our interviewee was acting as interpreter, had been charged with false attestation of identity. The defendant had in fact been asked to transcribe his name "in Latin characters", a request that led to an inconsistency with previous statements. The interpreter at that point "felt compelled to intervene" to explain that the error was probably not due to the defendant's will but to both his low level of education — "he probably would not have been able to write his name even in his own language" — and to objective difficulties due to different more or less consistent

systems of transcribing Arabic names into Italian, a difficulty increased by the fact that the Arabic alphabet does not normally use to write vowel sounds. The interpreter was not taken into account and the defendant was convicted demonstrating how different degrees of knowledge and awareness of the linguistic reality can voluntarily or involuntarily exclude refugees to other fundamental rights. In this case, too, we have thus found a discrepancy between the macro and micro levels: an awareness on the personal level on the part of the interpreter, driven in any case by a sense of help towards the weaker, and a closure, on the institutional level, in ignorance and disinterest towards diversified linguistic realities made up of systems. This case shows also how the monoglot bias of institutions could be a problem for the exclusion not because of the content of inclusion policies themselves but also because problem lies in the object to which the policy is applied, namely an idea of language. Moreover we have here a taken for granted idea of normalcy: the fact that a person is not able to write his/her name in a univocal way is not conceivable. But in reality it could be, not only when the person is lowly educated, but also when he/she finds himself/herself in a reality in which the name should be written in a different alphabet than that is "normal" for him/her. Thus the person is placed "in or outside normalcy, depending on how "normal" their language repertoire is [perceived]" (Blommaert 2009: 421).

On the other hand it is interesting to note, however, that we do not find in our interviewees explicit prejudices towards migrants' languages: we may be faced with some preconceptions or *idées reçues*, that are not necessarily negative about how some groups have an easier time learning the target language: "Slavic peoples learn Italian better because there are more letters in their alphabet" or "Italians know how to do well the long and short vowels of Swedish".

Again with questions about the need for knowledge of the language of arrival and the ways of learning it, we investigated the phenomena of banal nationalism and banal colonialism. The results show, almost unequivocally, how fundamental the refugees' knowledge of the language of arrival is considered to be. Comments in reference to the need to communicate in Italian in Italy are frequent and they are sometimes justified by the fact that the use of international languages such as English, even in institutional posts and public offices where the asylum seeker and refugee must continually address themselves, is rare. In situations where there is no knowledge of Italian, any kind of information that needs to reach the refugee is mediated by friends and volunteers, hence the statements on the importance of knowledge of the language. With regard to English here we see a case of perceived banal colonialism towards oneself as if English were the most correct or useful language for the goal to be achieved which is inclusion. One does not find among our informants — except

perhaps in one case — the mainstream idea in Italy (Antonsich 2015) whereby the refugee must learn Italian out of respect and gratitude to the "nation" of arrival, an idea that can be synthesised by the motto "if one wants to integrate, one must first learn the Italian language and culture".

Only in the observation to which we have already referred above, does a hint of banal nationalism appear in the operator's statements with reference to the duty to learn Italian. The fact itself does not have such a negative impact on the inclusion process, since knowledge of the target language is indeed a necessary factor; the issue lies rather in the almost substitutive, possibly guilt-inducing approach of the statements "learn Italian" and not "learn Italian, *too*".

Thus, as taken for granted in a nation state, the standard language is the centre of social inclusion; and this at the expense of the fact that the great linguistic variation governed by rules of diglossia is fundamental for communication and social inclusion. Still, this variation is not excluded out of malice or bad faith, but because it is socially "ridiculous", incorrect, to tell the immigrant that he or she must also speak dialect. One of our interviewees who is very aware of the multilingualism of the migrants, and even appreciates it, for example, falls in a situation of unease when asked if he himself speaks (an Italian) dialect: at first — not knowing which my reactions could be and arguing that the normal expected "taken for granted" answer should be negative — he says he does not do it because his "bourgeois" origins. But later, during the conversation, he admits he would like to speak it but he feels that he is socially not allowed.

Dialect whose use at the social level is not only admitted by the society but has been proved to be functional in the inclusion process (Chini 2004, Machetti – Barni – Bagna 2018). But the issue that only appears in the background here reflects the idea connected with the respondents' reactions to the knowledge and use of dialect. It should be recalled here that the Romance varieties that are called dialects in Italy are as distant from standard Italian as the latter is from French or Spanish or, from a Scandinavian perspective, as distant as Swedish, for example, is from Dutch (for some recent discussion about quantification of the distances between languages see for example Gooskens 2004; Nerbonne – Heeringa 2009; Wieling – Nerbonne 2011). Once again a splitting: between the official linguistic reality and the social one. Evidently in a situation of diglossia, it does not make sense even from the point of view of language planning to teach dialect, and in its position as a "low language" (Berruto 1995: 25), dialect is learnt on the street and standard Italian, on the contrary, must be taught at school or during formal language courses (Fettes 2022). The splitting thus lies in the fact that the non-standard language variety is not even envisaged, its existence is concealed and

eventually only made explicit when it is blatantly solicited. The discrepancy between the complexity of the sociolinguistic reality and the monoglot vision of language existing within the same person can have repercussion in the practical approach to some aspect of the inclusion process like language learning.

But what we are clearly interested in here is not the language policy, as much as the difference in ideologies and attitudes on languages and how this is reflected on our interviewees: studies in the sociology of language related to immigration (Chini 2004) show us that knowledge of variation linguistic in Italy and the use of codes that respect social norms is an excellent factor for migrant inclusion. Here we see again that the integration of theories coming from different fields of research can provide hints for appropriate policies that affect the entire civil society. But official policy does not explicitly take this into account and this is confirmed at the micro level where interviewees have a basic awareness that fades according to their role in the institutionalised inclusion process.

In the course of the interview, as expected, linguistic categorisations appear, but these are limited to the classificatory necessity and in fact are taken and revised several times by the same interviewee. On the other hand, we do not have a strong explication of "taken for granted" idea of language at the deepest level. Actually the idea of a linguistic standard to be taught does emerge, particularly on the part of teachers, but this does not have a particularly significant impact. What rather occurs is a sense of non-attention towards linguistic variation even when, at least unconsciously, it is recognised as a useful tool for social inclusion. It was then not necessary to formulate specific questions in order to identify ideological positions regarding integration and inclusion: the interviewees in recounting their own experiences made visible and implicitly expressed their approach towards their own implementation of integrative or inclusive actions. By these we mean behaviours in which on the one hand there is almost a normalisation, an idea of necessary adaptation of the refugee for the subsequent achievement of autonomous results, and on the other hand actions of a process that intervene first within the context to make the specific need become ordinary. Isolated are the positions of *do ut des* statements about language learning where social acceptance corresponds to a duty to learn the language. It is mostly a matter of non-explicit behavioural nuances such as gratitude that could be rewarded with communicative rapprochement. Interesting, however, with regard to the inclusion process, are the reflections that have been observed depending on whether the focus of the language problem on the inclusion process goes towards the target languages or the source languages. In Stockholm, in particular, learning the target language is not felt as an obligation, not a "krav" — "a duty". The opportunity to learn is given by the

state and by the society, but there is never a dutiful demand and the possible non-knowledge of Swedish is not interpreted as disrespectful to society, but rather as the refugee's failure to enjoy a service that is useful to him or her. "Det går"— "that's ok" — if the refugee does not speak Swedish, but it would be reflected on future difficulties e.g. with children at school. It is true, as Iannàccaro (2019: 89) writes, that social situations in which the relations between linguistic varieties and their speakers is unbalanced as well as the personal repertoire does not match with the social one, lead to individual communicative and social disadvantages. But they also lead to drawbacks for the community, causing the loss of skills and competitiveness of the whole community that can ultimately entail economic costs for the entire society.

An example, probably extreme, is the one in which the language issue is not taken into consideration at all: what is considered fundamental by our interviewee is the social and economic situation and the rights linked to these, but not language. And this almost forgetting the role that language plays in access, in the facilitation and in the very achievement of social and economic rights. What is of primary interest for her is the achievement of a dignified situation: whether the language issue is seen as monoglot through standard labels or as a set of codes does not seem to interest our interlocutor.

Another linguistic approach to inclusion starts and develops, instead, from the original language situations of the refugees: this is, for example, the case of the radio already cited above where the conscious use of many languages becomes a tool and a means of information and emancipation. In this case, the interviewee's experience is on the level of social, political, and economic inclusion through an activity that can be considered a group activity: language is used in this case for the creation of a self-conscious migrant community within a wider "national" community, which is perhaps the ultimate goal. Linguistic variation, and not a specific language alone, creates in-group inclusion in the (momentary) community of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers who have been refused refugee status, a community made up of camps and reception centres or temporary community housing; but not (yet) inclusion in the target society. This policy, which is set up on the edge of legality and on the margins of official policies, has as its main purpose to implement inclusion in the sense of acquiring civil, political and economic rights and not linguistic and cultural integration in the target society. As we have already mentioned above, inclusion means the opportunity for everyone to be able to be part of a fair society not only in terms of income and paid employment opportunities but also on the certainty of equal access to basic services and education. Inclusion encompasses the ability of people to participate in decisions that affect their lives and the community of which they are a part by including everyone's capacity for

empowerment (Birnbaum 2021). The use in this case of a "symbolic multilingualism", and thus the idea of the use of language regardless of whether or not it is understood by all members of the group, touches on the symbolic level of language (Edward 1994: 125-128) but at the same time creates a separate in-group, the "we" of the host places, a "we" that is built on diversity, as a new category of minority whose legitimacy is not linked to the territory but to the awareness to belong to a specific group.

This is confirmed by the interviewee when he states that the most institutional communication towards the outside world takes place in Italian. Italian thus becomes a vehicular language between the arrival society and those in the reception facilities, while the other languages have a symbolic value as group languages. Speaking in one's own code of origin, in this experience, not only makes it possible for the refugee to feel more at ease, but expressing oneself in that code frees the language from the burden of unease. By this is meant a kind of legitimisation of use: as seen in the previous parts of the work, languages in their social relationship are bearers of justice and injustice, and if language arrives through a more structured context this causes it to be assigned more value.

It is true, however, that linguistic aspects are inextricably connected with other ones like socio-economical factors, but it is worth to recall that linguistic habits are one of the most important symbols of the belonging of individuals to particular groups. This experience places language behaviours at the heart of individual and social practices, by attributing to it an implicit non-secondary role in the process of inclusion.

The question of unease also accompanies the entire empirical research to some extent and runs through it with different nuances, from perceptions of impatience with the inability to communicate to those in which unease would like to be avoided. Interesting in this second case is how the approach to the attempt to bridge the unease changes in two situations: on the one hand, an interviewee, explicitly expressing his frustration at the lack of resources available for guardianship and care management, states that, when necessary in the event of misunderstanding, she resorted to the help of children or young people. She somehow realises that the situation is not right, but the available resources do not always allow for alternative solutions such as the mediation of an interpreter. In this case, therefore, priority is given to communication, which is probably achieved by neglecting the unease situation that it causes and that touches not only the linguistic level, but also the psychological relationship of responsibility between parents and children. The same issue is dealt with by another interviewee in Stockholm: but in this case the focus is shifted to the individual and the children. She tells us that it often happens, when the refugee needs to communicate with

institutions or operators, that adults bring their children along to be helped in understanding. But our interviewee's approach is quite different from the previous one: her focus is on protecting children, who do not have to be present or handle formal situations, and interpreters are brought in.

Conclusions and future pathways

In the theoretical discussion and in its empirical application through this dissertation, a perspective on asylum seekers and refugees was suggested as a way to capture how two different visions of the language interacts differently with inclusion policies, both at macro and micro level. Our interest therefore focused on social inclusion policies and how these are driven by an idea of language, given as a postulate, not matching with linguistic reality. The point in fact concerns not one of the many language-related problems that can be encountered in the process of social inclusion, but how these, and consequently the policies implemented, are often constrained by a view taken for granted of the concept of language. Through ethnographic action and field investigation we wanted to see how the monoglot idea influences the representations assigned to language and how these in turn condition social inclusion policies even at the micro level. The starting point underlying the research question, namely that inclusion policies, to a large extent, even when they arise at the micro level of civil society, sometimes reproduce prejudices about the otherness and it is continuously if not constantly confirmed by the results that these policies are based on ideals that often rely on banal nationalism.

Indeed, the case studies in this work focus on the micro level, i.e. on civil servants, private agents, associations and voluntary structures and their awareness and representation of language as a tool of and for social inclusion. We therefore come to the conclusion that there is a diversified tendency that seems to be influenced by the role that the interviewees play in the inclusion process. When it comes to individuals who play the role of voluntary workers, the awareness of the surrounding reality is broad and the reference to linguistic reality is detached, at least in part, from models that identify languages with clearly delimited and predefined objects and that often include traces of hegemonic discourses. The empirical approaches that the interviewees recount of their work in helping refugees reveal linguistic practices made up of fluidity and creativity that is not only individual but also collective, an approach that makes speakers individuals composed of "constantly moving repertoires and resources not permanently linked to ethnic identities or pre-established identity aspects"[6] (D'Agostino 2021: 45, referring to Lüpke – Storch).

[6] "[…] da repertori e risorse in continuo movimento non collegate stabilmente a identità etniche o a prefissati aspetti identitari"

When the role of the helper becomes more institutional, we have instead a reversal of the trend: the approach and the use of fixed repertoire models continue to be present as they refer to a "notion of stable status"[7] (D'Agostino 2021: 45) that the speaking subject, in our case asylum seekers and refugees, must respect. This view is particularly present in the language learning process, with its fixed and rigid status as an official and administrative code, and has the consequence of influencing (negatively) the use of the other codes that are part of the social repertoire, codes whose use depends on the interactional context. The rigid approach in fact favours forms of linguistic unease and dominance, even when internal rules of natural relations in interaction should facilitate communication and shows traces of taken for granted classification of the sociolinguistic reality grounded on representations and categorisations influenced by ideals of banal nationalism.

Our interlocutors are torn between the institutional habit of rigid language status labelling but are more or less aware of the internal variation in language systems and the language resource of migrants. In some cases, this creates a sort of contradictory in our interviewees, in others it is simply an underlying but not explicit feeling, and in others the problem does not arise at all — what matters is to communicate. In part, however, one forgets how decisive the linguistic resource is when looking at the relationship between communicative practices and movement in geographical and social space (D'Agostino 2021). The fact that in Sweden helpers are focused on the socio-economic side is also due to a legal issue since in Sweden language knowledge is not a requirement in inclusion processes nor for obtaining citizenship, a policy that has been labelled as "civic integrationist" (Borevi – Jensen – Mouitsen 2017: 10) that, at least explicitly refuses the national models.

The Italian way to integration, on the other hand, is characterised (or was characterised at least until 2015) by the fundamental roles attributed to local communities and to the integration of families in small and medium-sized contexts. Still, in general, the Italian model can be defined as neo-assimilationist in reference to the importance given to greater adaptation by migrants to the host country's culture, rather than to the acquisition of civil, political and economic rights. And this is subject to two ideas inherent in the mainstream vision (Antonsich 2015); the first is that of univocal standard Italian (which deliberately excludes real linguistic variation) as the central point of policies on the reception of asylum seekers, and the other that of the migrant's moral obligation to learn Italian. However the activities conducted through the humanitarian corridors are important because of their

[7] "nozione di status stabile"

peculiarity of implementing and supporting the inclusion policy from a bottom up perspective and their complementary (when not substitutive) function to state policies. They are non-institutional actions that, since they are based on the civil society, could be more receptive to field action experiences as well as to scientific studies on migration that propose alternative, innovative and even experimental solutions.

Nevertheless, since inequalities caused by language use, behaviour and attitudes are very common, they seem to be often morally unproblematic among our interviewees even if they recognise their importance when asked explicitly. These issues are commonly considered of secondary importance compared to others and although these inequalities fall within the dimension of public policy, at macro level they are mostly managed through assimilatory mechanisms and rejection to multilingualism considered as a cause of social problems without acting at the level of individual language unease (Shorten 2018; Gazzola – Templin – Wickström 2019). It is precisely the different evaluation of this characteristic that can lead to non-functional and often deviant inclusion policies; the idea, for example, that linguistic assimilation leads to social inclusion or, in cases where multilingualism is evaluated positively as an inclusion tool, they may be not sufficient as an understanding of multilingualism as "multiple monolingual competencies can result in exclusionary outcomes" (Piller- Takahashi 2011: 327). And this kind of policies touch also recent immigrants: the monoglot perspective and the banal nationalist ideals of the host society play the role of gate keeper against migrant people which in turn affects the process of inclusion in the host society. Policies that target to an inclusive society should therefore take into consideration the implementation of linguistic justice targeting the entire population, both autochthonous and migrant. Unfortunately, these values are quite abstract, and it is not immediately apparent what they entail for language policy (Kymlicka – Patten 2003: 7).

In recent years, and mainly with reference to what is known as the "migration crisis" (in 2015), civil society as a whole has been called upon to address the migration issue by needing instruments to prevent the so called "travels of hope" (from Italian "viaggi della speranza" cited and commented in D'Agostino 2021). The great diversity of linguistic, cultural and religious characteristics of asylum seekers in an era of globalisation, in relation to the varied and diversified cultural characteristics of host countries means a challenge for host communities to create conditions for all asylum seekers to achieve sustainable inclusion. Further studies could focus on how refugees (or migrants in general) perceive their linguistic reality and that of the host country, as well as the interpretation of their discourses in relation to citizenship and group membership. Collecting migrants' experiences would shed light on

the discourses of racism and exclusion that exist in society at large and that may be caused by linguistic misunderstandings, in order to better understand (at least) these kinds of inclusion or exclusion processes. Future research could also explore the theoretical and practical potential of majority community language awareness (MIME 2018: 92, 121, 129, 139) through symbolic and political acts. Challenging monoglot language thinking could inspire a new immigration policy that moves towards a more inclusive society, more supportive of global population movements than can be imagined within the framework of the current nation-states in Europe. Still migrants coming to Europe have language repertoires that are often unknown in the host countries and, in many cases, when known, not even positively evaluated; and, in the case of asylum seekers and refugees, they might be also misunderstood by hosting volunteers. Not taking into consideration the richness of the linguistic repertoires of migrants not only can result as waste of intellectual potential, but in particular it can mislead even policies that positively and explicitly aim towards the inclusion of the migrant population.

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