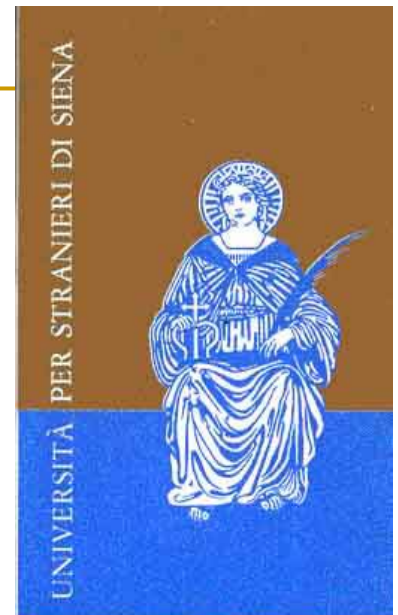# Mapping linguistic super-diversity in cities: new methodological approachs

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'Linguistic super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007:1024)

Nowadays: massive migration on a worldwide scale as well as mobility being made easier at the global level

Presence of speakers of different languages in quantities hitherto without precedent, as well as the presence of a series of other, non-quantity-based, evidence distinguishing a situation of 'super-diversity' from one of normal linguistic contact.

General question

what challenge the general linguistically super-diverse situation caused by immigration poses to scientific research

how data collected by investigative research may be useful for management and guidance projects dealing with the dynamics caused by so many languages sharing the same area

Various levels that the question concerns

- the quantitative level, as the quantitative dimension of the groups in contact (and therefore also the languages) would appear to be the first indicatory factor of a super-diversity situation
- the individual dimension, as a general situation of super-diversity is of course made up of individual speakers and their relationships with social networks *vis-à-vis* their personal configuration of 'super-diverse' linguistic competences
- the qualitative dimension of contact between languages within society

The methodological challenge

diversified collection models for data coming from linguistic contact in a context of migration

able not only to shed light upon quantitative data (how many languages, how many speakers),

but to take into account the types and results of such contact between the traditional linguistic space and other languages of recent entry, analysing the mesh of dynamics that is created in a given territory between the linguistic use and behaviour of immigrant communities and that of host communities.

Observation parameters used in an investigation into the Italian situation

the presence of speakers of immigrant languages, and thus their demographic weight and location

their declarations of language use, their linguistic behaviour and attitudes as well as those of Italians

the presence, visibility and real use of the languages in question in contexts of social interaction

Observation parameters used in an investigation into the Italian situation

each of these parameters and interaction amongst them sheds light on diversified conditions of language contact and takes into account the diversified redefinition of local linguistic space

and the consequent need for elaborating diversified policies of intervention and institutional management (in schools, in social contexts most strongly touched by immigration)
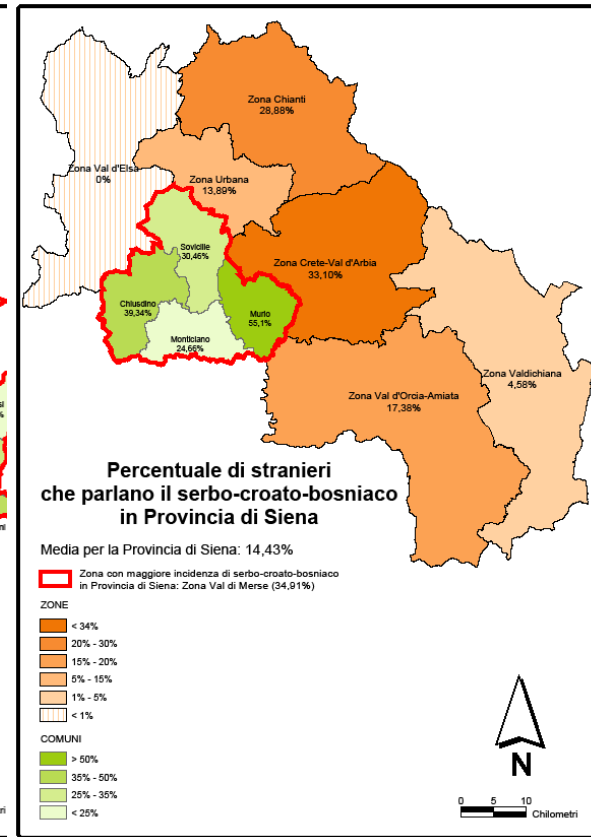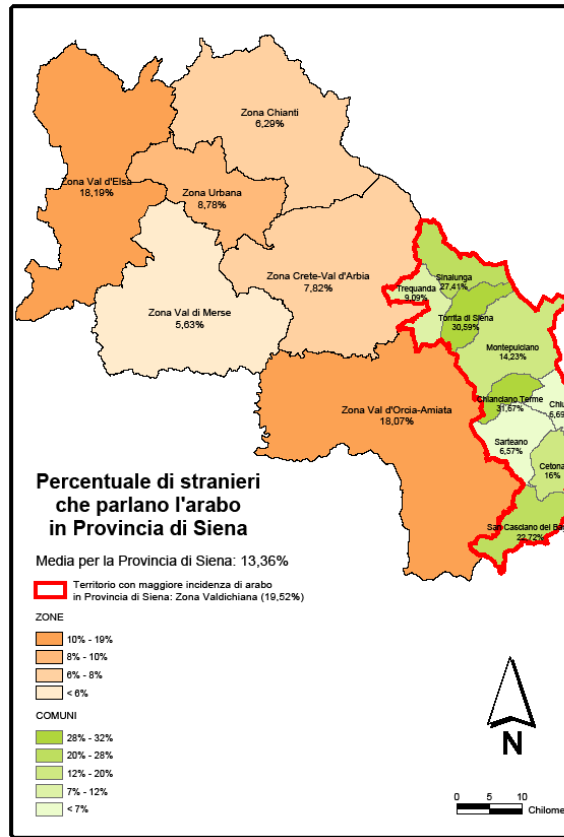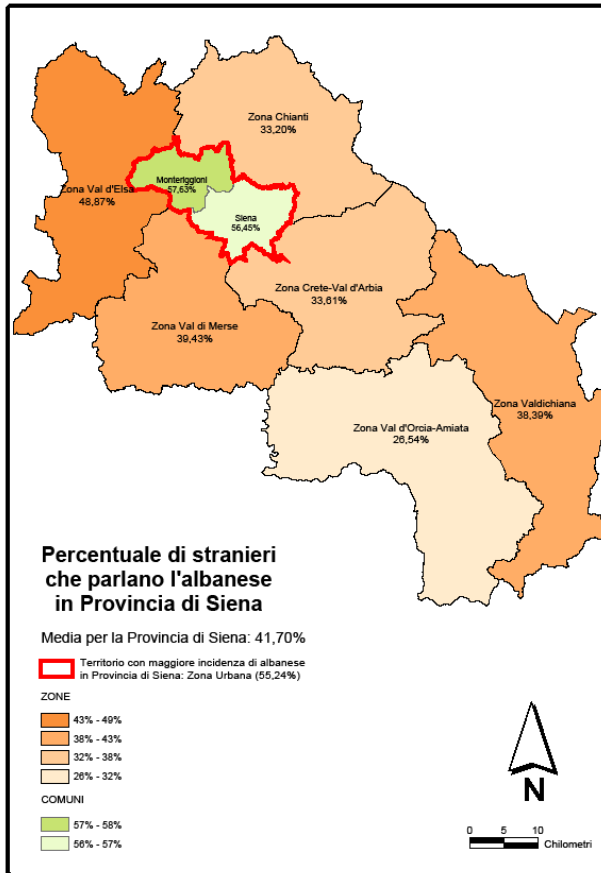
Presence of immigrant languages

demographic data as the starting point for linguistic analysis

an instrument aimed at those who work in structures in contact with immigration and have to elaborate socio-cultural policies for integration in an intercultural context.

Geolinguistic representation

Percentuale di stranieri
che parlano l'albanese
in Provincia di Siena

Media per la Provincia di Siena: 41,70%

Percentuale di stranieri
che parlano l'arabo
in Provincia di Siena

Media per la Provincia di Siena: 13,36%

Percentuale di stranieri
che parlano il serbo-croato-bosniaco
in Provincia di Siena

Media per la Provincia di Siena: 14,43%

Italian enters into contact with other languages
in varying ways

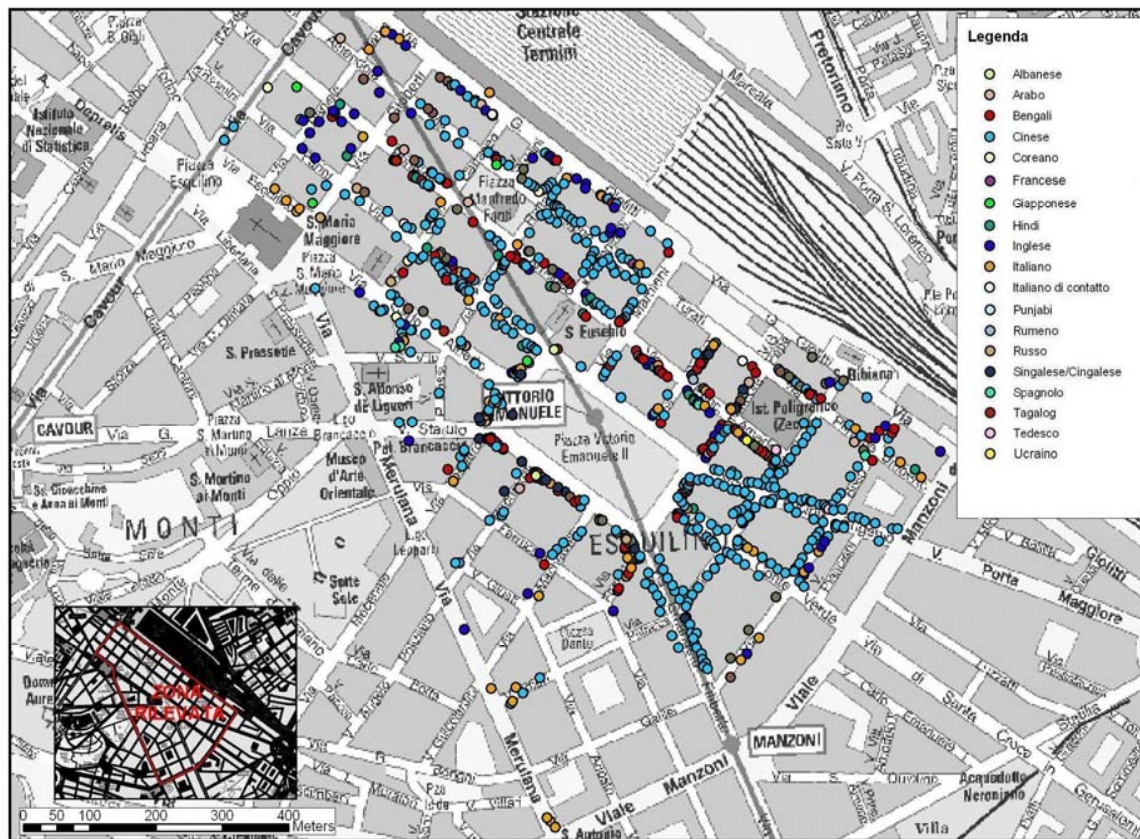# Individual super-diversity: The case of foreign-origin children

The questions to be asked about their linguistic situation are clear:

What is their L1?

The one used within the family? with the peer group? at school?

the competence of children of foreign origin born in a host country covers an idiomatic range marked by contact between several languages; these children show no fear of dealing with this contact as a mixture or superimposition

Level of contact between languages in social communication space

Investigation into linguistic forms of social communication (signs, posters, notices etc.) has brought to light a noteworthy plurality of languages:

24 languages in Esquilino -Rome (1180 LL items)

their distribution is not casual.

Investigations in other Italian cities: Prato, Florence, Arezzo, Ferrara, Turin

data collected through three investigative parameters (language presence, language use and language visibility)

different languages show different traits according to the different contact conditions in which they find themselves (Barni, 2008; Barni and Bagna Forthcoming)

contact conditions and outcome are various, and depend upon factors such as the demographic, social, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the area in which immigrants settle and for how long they have settled there, as well as upon speakers' own attitudes towards their language.

To describe such a complexity of dynamics

it is necessary to use different methods of data collection, in such a way as also to receive complementary information

each of the levels of investigation that we have used to describe the Italian situation covers an aspect that eludes the others

comparison of the data collected allows us to highlight the relationships between the parameters of language presence, language upkeep and language use that are underlying the data