

**THE ORALITY-LITERACY
CONTINUUM IN GALICIAN:
LANGUAGE CHOICE, CULTURAL
IDENTITY, AND LANGUAGE
POLICY AT A CROSSROADS**

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[doi:10.17075/tucmeg.2015.007](https://doi.org/10.17075/tucmeg.2015.007)

1. INTRODUCTION*

Language choice and cultural identity in Galicia are immersed in a redefining act needed from within and forced from the outside. Following Fredric Jameson (1991), we can say that the postmodern world is creating new forms of post-national identity in Galicia and these forms are inextricably connected and determined by Galicia's long history: real, imagined, and reinvented.

Do Galicians today identify themselves as bicultural or monocultural? Biliterate or monoliterate? According to the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (2005: Estudio 2063) and other surveys, Galicians today know how to read in both Galician and Castilian, showing clear signs of biliteracy. Nevertheless, Galicians seem to be acquiring literacy in Galician at a lower rate than non-Galician speakers (Mercator Education 2001) and they are also choosing to read in Castilian with greater frequency and quantity than they do in Galician (Vid. Chart 4 below). Are Galicians bilingual but monoliterate? It could be argued that because of the primacy of orality in the history of Galician, Galician speakers are acquiring literacy in Galician in one of two ways: either as an L2 language, or as speakers of a heritage language who have acquired literacy in a different language first. In an attempt to see how the orality-literacy continuum is integrated (or not) in an apparently biliterate and bicultural linguistic environment such as the Galician community, we used a self-designed sociolinguistics survey and the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer/Bennet 1998/2002) to look at the linguistic, cultural, and social perceptions of intercultural and linguistic development reflected in the current sociolinguistic situation of Galicia.

Walter Ong (1982/1988) used the term orality to refer to the linguistic status of a society prior to the introduction of writing. When writing systems first develop, linguistic groups and individuals move from orality (only verbal

* Research for this study was funded by a Regis Summer FDC Grant. Preliminary results were presented at the X AIEG Conference. The author would like take this opportunity to thank the Regis FDC, the organizers of the X AIEG Conference, and the editors and anonymous reviewers of this publication. Also, especial thanks go to Gabriela DeRobles for her help in identifying trends in preliminary research results as well as for her careful reading of this manuscript.

expression) to literacy (reading and writing). This progression represents movement along what we are calling here the orality-literacy continuum. In order to understand this continuum, we have to look at different permutations of orality and literacy. At one end of the continuum we have oral only cultures where written language has not yet developed. At a midpoint we can also have cultures where a written language has developed and/or is accepted as a standard although a substantial part of the population is not literate in that language and uses a different oral register. The linguistic situation of the Middle Ages in Europe, for instance, is a good example of disassociation between written and oral registers. Although Latin was the standard for the written form, speakers had different oral registers depending on the area. In the Early Middle Ages, Galician and other emerging romance languages represent a good example of two linguistic situations: a linguistic environment where a written language existed but was only available to a privileged few combined with what has been called the disassociation between the written and the oral register, i.e. Latin was the written language while vernaculars were only oral (Ong 1984: 4, 5; Geary 2013).

The changes produced in the orality/literacy continuum in Galician have historically tended to come not from within, but from the outside. The Galician language has gone back and forth intermittently between orality and literacy during its long existence. Galician has been an oral language since approximately the 9th century and a written language from at least the end of the 12th century (Monteagudo/Santamarina 1993). The oldest text written in what we can call Galician-Portuguese is *Pacto entre Gomes Pais e Ramiro Pais*, predates 1175 (Souto Cabo 2011). The oldest literary document known today is the cantiga satírica «Ora faz ost'o senhor de Navarra» by Joam Soares Paiva, written towards 1200. The first nonliterary documents in Galician are from the beginning of the 13th century, *Noticia de Torto* (1211) and the *Testamento de Afonso III de Portugal* (1214). Monteagudo (2005) indicates that a text entitled *O foro do bo burgo do Castro Caldelas* was ordered by Alfonso X, King of Leon and Galicia in 1228 and was written by a notary public of Allariz in April of that year. In contrast, the first «original text» with the same historical characteristics in Castilian Spanish dates from 1246 and in Portuguese the testament of Alphonse the II is dated in 1214 (Monteagudo 2005).

Galician was the written language of the lyric in the Iberian Peninsula from the 12th to the 14th centuries (Monteagudo 2007). The kings of two countries, Spain and Portugal, used it as their language for poetry. The Castilian King Alfonso X of Castile used it to write his poetry, while choosing Castilian to write his laws (Fisher 1986). Even though Galician was removed from the literacy continuum in Spain from the 16th-17th centuries (Monteagudo 2007), it continued to be used in its oral form and on occasion was not completely absent from the

writing continuum. Galician was not used as a formal written form until the 18th century, when father Sarmiento writes, among other things, his *Coloquio de 24 gallegos rústicos*, giving new light to the Galician language associated before and even after with the language of peasants. Father Sarmiento emphasizes something truly groundbreaking during his time and even today: he insists on creating a written record of orality in Galician. Father Sarmiento insisted on preserving what he found in the oral register and did not try to impose the Castilian standard on Galician; he wanted to reproduce authentic oral forms (Fernández 1997). We still had to wait until the 19th century for Rosalía de Castro and her poetry book *Cantares Gallegos* (1863) to have Galician orality reintroduced in a written form. Her decision, awakening a desire to write in Galician, re-inserted Galician in the orality-literacy continuum.

Since the 15th century Galician has been in contact with Castilian Spanish in a kind of diglossic situation where in most instances Castilian has been considered the high variety and Galician, the low. Until the 19th century Castilian was the language of literacy, while Galician was mostly expressed in orality. Although Galician almost disappeared as a written language and was barely used orally in urban centers, it continued to be used by the majority of the rural population as a natural means of communication within the local monolingual community. It was a clear signifier, be it positive or negative, of their identity. This environment is a good example of what Mandianes sees as the relationship between identity and orality: identity is laid out/carried out by orality, or, “la identidad está vehiculada por la oralidad” (Mandianes 1999: 67).

Even though we cannot describe the Galicia of today as an oral society in the sense established by Ong (1982/1988) as pre-conceptual, pre-abstract societies, where writing had not yet been developed, the apparent behavior of contemporary Galician speakers seems to favor orality over literacy when using Galician. Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao, a prominent figure of Galician culture, politics, and letters represented the linguistic situation in the Galicia of his time in one of the drawings from his collection *Nós* published in 1931.



Fig. 1: Rodríguez Castelao. 1931. Nós. Source: Facsimile edition (1975:29).

In this drawing the little girl asks in Castilian to the obviously peasant old man «¿Por qué no habla castellano, señor Pedro?» («Why don't you speak Castilian, señor Pedro?») Señor Pedro answers in Galician: «Ay, neniña, en galego nunca s'escribiron os recibos das contribucións» («Oh, little girl! Tax receipts have never been written in Galician»)⁵⁰ The old man shows his resistance to the power gained by Castilian Spanish by saying that he chooses not to speak Castilian because it is the written language and «not pleasant things» are written in Castilian. It is hard not to see the acute and bitter commentary on domination and dependence and the clear expression of resignation in protest in the answer given by the old man. At the same time, it is also impossible to avoid seeing the opposition between «speaking: orality» and «writing: literacy».

Alfonso X of Castile, known as «the wise» or «the learned» comes quickly to mind. This much learned king wrote his poetry in Galician, but his laws in Castilian. In Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1) we have a clear depiction of writing as identified with a power structure: the old man does not speak Castilian because

⁵⁰ Unless otherwise identified, all translations are the author's.

it possesses a writing system that imposes taxes on him. He chooses to remain in the domain/world of orality in order to avoid an unwelcome and oppressive literate world. This old man would understand perfectly what Max Weber (1968) pointed out when he said that one of the characteristics of bureaucratic organizations is to conduct business on the basis of written documents. Walter Ong (1982/1988), in his study of orality and literacy, also refers to writing as a naturally suspicious phenomena to historically oral societies.

In the following, more contemporary drawing, we see another younger girl talking with an older young man. Only in this case it is the man who asks the question:



Fig. 2: Illustration by Fran Bueno. Source: CGENDL (2011).⁵¹

While Castelao's drawing above (Fig. 1) had a clear contrast between speaking and writing, this drawing made by cartoonist Fran Bueno (Fig. 2) as part of the campaign of the Galician Coordinator of Linguistic Standardization and Dynamization Teams (Coordinadora Galega de equipos de normalización y dinamización lingüística, CGENDL in the Galician acronym) to address linguistic attitudes in Galicia, represents only an oral system. No references are made to reading and/or writing; only speaking is reflected and considered here. We do not know if Fran Bueno had Castelao (Fig. 1) in mind when drawing this cartoon (Fig. 2), but the similarities and differences are just too great to be nothing more than a coincidence. Again, we have an older man and a girl, only this time the man has a punkish/hipsterish look and speaks in Castilian while the

⁵¹ Available at <http://www.coordinadoraendl.org/prexuihos/doc/prexuihos.pdf>

girl has a fairly standard look and speaks in Galician. To the question posed by the young man, she answers with a question (very culturally appropriate). Both question and answer in Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1) were in the negative: «why don't you... Because tax receipts are not written», while both questions here are in the affirmative: «Why do you...Why do you ask?» The girls' answer can be interpreted as a manifestation of the traditional Galician humor known as «retranca» or even as despondent in the sense of «I don't need to explain my actions to you». Basically, she is saying she does not need to justify her choice of language. This is what the campaign promoting the use of spoken Galician seems to be fostering: Galician is the language of Galicia and its use does not need explanation. However, in Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1), señor Pedro feels obligated to explain why he does not speak Castilian and he proceeds to do so by stating his resistance to what he feels is an imposition of the Castilian written register.

In Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1) Galician is the language of an older, rural, and unrefined people. The contrast between the little blond girl and the old man is almost monstrous in my view. At that time the younger generation that goes to school—the future of Galicia—may speak Castilian or Galician at home, but is becoming literate in Castilian in school. The older, rural generation speaks Galician. Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1) clearly represents the classical view of Galician as a language of peasants. The contemporary drawing (Fig. 2) has a very different approach with two embedded meanings: it is clearly the young girl who speaks Galician while the man uses Castilian. Another main difference is that this man is not old. The young generation of Castelao's time grew up learning Castilian in schools. The young man in Bueno's drawing was surely taught Galician in school at least to a certain extent. He clearly chose to use Castilian. The girl represents the younger generation, the future of Galician. Interestingly enough, literacy is not present in the exchange as it was in Castelao's drawing. The emphasis here is on orality not on literacy. We could argue that literacy is present in a secondary way, much in what Ong would call secondary literacy: we are seeing the representation of a scripted, written text representing a dialogue in oral form. Fishman's (1996b/2007:78) reference to «literacy as providing communication across time and space» clearly resonates here. Walter Ong, talking about primary orality vs. secondary orality as found on TV anchor reading news, says that secondary orality is a phenomenon of post-literate societies. It is an oral residue: transition from pre-literate to literate. The transition is not fully complete; the society keeps many of the characteristics of oral society.

The disassociation between literacy in Castilian and orality in Galician has played a major historical role in the status of the Galician language. Intentional and deliberate efforts have been made to encourage a shift to literacy in both

languages but, although the latest surveys show Galicians to be amongst the most avid readers in Spain, only 4% of readers in that country read in Galician below Castilian, English, Catalan, and French, in that order according to the Federation of Publishers Guild of Spain (2011).

As we mentioned before, the questions here are how the orality-literacy continuum is integrated (or not) as the Galician community makes meaning and what becomes meaningful enough as to define the community itself. Eastman (1984) considers language use to be only a surface feature of ethnic identity: speakers can stop using a language but still consider it as part of their heritage. Regarding the Galician situation, Iglesias-Álvarez and Ramallo (2002/2003) consider Galician to be the cohesive element of multiple dimensions of Galician identity. Regueira Fernández (2006) and Beswick (2007) agree that even if Galician natives do not know the language, they still identify with it as an intrinsic measure of ethnic identity. Results from studies conducted by the Sociolinguistics Institute of the Royal Galician Academy (SSRAG 2003) also seem to indicate that the use of Galician is not essential for ethnic identity.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In an attempt to contribute to the study of possible connections between cultural identity, intercultural development, and language choice in Galicia, we designed a research project to gather information from Galicians regarding their self-reported perceptions of cultural identity and language use. Because of the centrality of the education system in the introduction of literacy in Galician, we decided to look at different groups within the education system: students, teachers, professors, and administrators in an attempt to look at the status of the continuum of Galician identity and language use to see if it paralleled and/or intersected with the notion of intercultural development as a continuum. This sample of the education population was chosen for two main reasons:

1. To have a closer look at the perceived effectiveness of the Galician education system looking at it from two sides: students and instructors/administrators.

2. To have a coherent study group.

The tools used to collect data were:

1. A self-designed sociolinguistic questionnaire.⁵² This sociolinguistic survey was conducted in Galician and collected self-reported information on language knowledge and use and cultural and linguistic identity from

⁵² Survey available upon request.

informants.⁵³ All, except two questions in the survey, are designed on a Likert scale. Two of the questions are open ended questions asking respondents to complete the following two statements:

An individual is considered Galician if...

An individual is not considered Galician if ...

2. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI): a survey of intercultural sensitivity development, (v3 2004). This survey is a 50-item standardized psychometric instrument based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) designed by Milton Bennett (1993). The IDI was administered in Spanish as there was no Galician translation available.⁵⁴

We have respondents from three major age groups: 10-17, 18-30, and 40+, but, interestingly, no respondents between 31-39 years of age completed the surveys. This was probably related to the group selection: students and instructors. In future studies we will make every effort possible to gather data from all groups.⁵⁵

Statistical analysis shows that the results have a probability of error of +/- 1 to -4, and a degree of confidence of 95%. The results of this study are, in general, in consonance with the ones collected via the Sociolinguistic Map of Galicia (1992/2004), with one significant exception: reading in Galician. The Sociolinguistic Map asked for competency in reading and related it to origin of acquisition: home or school. The present study asked respondents to identify the language in which reading was done as we were interested in seeing not only the reported knowledge of linguistic abilities, but also what language users actually say they do with the language they report to know.

⁵³ We are aware of the limitations of self-reported information, but the nature of the study required individual personal responses from the surveyed population.

⁵⁴ The author of this study has undergone training in the use and administration of the IDI and is a certified and qualified administrator of the IDI.

⁵⁵ Because this research project included human subjects, especially human subjects under 18 years of age, it had to be reviewed and approved by the Committee of Institutional Research at the researcher's institution before proceeding. The research methodology was approved and all protocols needed to gather information were followed including, but not limited to, seeking authorization from parents and/or guardians of minors, and requiring signed informed consent from all participants. All surveys were conducted online and participants were given usernames and passwords only after their signed informed consent forms were received. Respondents were selected by contacting schools at different levels in the areas mentioned. More than two hundred possible informants responded to the call for participation, and 175 respondents completed all necessary consent forms and research tools.

3. DATA RESULTS

3.1. Reading and Writing

The sociolinguistic survey asked respondents not only to assess their proficiency in reading and writing, but also to rate their actual use of these skills. When asked about reading and writing ability in Galician and Castilian Spanish, respondents clearly stated that they consider themselves to be proficient in both languages. The 10-17-age-group self-report a lower level of proficiency in writing in Galician than in Castilian which tends to indicate that they are learning to write in Castilian at a faster rate than in Galician. This is surprising if we take into consideration that the spelling system adopted in Galician copies the Castilian system and similarities between these two systems should allow for skill transfer from one to the other. There is a 15% difference between the 10-17 group and the 18-30 group. The results from Castilian show almost no difference between the last two groups. They are almost at the same level. It is interesting to see that in Chart 2 below we find the same result for reports of reading ability in Galician. It seems that there is not perceived progress in writing in Castilian in the 10-17 and 18-30 groups and the same is true regarding reading in Galician for both groups. Taking into account that these two groups represent a progression from elementary to secondary and higher education, we can say that there seems to be a predictor factor in the degree of reporting of actual use of reading and/or writing in both languages depending on the existence of a natural progression in the acquisition of these skills. Respondents read and/or write more in the language where there was a natural progression in the development in these skills from elementary-secondary schooling to university education levels. This is an area that warrants further study to ascertain the writing and reading proficiency level and the actual rate of progress in both languages.

Perception of progression from lower to higher levels of proficiency from the younger to the older group is a result of the makeup of the study group: 10-17 year olds are students in school, 18-30 are either university students or beginning teachers, while the 40+ group is composed of teachers and administrators.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ The fact that these results reflect the expected natural progression in the development of these skills within the education system, helps give credence to other results on the survey.

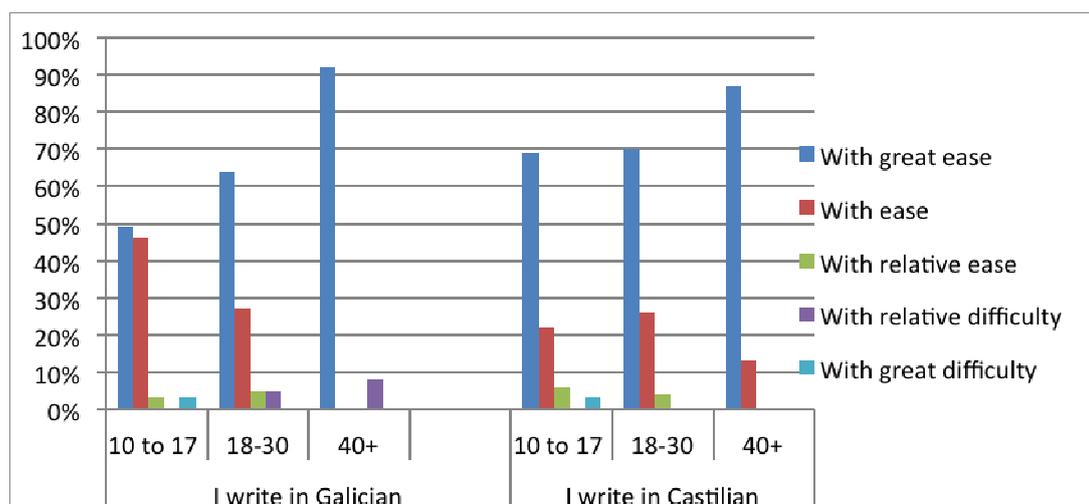


Chart 1: Ability to Write. Based on results from Sociolinguistic Survey

Comparing Chart 1 above with Chart 2 below, we can see that respondents tend to report a higher level of reading skills compared to writing skills in both languages. We cannot fail to note the exception of the 40+ group which reports a higher ability in writing than in reading in Galician: This could be seen as surprising as we would expect reading to be generally more accessible to speakers than writing, but the 40+ group would be the group with the longest contact time with both languages.

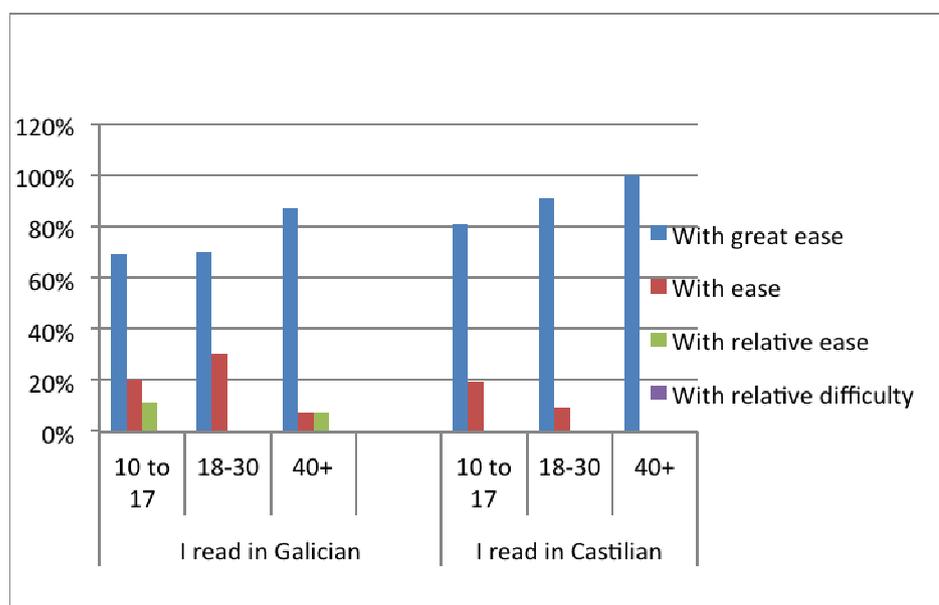


Chart 2: Ability to Read. Based on results from Sociolinguistic Survey

Most educators would agree that language learners would have an easier time reading than writing in another language. Most speakers can understand a written text at a certain level, but would not be able to produce a written text in that language with the same level of accuracy. Writing comes later or takes longer to develop than the other language systems: speaking, listening, and reading (Vygotsky 1978). Also, research has shown that those who are low in oral language skills will be at a lower level in the development of writing skills (MacArthur/Graham/Fitzgerald 2008), which would explain why we have a lower percentage of respondents who self-report reading in Galician. Interestingly enough, as we mentioned above, results show that while speakers in the 10-17 and 18-30 group report to write in Castilian at almost the same level, respondents in the same age groups report they read in Galician at about the same levels.

Gee (1991) refers to two sides of learning in the process of reading: learning to read and reading to learn. Once the student knows the code, he/she needs to appeal to the cultural background, prior knowledge and past experiences to connect to the text. It might be that in regards to reading, the cultural background of reference in Galicia is Spanish, not Galician. This would attempt to explain why heritage speakers refer to reading in the heritage language as a foreign/alien activity. The educational system in Galicia has done an effective job in teaching the code, and the students have learned it, but when it comes to connecting that code with cultural background and previous knowledge, they lack the literacy context in Galician. Reading in Galician for these learners feels like reading in a foreign language. They cannot connect the code to the text and therefore are unable to make meaning from it. They have learned how to read, that is, they have learned the code, but they are unable to use that code to generate meaning that can take them to learning. Initially we agree with Vilavedra (2008) when she talks about the Galician reader as a future project, but in order for the Galician reader to be able to read the literature written in Galician, the readers need first to develop a level of pragmatically and culturally accurate reading proficiency that will allow them to understand and partake on the meaning that the newly created literature is trying to convey.

The act of reading implies decoding previous knowledge and mental schemata. We can read what others have written without writing ourselves, but we cannot write without reading. Writing implies the existence of a codified outline that needs to be learned and controlled before actually being able to write accurately. Reading in an L1 language comes after speaking and happens only after specific instruction. Reading in an L2, although also learned after specific instruction, might come before speaking. This is confirmed by the Mercator-Education study (2001) mentioned above which reports that non-

native speakers in Galicia tend to develop higher literacy skills in Galician than native speakers.

The similarities between Galician and Castilian literacy skills would tend to indicate that writers and readers should be at the same level of proficiency in both languages. Nevertheless, comparing the two charts above (Vid. Chart 1 and 2) we can see that there is a higher self-report level of proficiency in both reading and writing in Castilian than in Galician. At the same time, students in the school system in the reported areas in this study self-report that they have a higher level in reading than in writing skills in Galician. Nevertheless, they self-report to engage in writing more than in reading in Galician.

When responding to the prompt «I write generally in Galician, Castilian, Galician and Castilian, or other», the majority of survey takers responded they write more in Galician only (54.9%) compared to the other options. When asked to respond to the prompt «I read generally in Galician, Castilian, Galician and Castilian, or other» (Vid. Chart 3), about half of the respondents stated they read in the two languages more than they do in Castilian only or Galician only. A small minority attests to reading in Galician only: 8.6% in contrast with Castilian only: 37%.

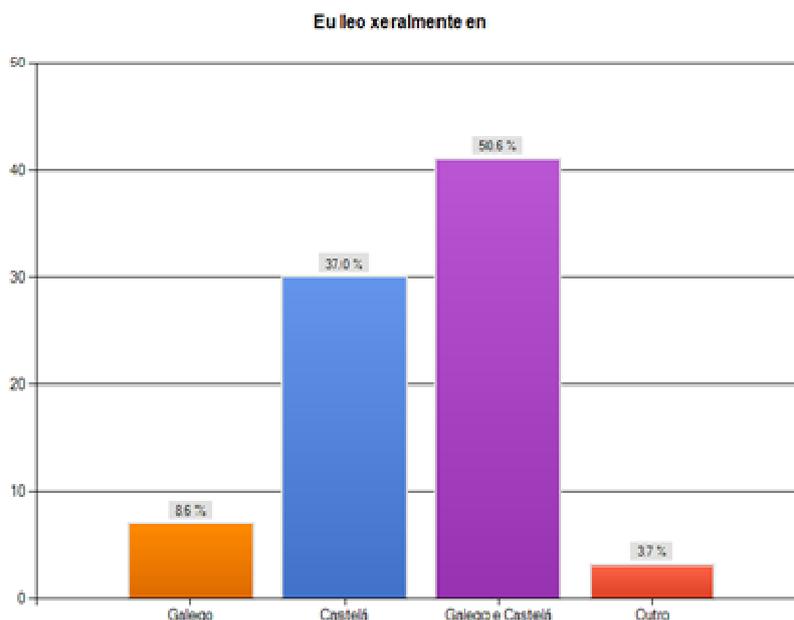


Chart 3: I generally read in... Based on results from Sociolinguistic Survey

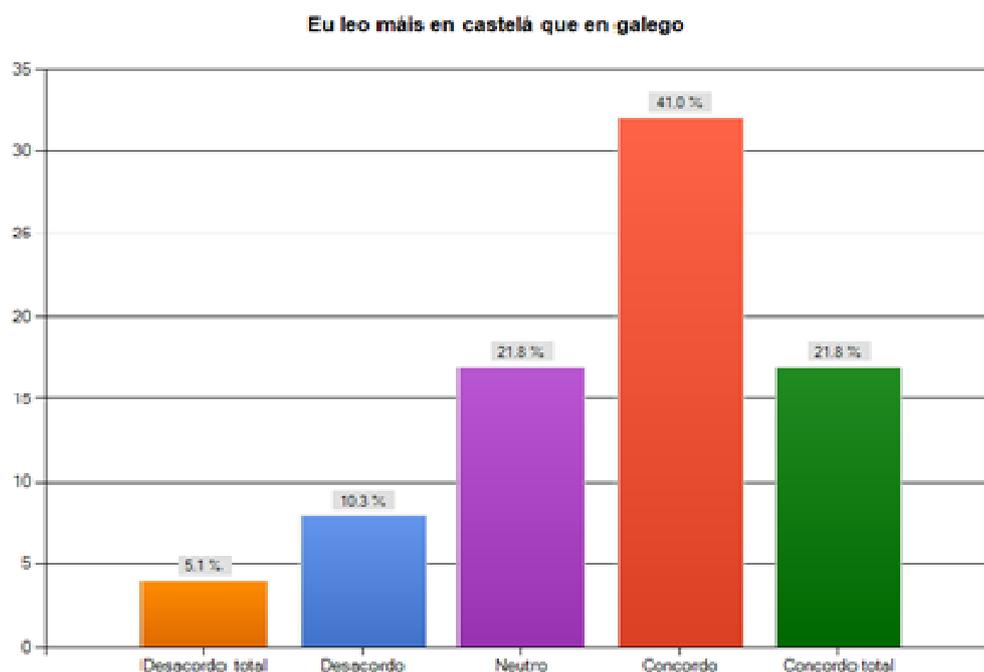


Chart 4: I read more in Castilian than in Galician. Based on results from Sociolinguistic Survey

When asked to agree or disagree with the statement «I read more in Castilian than in Galician», 62.8% of respondents say they agree or totally agree, while only 15.4% disagree or totally disagree (Vid. Chart 4). When asked about writing ability 93.3% of the respondents state that they write in Galician with ease or with great ease. When asked to identify their reading ability in Galician once again 93.5% say they read in Galician with ease or with great ease. They are stating clearly that they know how to read and write in Galician and that they perceive both skills to be easy for them.

Chart 5 below includes a summary of language use in Galicia from 1991 to 2011 comparing the results of three different studies: the study conducted by the Galician Language Academy in 1991, the study conducted by the Center of Sociology Research in 2005, and the present study conducted in 2011. The present study differs from the other two primarily in the following aspects:

1) The number of respondents: the 1991 and 2005 studies included a much larger number of respondents than the present study.⁵⁷

2) The composition of the study group: the 1991 and 2005 studies surveyed a wider sample of the population. The present study surveyed a coherent group sample composed of students, instructors and/or administrators in schools at the elementary, secondary, and college level.

3) The 1991 and 2005 studies produced information about reported ability in speaking, reading, and writing. The present study gathered information on

⁵⁷ See note 54 above.

reported ability on the previous skills together with actual reported use of those abilities. The 1991 and 2005 studies did report information on speaking the language at home, but did not report information on speaking with friends, or in other environments.

Knows how to Write	Writes	Knows how to Read	Reads	Knows how to speak	Speaks with Friends	Speaks at Home	Source	Date
27.1%		45.9%		86.4%		62.4%	Galician Language Academy	1991
57.9%		80.4%		83%		56%	Center of Sociology Research	Study no. 2603 April-May 2005
			4% of readers read in Galician				Federation of Editors Guild of Spain.	First semester 2011
93%	53%	93%	9% Galician only. 50.6% Castilian and Galician 37% Castilian only	94%	49%	59%	This study	Summer and fall 2011

Chart 5: Language use. Comparison of results from 1991, 2005, and 2011 Studies

Consistently, we see a gap between the ability to write, read, or speak and the actual use of these abilities in real contexts: 93% of respondents say they know how to write in Galician (Vid. Chart 1 and Chart 5), but only 53% say they actually do it (Vid. Chart 5); 94% say they know how to speak Galician, but only 49% admit to using it when talking to friends (Vid. Chart 5). The biggest gap appears in the present study in the results reported for amount of reading done in Galician. 50.6% of respondents report that they read in both Galician and Castilian, while 37% report that they read in Castilian, and only 9% of respondents report to read in Galician only (Vid. Chart 2 and Chart 5). Compare these results with the 62.8% of respondents who say they agree or totally agree with the statement that they read more in Castilian, while only 15.4% disagree or totally disagree with the same statement (Vid. Chart 2). This surprising result coincides somewhat with the information reported by the Federation of Editors Guild of Spain in the first semester of 2011 stating that only 4% of readers in Spain read in Galician.

Since the first results of the Academy of the Galician Language Sociolinguistics Map appeared in 1991, we have seen a steady increase in literacy rates in Galician combined with a steady decrease of language use in oral environments. Nevertheless, literacy skills are not used equally. Galicians seem to choose to use Galician more for writing than they choose Galician for reading. Still the question remains as to why after specific attempts at establishing a clear language policy related to the teaching of Galician within the education system, we find less speakers who actually use the language in speaking. According to Fishman (1996a/2007:77) literacy provides communication across time and space. Ethnic literacy is seen as a «prerequisite for the optimal attainment of both community and continuity». In order to attain biliteracy in Galician the speaker needs to ascertain what are the functional roles and social rewards of reading in Galician. What we are seeing right now is acquired literacy in two languages: Castilian and Galician, but functional and active literacy in one: Castilian. Can Spanish meet the reading needs of Galician speakers today?

If we go back to the linguistic situation depicted in Castelao's drawing above (Fig. 1), we can see that for the old man, literacy was not desirable. Looking at the second drawing (Fig. 2), we see that the need for literacy is not even addressed. From the data we have mentioned above, it looks like Galicians are reading in Spanish and other languages, English especially, more than they are reading in Galician. There seems to be «two cultures of reading». From a cognitive view of reading as defined by Rumelhart (1977), if reading processing is not done in the native language, the schemata present in the reader will not be tested. Also, the written text is an intrinsic part of the culture; if that part is taken away, the schemata will be incomplete and the text will be undecipherable

or misunderstood. This is similar to what happens when we read in a foreign language we do not know well: it is not only the code that is lacking, it is the missing schemata which is preventing the reader from achieving complete meaning comprehension.

Walter Loban (1963) established that there was an interrelationship between competency in language skills: children who are more proficient in oral language are also more proficient in reading and writing (Loban 1976). We can connect this with the fact that native speakers develop oral language first while second language learners may develop reading and writing skills before oral skills. Native speakers in control of oral language will work harder to develop literacy skills in that language if they find them useful and feel they will add to their linguistic control. This is somewhat similar to what heritage language learners experience when they take literacy language classes in what they consider to be a non-native environment. In these situations, the non-native learner progresses faster and more effectively than the native speaker. In Galicia, the native speakers seem to be reacting as if they were being taught a foreign or heritage language in a non-native environment. The reason why it feels this way may be related to the methods used: they might resemble too closely the methods used in Spanish, or maybe the variety of Galician taught resonates as foreign to Galician speakers who grew up in an oral environment.

According to the results of this study, Galicians have achieved a level of biliteracy. What remains to be seen is in what type of biliteracy they are engaging. Fishman (1980: 49) refers to what he defines as *language-of-wider-communication* based biliteracy. Until the last decades of the twentieth century literacy in Galicia was first acquired in Castilian Spanish, while Galician remained the language of the home and as such remained an oral language. Whatever was written in Galician helped maintain what Murado (2008) called *lengua de pobres y poetas* (language of poor folk and poets). Everyday writing is done in Castilian Spanish while Galician is reserved as a «vehicle of *intragroup* literacy» (Fishman, 1989: 49). Fishman goes on to explain that «Unlike LWC biliteracy, where one language is primarily inward looking and the other is a window to the outside world, traditional biliteracy utilizes two languages primarily for *intragroup* purposes» (1989: 50). In the Galician situation, Spanish seems to constitute the «window to the outside world» while Galician would be «inward looking». This would be true for Galician poets, but for the majority of the Galician population, reading in Castilian Spanish *is* the source of communication with the outside world, while orality in Galician *is* maintained as the path to the inward world.

3.2. Differences between Individual and Group identity

Pinxten (1991) establishes three identity levels: individual or personal, group, and community identity. In our study we can identify a clear difference between individual or personal identity and group or community identity. When respondents to the Sociolinguistics survey were asked to agree or disagree with the statement: «I am proud to be Galician», their sense of pride is clear and resonates equally among all age groups.

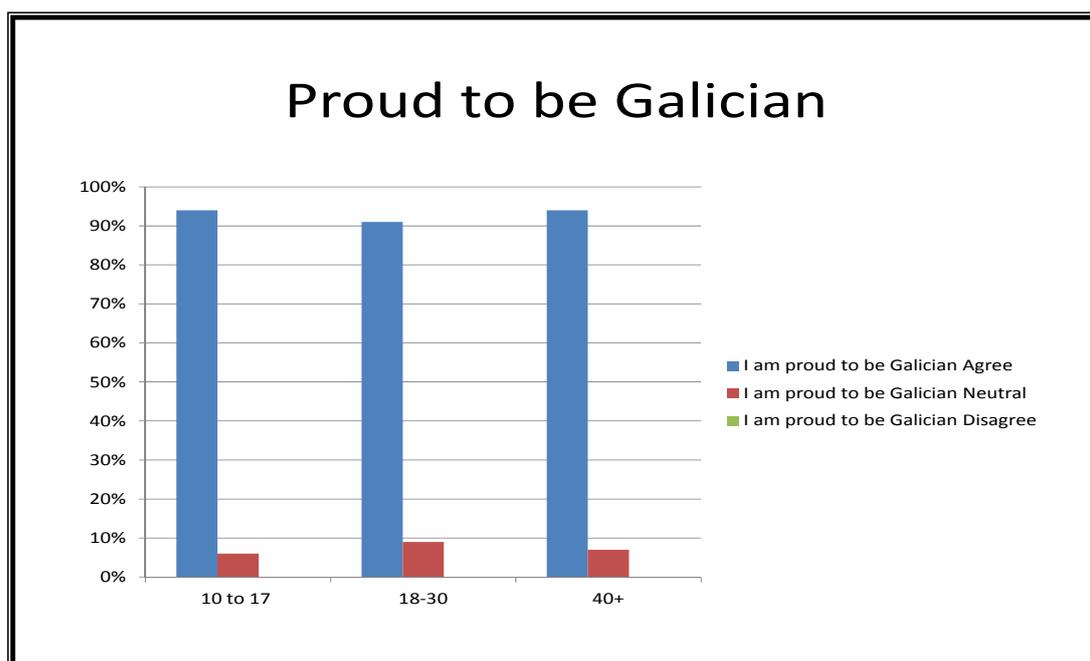


Chart 6: «I am Proud to be Galician.» Based on Sociolinguistic Survey Results

But when they were asked to agree or disagree with the statement «Galicians are proud to be Galician» (Vid. Chart 7) we see a clear change between groups and in actual percentages in all groups.

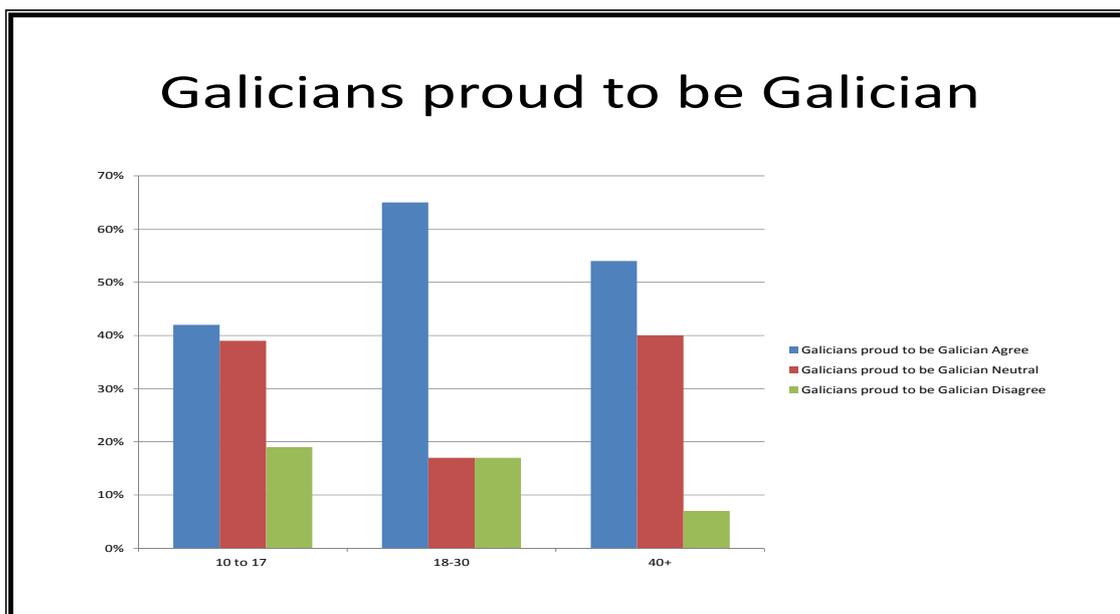


Chart 7: Other Galicians Proud to be Galician. Based on Sociolinguistic Survey Results

The most apparent change is in the 10-17 group. What does this mean? It looks like individually they feel proud to be Galicians, but they do not feel so strongly about the members of the community. In other words: «I do feel proud, but I am not so sure about others». It appears that they do not trust the intent of their community. In other words: the individual seems to have lost his/her community.

3.3. Reported Information about What Defines Ethnic Identity⁵⁸

The last two questions of the Sociolinguistic Survey asked the survey respondents to complete the following sentences:

1. An individual is considered Galician if
2. An individual is not considered Galician if

The answers were coded and tabulated to identify major trends. The chart below shows the trends encountered in the words used to complete sentence number one. 47% percent of respondents identified having pride in Galician culture and/or identifying themselves as Galician as extremely important to be considered Galician, while 29% insisted that speaking Galician is essential to be considered Galician.

⁵⁸ We are completely aware of the impossibility of addressing the issue of ethnic identity in detail here. We are only reporting pertinent information from the study results to give a better idea of where the «two cultures of reading» in Galician might be coming from.

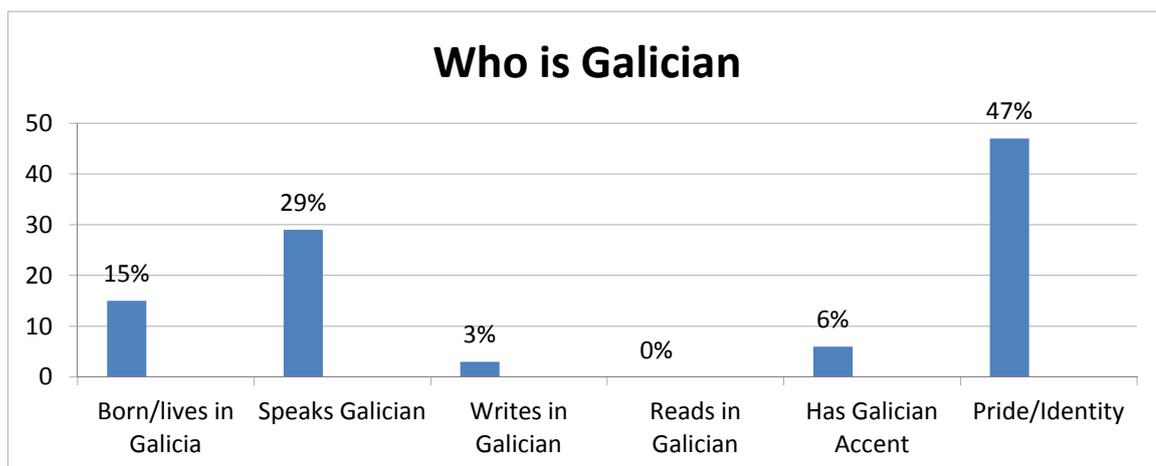


Chart 8: Who is Galician. Based on Sociolinguistic Survey Results

Looking at the elements respondents found important to identify someone as not Galician, it is interesting to see that not being proud of being Galician or not having a Galician identity was identified by 54% of the respondents as characteristics for not being Galician, while not speaking the language was a factor for no Galician recognition by only 23% of respondents.

We cannot help to notice an element that seems to confirm the results mentioned above about reading and writing. When expressing what defines a Galician, only 3% of the respondents identify writing in Galician as one of the needed elements while reading in Galician is not even mentioned. Reading is only mentioned by 0.8% of the respondents when identifying who is not Galician. The difference between these numbers is small, but it is, nevertheless, significant that literacy is not considered an important factor when defining who is, or who is not identified as Galician.

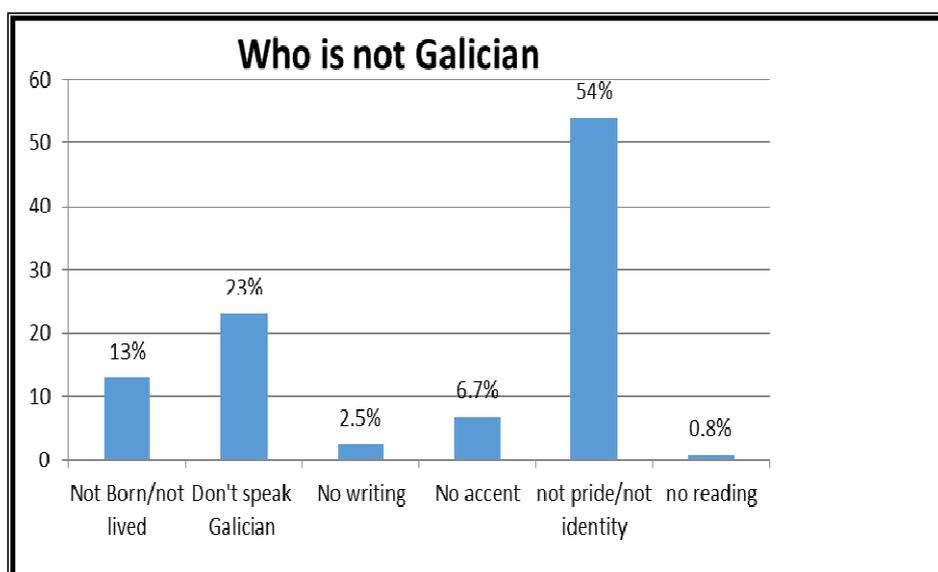


Chart 9: Who is not Galician. Based on Sociolinguistic Survey Results

3.4. Intercultural development

This research project also used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI v3 2004, Hammer/Bennett 1998/2002) to ascertain if there was a relationship between language choice and intercultural development in the population surveyed in Galicia. The theory behind the IDI is based on the idea that intercultural sensitivity is, like a language, acquired, and in this process of acquisition we go through different stages of development divided in ethnocentric and ethnorelative worldviews:

Denial: Ethnocentric stage where cultural differences are not recognized.

Polarization: Defense/Reversal: Ethnocentric stage characterized by a polarizing worldview

Minimization: Ethnocentric stage where awareness of cultural differences exists, but differences are seen as not important.

Acceptance: Ethnorelative stage where awareness of cultural differences exists and differences are considered important enough to know, understand, and accept.

Adaptation: Ethnorelative stage where awareness of cultural differences leads to adaptation and interaction with and within different cultures.

Integration: Ethnorelative stage where a higher level of awareness of cultural differences allows a higher level of negotiation, interaction, and cooperation between groups.

The IDI's statistical analysis allows us to see two orientations: the Perceived Orientation (PO) and the developmental orientation (DO) (v3 2004). The first one reflects our perception of where we are in the intercultural development stage; the second one tells us where we really are. So although the participant group feels they are at the acceptance level, this chart shows that the participants in the study place at minimization in their developmental orientation.

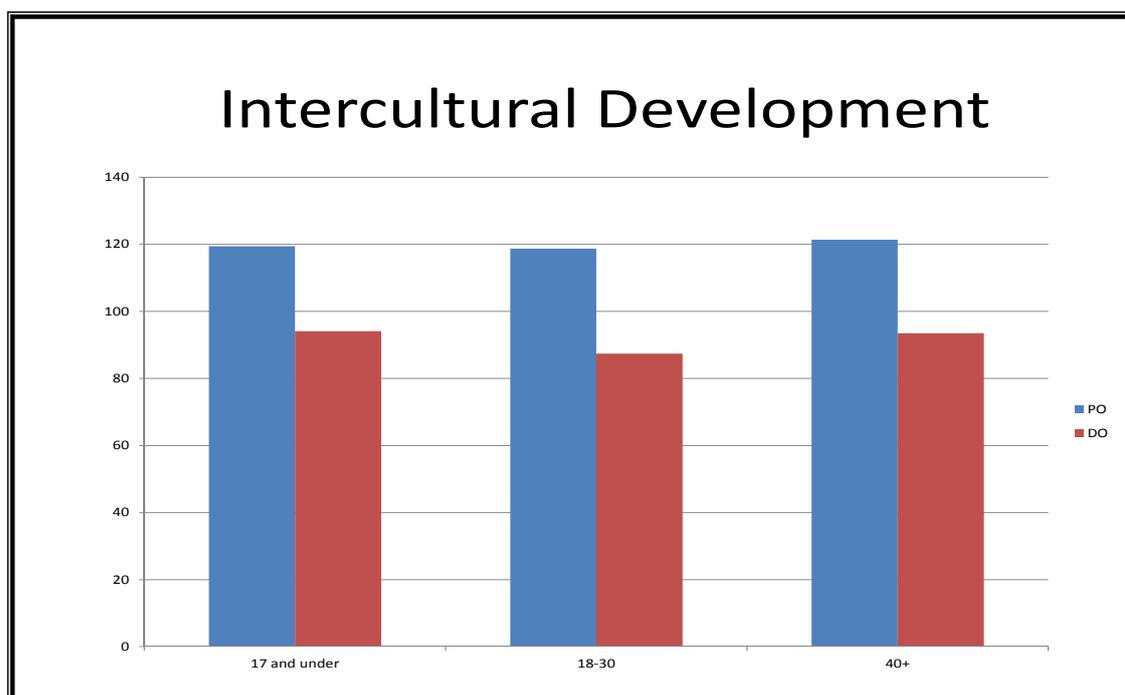


Chart 10: Perceived vs. Development Orientation. Based on IDI Results

It was expected to find differences in intercultural development amongst the different age groups, but as we can see in Chart 10 that was not the case. All groups are at exactly the same level of cultural development. In a way, this is not surprising seeing the results of the language attitudes. As we said before, minimization is an ethnocentric stage where we recognize cultural differences, but believe that we are basically all the same and differences are therefore not that big and/or important. Although this shows development along the intercultural development continuum, groups at minimization still need to move into the acceptance, adaptation, and integration stages where they learn that cultural differences are indeed significant once we move away from food and surface level language and customs. It is indeed interesting that in an apparently bicultural space like the Galician community, we still minimize differences. We have done many successful things to increase literacy in Galician, but we have not concentrated on intercultural development. This points to the need to provide the space where cultures come forth in natural settings. We would like to think that intercultural development would happen naturally, but unfortunately this is not the case. We can live in a multicultural or bicultural environment such as Galicia and never come to terms with the cultural differences of the «other» right in front of us. What we can refer to as «cultural literacy» is key to develop linguistic literacy and in post-modern Galicia it looks like pro-active and intentional measures need to be taken to foster multicultural development.

4. CONCLUSIONS

When looking at the orality and literacy continuum in the Galician linguistic environment, it is interesting to notice that it is at this point in time where the language is taught in schools and statistical results point to achievements in reading and writing where we find the number of speakers decreasing. We are not talking about the diminishing numbers of monolingual speakers; we are talking about the decreasing numbers of Galician speakers. Galicians, especially the younger generations, are using Galician less and less in oral environments. Higher rates of literacy achievement seem to be leading to lower rates of orality. That is, the more we write (not necessarily read as we have seen) the less we use the language in oral environments.

Today, after many efforts have been made to develop a consistent and staying literacy in Galician, we find ourselves looking at the decreasing numbers of oral speakers. It looks like the institutional efforts to maintain the language are encountering resistance from the actual speakers. Maybe the younger generation, lacking a cultural community to support their language skills, is not seeing the benefits of language maintenance. Perhaps the older generation, much like señor José in Castelao's drawing (Fig. 1), is resisting the efforts made by institutions they do not necessarily trust. Identity, whether positive or negative, is carried out through orality (Mandianes 1999). Literacy, on the other hand, requires a set of social norms that need to be communicated. Literacy in a language applies to social networks that are transmitted via the printed word.

From the data presented and discussed in this paper, it looks like Galicians are reading in Spanish and other languages, English especially, more than they are reading in Galician. There seem to be «two cultures of reading» in Galicia. As we mentioned before, the act of reading implies decoding previous knowledge and mental schemata. Writing, on the other hand, implies the existence of a codified outline that needs to be learned and controlled before actually being able to write accurately. But, once the system is learned, the writer controls the process of writing. The writer decides what to say and how to say it to make it accessible to the intended audience. The reader, on the other hand, needs to be familiar with the culture, history, rhetoric, philosophy, etc. behind the text in order to make meaning from it. If that knowledge is lacking, the text is not meaningful and the reading process will not be successful. Based on the data presented here, Galician is still the L1, the first language, for writing and speaking, but at this point it seems not to be the first language for reading.

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