
Which Italian is spoken in Montreal?

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Résumé

This communication is part of an ethnographic research on the "Italian community" of Montreal, Canada. The main purpose is to illustrate the situation of the Italian language and variations spoken by the descendants of the Italian migration. Moreover, it aims to bring to light the question about different Non-Dominant varieties still present within the community.

The research project is part of a sociolinguistic study on language practices and the evolution of these practices in a multilingual context such as the one in Montreal, in contact with the two dominant languages: French and English. The linguistic questions and the importance of languages in Quebec, especially in Montreal, have to be considered in order to analyse how language is transmitted from one generation to another and how important is its role in the process of identity's construction.

Field research were carried out in Montreal, in 2011 and more recently in 2019. A sample of 60 interviews was collected, from Italians or descendants of Italian migration of different age, gender, socio-economic status, profession and studies. The analysis allowed us to observe some particular elements of the Italian spoken in Montreal. It was also possible to analyse the fundamental role of practices and the status of standard Italian through ideologies and representations. This, during the process of identity's construction, in order to preserve a cultural and linguistic heritage inherent to the group. Through this analysis, it will be important to reflect about how linguistic practices are a manifestation of belonging to the group in a definition of a territory of practices, and the role of Italian as the marker of the community's life.

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Mots-Clés: Sociolinguistique, migration, pratiques langagières, Montréal, langue et identité