Phonetic shift as correlate of identity sentiment, ideology and social practices

In different variants of Sardinian languages it has recently been observed an oscillation between the realization of the voiced plosive as retroflex [ɖ] and as alveolar [d] in intervocalic position (cfr. Contini 1987). The phonetic shift toward the alveolar form contributes to make the phonetics of Sardinian uniform with that of the Italian language.

In a situation of diglossy like that of Sardinia, this variability seems to be connected - together with properly linguistic and pragmatic factors - with different opinions and sensibility about issues regarding Sardinian identity; with different political and cultural ideologies; and with different social practices and ways of life (cfr. Pira 1978).

To test this hypothesis, the following protocol of research and analysis has been defined:

- creation of a short text (see Appendix n.1), in Sardinian language, campidanese variant with some local variations, where the observed phoneme appear in different contextual position;
- creation of a questionnaire with a list of questions, most of which with closed response (on a five points scale of agreement), with 39 variables regarding not only usual categories like age, sex, instruction, social status etc., but also topics like confidence with Sardinian traditions, political issues, food, social milieu, dressing etc. (see Appendix n. 2);
- field recordings of the short text read by a sample of people from two villages of central/southern Sardinia (recording instruments: Tascam DR 100 digital recorder; headset microphone Shure WH 30 XLR; Behringer ECM 8000);
- submission of the questionnaire;
- listening test: evaluation of the recordings by three experts in Sardinian language;

The collection of data and their elaboration analysis is still going on. Therefore, the results will be presented, in case of acceptance of this proposal, during the conference.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cedergren, H. & Sankoff, D.

Contini, M.

Pira, M.
Unu dia, unu piccioccheddu, giranno a caddu aintro ‘e boscu, atòppada unu sirbone. Custu sirbone cumpènzada a foeddare cun issu e di nàrada:

- “Ite olise de me¹, piccioccheddu? Deo seo leggiu, seo totu nieddu e caddozzu e no bâglio a nudda; poite no ánna a cassare incui, anca este cuuddu poleeddu, du sparasa e di faese unu stampu in cussu bella pedde groga!”

Su piccioccheddu, intennendo custos fueddos de su sirbone, si spantada e si fuidi. Torrau a bidda, atòppada sa mamma ci² di narada:

- “Inue fiasa a giru cun cuuddu³ cuuddu? No sese annau a iscola? Como istudanne su fogu, e piga s’iscova e illichidi. E luegu beni babbu a t’iscutere!”

APPENDIX n. 2

Two short excerpts from the questionnaire submitted

1 Varianti: per alcuni, “de mimi” o “de mei”
2 Varianti: per alcuni: “ji di narada”
3 Varianti: alcuni: “cussu caddu”