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Introducing Maltese Linguistics

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Terminology of Italian origin used in EU Maltese

A case of linguistic "Europeanisation"?

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Maltese is an official language in the European Union and it is used to translate documentation and to interpret parliamentary sessions. The "Europeanisation" of Maltese is discussed by referring to three sources: EU documentation available o nline in Maltese, EU news in local newspapers and on television. Focus is placed mainly on the extent to which terms of Italian origin are used to translate EU texts into Maltese and whether these terms are divulged in the local media. Results indicate that the presence of words of Italian origin is higher in EU-related websites and newspaper reports than it is in other sources. As a variety which includes terms from different sectorial languages, EU Maltese possesses features which make it quite unique in the local sociolinguistic scene.

1. Introduction

On the 1st of May 2004 Malta became a full member of the European Union (EU) and it is currently the smallest state in this institution, both in terms of geographical area and of population. As a direct consequence of accession, Maltese has become an official EU language and it is the only Semitic language within this institution. Maltese is now thereby used to translate documentation and to interpret European parliamentary sessions.

Undoubtedly, Malta's accession to the EU also involves many challenges. These involve practical issues such as the recruitment of qualified personnel to work in the EU institutions. During the first year of full membership the complement of Maltese translators and interpreters in the EU was rather small and though it has now increased considerably, shortages are still averted in some areas. For example, although there are presently 33 translators employed within the European Commission, there is still need

for an additional 32 employees (including 15 administrative personnel)[1] and overall, according to the local press, the EU still requires over 100 new Maltese translators.[2]

Another issue which causes concern is the 'brain-drain' that working in the EU implies for Malta. The following news item indicates the way this issue is regarded by some segments of the local press:

> In a notice confirming that the Brussels monster intends swallowing more of our graduates, language experts, and men of letters who leave our islands to live in the boring administrative blocks translating directives about pesticides and flip-flops, the EU announced it will be holding an exam for interested migrants.[3]

From a linguistic point of view one of the main challenges involved, regards the use of sectorial terminology in a number of areas which EU institutions deal with regularly. Sectorial terms have to be translated into Maltese and consequently the language has to deal with terms for which a direct correspondent may not exist or for which an equivalent term may not be readily available. The use of Maltese in these special languages is often cause for debate, as evident in the news item reported above, because in many of these areas English is used very frequently in Malta and this has inevitably limited the development of technical terminology in Maltese.

This situation is even more intricate when one considers the complex nature of EU communication. Despite the fact that within the EU itself there have been attempts to render communication more transparent (e.g., *Fight the Fog*, published by the European Commission in 1997), the terminology used in most EU documentation is technical and may be problematic in order to be readily understood by the general public. The legal implications that such documentation may carry also lead to syntactic complexity, as legally binding policies are normally characterised by lengthy clauses and by subordination. Furthermore, translation within the EU institutions requires total equivalence between the source and the target language, thereby rendering other translation techniques, such as paraphrase or reformulation, rather inadequate in most circumstances.

However, over the recent years EU documentation has become more readily accessible than it was in the past. Besides the official publications and websites, mass media in most European countries dedicate columns and space in order to divulge EU related news to the general public. In this case, of course, Malta is no exception. A number of websites reporting EU news are now accessible in Maltese. Local newspapers and

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1.   I thank Dr. Angelo Chetcuti, Field Office for Multilingualism, European Commission Representation Office, for this information.

2.   Information reported on a local newspaper, *Malta Today* (issue no. 432), 17th February 2008.

3.   ibid.

other means of communication also regularly carry news items regarding decisions and policy making within this institution.

The following paragraphs, quoted from a local newspaper,[4] in an article reporting an interview with Professor Manwel Mifsud, President of the National Council for the Maltese Language, summarise effectively the role of Maltese within the EU whilst outlining some of the problems that have to be faced:

> According to Mifsud EU membership is the third stage in the evolution of the Maltese language. First it was a spoken language addressing the daily and personal realities of the Maltese. When Malta became a nation,[5] the Maltese language had to penetrate other spheres like the legal, scientific and economic spheres. But even before penetrating these spheres, the Maltese language found itself an official European language.

Professor Mifsud is then quoted directly, and reportedly states that:

> Maltese translating official EU documents have ended up coping with concepts and ideas which are completely alien to Maltese realities. They are working on documents dealing with methods of transportation which are not even used in Malta.

Presently there are over 100 translators and interpreters who offer their services within the various EU institutions, including the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of the EU and of the EU Legal institutions. In most cases, these translators and interpreters, besides being fluent in English and Maltese, also have a sound competence in more languages, most notably either Italian or French as these are the foreign languages which are studied by most students in Maltese schools. A small number of these EU functionaries also know Arabic and/or German. Furthermore, one must also note that within the Maltese sociolinguistic context, the presence of Italian media can also lead to a considerable degree of spontaneous acquisition in this language (Caruana 2003), therefore it is presumable that most translators and interpreters have a rather sound knowledge of this language, possibly even if they did not learn it formally through schooling.

Maltese translators often refer to other language versions when translating from English to Maltese. In fact, they reportedly refer mainly to Italian terminology prior to translating technical terms from English into Maltese. This, of course, is to be expected, especially when one considers the large amount of words of Romance origin present

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4. Interview by James Debono, on *Malta Today* (issue no. 323), 15th January 2006. Also available online: http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2006/01/15/interview.html, access date 29.01.08.

5. This probably refers to Malta's independence, achieved on the 21st September 1964.

in Maltese, which, as Brincat (2003: 360) points out, constitutes more than half the corpus included in Aquilina's dictionary (1987–1990).

2. The Maltese 'language version' within EU institutions

As Wagner et al. (2002: 8–9) report, it is interesting to note that in documentation within the EU reference to the term 'translation' is avoided occasionally and the term 'language version' is preferred. This choice, which may seem superficial at first glance, has a number of implications, not least the fact that "European Parliament rules of procedure do mention the existence of an original text, but only in order to stipulate that it is no more authoritative than the other language versions" (Wagner et al. 2002: 8). This therefore implies that the Maltese language version documentation is just as authoritative as texts in other languages and this undoubtedly implies a further responsibility to the work of translators and interpreters in the EU:

> Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament (16th edition – November 2007; Rule 138, Languages):[6] Where it has been established after the result of a vote has been announced that there are discrepancies between different language versions, the President shall decide whether the result announced is valid pursuant to Rule 164(5). If he declares the result valid, he shall decide which version is to be regarded as having been adopted. However, the original version cannot be taken as the official text as a general rule, since a situation may arise in which all the other languages differ from the original text.

Having established that translating into Maltese in the EU involves a number of implications which may not be evident at first glance, a major observation from a linguistic point of view, is that the Maltese language version of EU texts replicates a pattern of adaptation and integration of foreign terms. This is very much the nature of the language itself. The three examples below, extracted from articles on the EU website in Maltese, exemplify how the terms of different origin coexist within EU Maltese:[7]

(1)   *Nagħtu   ħarsa lejn il-qabżiet bejn   l-iktar   fqir u   l-iktar   sinjur*
     we.give.ɪᴘ look at   the-leaps between the-most poor and the-most rich
     'Let us have a look at the differences between the poorest and the richest'

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6.   Available online, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+RULES-EP+20071128+RULE-138+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN&navigationBar=YES, access date, 08.02.08.

7.   The following abbreviations are used in the interlinear gloss: ᴄᴏᴘ = copula, ꜰ = feminine, ɪᴘ = imperfect, ᴍ = masculine.

(2) *Il-punt*   *kollu*   *tal-politika*   *reġjonali*   *hija*
     the-point.M   all   of.the-politics   regional   is-COP.F

   biex   *ittejjeb*   *il-koeżjoni*   *soċjali*   *u*   *ekonomika*
   to   improve.IP.F   the-cohesion   social   and   economic

   bejn   *ir-reġjuni*   *Ewropej.*
   between   the-regions   European.

   'The whole point of the regional policy is to improve social and economic cohe-
   sion between European regions'

(3) *Petizzjoni*   *lill-Parlament Ewropew*   *permezz*   *ta' email*   *fuq*
     Petition   to.the-Parliament European   by.means   of.email   on

   il-formola   *uffiċjali.*
   the-form   official.

   'Petition to the European Parliament by means of an email on the official form'

A phrase such as the one proposed in (1) is a clear example of the Semitic stratum of
the Maltese language. All the words used, with the exception of *sinjur* (Italian *signore*)
are of Arabic origin. This is manifest even in Maltese orthography, which still presents
clear traces of its Arabic etymology. In the case of (2) the Italian adstratum comes to
the fore.[8] What is immediately noticeable is the fact that nouns and adjectives used in
this sentence are of Italian origin, whereas the invariable terms, such as prepositions
and articles are Semitic. Another point which has to be pointed out, is the lack of
agreement between the masculine subject *il-punt kollu* and the feminine copula *hija*
and verb *ittejjeb*, probably due to the presence of the complement *tal-politika reġjonali*,
which includes a feminine head noun. Unfortunately such shortcomings, which may
be acceptable in the spoken language but less so in official written documents, are
possibly due to the volume of work which has to be covered in a relatively short time.
Finally, sentence (3), provides an example of the penetration of English into Maltese[9] in
the case of at least two terms: *email* and *formola*.[10] Within this sociolinguistic framework

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8.   Translation into Italian: *Il punto di maggior rilievo della politica regionale è quello di
migliorare la coesione sociale e economica tra le regioni europee.*

9.   One may also add that even English terms are integrated into typically Semitic morpho-
logical patterns: therefore one often may encounter forms such as *SMSja* 'he sent an SMS text
message' which is modelled by analogy on other widely accepted forms such as *immissja* 'he
missed'; *ibbukkja* 'he booked'; *iċċekkja* 'he checked'; *ixxuttja* 'he shot'; *iċċettja* 'he chatted (on
the computer)'.

10.   Though the term *ittre* (*ittra elettronica* 'electronic letter') has been introduced into
Maltese to refer to 'email', the use of this term is still extremely limited and the English form
email/emejl is clearly preferred. This is also confirmed by the fact that the verb *emailja/emejlja*
'he sent an email' is also attested in Maltese. The etymology of *formola* is Italian according to

it is therefore hardly surprising that the Maltese language being used in the EU is rife with terms which are borrowed from Italian and from English, whether integrated in the Maltese morphological patterns or not.

The objective of this paper is not solely, however, to document a phenomenon which is very much part-and-parcel of the nature of the Maltese language. What I explore is the extent of the presence of non-Semitic terms in texts translated in Maltese within EU institutions and, more specifically, whether the presence of words of Italian origin is indeed so significant that it deserves the interest of researchers. One must bear in mind that Italian terms are often adapted to Maltese, as illustrated above, and therefore whereas the source of innovation for most EU languages is English, for Maltese it may very well be Italian. Furthermore, I also explore whether terms of Italian origin, which are used in the EU institutions, are penetrating into the local media, such as television and newspapers. In other words, my aim is to gain insight as to whether technical EU jargon is limited to the realm of the EU institutions and its websites, or whether such terms are possibly also divulged to the general public through the local media.

For this purpose I refer to what has been termed as the "Europeanisation" of a language. This concept derives directly from the work of Tosi & Visconti (2004) and Tosi (2007) who use the term *europeizzazione* when referring to EU institutional terms with which Italian comes in contact. This term is closely related to the so-called 'eurolect' (Goffin 1997) which in other sources is defined as Eurospeak, Eurojargon or, more simply, Community Language. Despite these numerous terms which have been used to refer to it, the characteristics of this variety can be summarised by means of the following three paradigms, as reported by Mori (2003), which are similar to the characteristics of sectorial languages: first of all, when referring to Europeanisation of a language we are dealing specifically with the bureaucratic language of the EU institutions. Secondly, since this variety is also the language of EU legislation it carries legal bearing and is therefore inevitably influenced by legal jargon. Thirdly, it is a technical language because of the very issues it deals with.

This phenomenon concerns languages that are much more widespread than Maltese. Tosi & Visconti (2004), for example, speak of *italiano comunitario*, that is the Italian sectorial language used within the EU. They compare this variety to what has been termed as *burocratese*.[11] This nomenclature often carries negative connotations as it is used to refer to the variety of Italian that is used within governmental institutions which is often extremely complex, both lexically and syntactically. Europeanisation

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Aquilina (1987–1990), though in the above example the presence of this term replicates the English 'form' and not the Italian *modulo*.

11. Sobrero (1993) provides a comprehensive description of this variety.

has also been used when referring to French: Rollason (2003), for example, studies a number of Anglicisms and hybrid terms which are used to refer to information technology in EU documentation.

An aspect that distinguishes 'eurolect' from the normal characteristics of other sectorial languages is the fact that it is a variety which develops beyond the 'local' frontiers, as documented by Mori (2003), Cosmai (2003) and Tosi (2007) for Italian and by Rollason (2003) for French. This aspect is especially relevant for a language like Maltese, which has a limited number of speakers when compared to other European languages: in fact, possibly for the first time in its history, certain issues regarding terminology are being discussed within a context, namely that of the EU institutions, which is physically distant from the Maltese shores. Furthermore, the personnel who ultimately decide which terms to use in specific contexts when translating and interpreting into Maltese, as well as how to use these terms, come from different walks of life and may be influenced by the languages they feel more comfortable with. In this respect, though reference tools (such as dictionaries, thesauruses etc.[12]) for Maltese are on the increase, there are still a number of lacunae which will take time to be resolved.

On the basis of this, it is not surprising that even in Malta interest has been aroused by the way the language has adapted itself to suit this institution and whether the cultural and political affiliation to Europe is also rendering the language 'less Arabic' and 'more European'. As far as the Maltese language versions in the EU are concerned one may say that there are two levels which may be associated to the Europeanisation of Maltese: the first level, as outlined above, regards a process which is inherent to the Maltese language, which has become more Europeanised in its recent history as a result of frequent contact with other languages, especially Italian and English. The second level can be related more directly to the EU institutions, that is the inclusion and use of sectorial EU terms for which a Maltese version must be provided.

The following five points outline the characteristics of Maltese as an official language of the EU and also constitute the hypotheses of this study.

Maltese in the EU:

a. is a rapidly evolving variety, which integrates terms derived from a number of sectorial languages. This is also conditioned by the fact that numerous texts from the EU must be translated on a daily basis into Maltese;

b. is based on the translation ('language versions') of technical terms for which there may not necessarily be an original term in Maltese. In such cases, adaptation into

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12. For example, Briffa's (2007) dictionary on sectorial terms as well as a number of glossaries compiled by students following courses in the recently established Department of Translating and Interpreting at the University of Malta.

Maltese will normally involve an Italian or English term which may or may not be integrated into Maltese morphological patterns. In such situations Arabic terms will be used very rarely, if ever;

c.   is influenced by the idiolect of individual translators, journalists. There are cases in which prior to deciding which technical term to use in Maltese, reference will be made to other language versions. Therefore, for example, a translator who is competent in Italian may consult the Italian language version of a text before deciding how to translate a specific technical term into Maltese;

d.   is a variety which may be ambiguous even to native speakers because of its sectorial nature;

e.   may contain a number of Anglicisms, just like other European languages. However, quite differently to other European languages, there will be also many terms that originate from Italian.

3.   Methodology and corpus

The study has been conducted by referring to three sources: official EU documentation available online translated into Maltese, EU news as reported by local newspapers and by local television channels. The corpus comprises articles from EU documentation available on the website www.europarl.eu.int, articles from dailies and weeklies and news items transmitted on national television. The corpus will be analysed quantitatively and will be described in terms of word formation, inflectional and derivational morphology and etymology.

My analyses focuses mainly on words of Arabic and Italian origin, namely the two largest groups of words which etymologically compose the Maltese language. As stated previously, this, in some respects, is an aspect of the Europeanisation of Maltese which renders it quite different from other EU languages wherein most recent loanwords originate from English. However, even in the Maltese context, the presence of Anglicisms is noteworthy, and some marginal considerations will also be made regarding the use of English and of other languages within EU-related texts.

The two main research questions of the study are the following: is the frequency of words of Italian origin higher in EU texts when compared to other texts in Maltese not reporting EU news? To what extent are these technical terms being used in the local media, namely television and newspapers? To respond to these research questions I compare EU-related news on the web, in newspapers and on television to other news items reported on these means of communication.

The corpus of words on which the study is based was collected in two separate and distinct stages, firstly in 2005 and subsequently in 2007. The corpus is composed of a total of 19,079 words. Words are counted as tokens and not as types, as the aspect

under study is the frequency of use of words of different origin. The corpus is divided into three broad categories according to the medium from which the words were taken, subdivided as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Number of words of Italian and Arabic origin in the corpus

	Websites		Newspapers		Television	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
EU information	1,638	1,519	2,377	2,552	635	668
Local items	1,027	1,055	1,297	1,273	807	745
Foreign items (not UE)			1,137	1,427	434	488
Total	2,665	2,574	4,811	5,252	1,876	1,901
Grand total	5,239		10,063		3,777	

The part of the corpus classified as 'EU information' in the table above includes words from the EU Parliament website www.europarl.eu.int, articles reporting EU news from newspapers and transcription of EU-related items from television news. The data gathered from the above website consist of Maltese language version articles originally in English or in French, with the exception of a short intervention (composed of 163 words in the 2005 corpus) of a Maltese Europarliamentarian, which was originally in Maltese.

The Maltese language newspapers included in the study were the Church-owned *Il-Ġens*, the independent newspaper *Illum* and party-owned dailies *In-Nazzjon* and *L-Oriżżont*. The TV news included in the study was the prime-time news broadcast on national state television (Television Malta) screened daily at 20:00 hours. In the latter case only the variety known as *parlato-scritto* (Nencioni 1983), the spoken variety which is very close to the written form, was taken into consideration. This includes the news read out by the broadcaster in the television studios as well as the reports accompanying the various filmstrips screened throughout the news. Interviews aired during the news and direct interventions from reporters (possibly with some form of spontaneous interaction with the studio broadcaster) were not included in the analysis.

'Local items' in the table above refer to news items carried on websites, in the said newspapers and during the above-mentioned television news, pertaining exclusively to reports regarding local affairs. 'Foreign items (not EU)' refers to reports of foreign news on the said media. In this case, however, the foreign news considered did not include EU-related items, thereby forming a completely distinct category from the one entitled 'EU information' in the table above. No websites were examined as far as this category is concerned. This is due to the fact that websites reporting foreign news in Maltese

are, in most cases, simply the online version of the news published in newspapers. The websites taken into consideration included a variety of Maltese language online pages, including blogs and personal entries, the websites belonging the two major political parties and to trade unions and other websites which report local news in Maltese.

4. Etymology

The etymology of the words included in the corpus was established by means of the dictionary published by Aquilina (1987–1990). Toponyms, names and surnames, proper nouns, acronyms and abbreviations were not included in the count. Neither were numerals which were written as digits, including dates and years. As stated above, words were counted as tokens and word boundaries were established using morphological criteria. This means that, for example, verb auxiliaries in periphrastic verbal forms and progressive markers were counted as individual words in their own right. So, *kien qed jiddeċiedi* 'he was deciding' would include three tokens in the count, namely two forms of Arabic etymology (the verb *kien* and the progressive marker *qed*) and one of Italian origin (*jiddeċiedi*). The same criteria was also adopted for nouns accompanied by invariables: for example *id-deċiżjoni* is considered as a total of two words (article and noun).

In certain cases, however this strict application of word boundaries and their classification into grammatical categories proved to be rather problematic. This occurs especially when a semantic nuance overrides morphological or syntactic features. So, for example, the adverbial locutions *kemm-il darba* 'as many times/when' and *fil-fatt* 'in fact', were both classified as one token word. In such cases, the morphological criteria described in the paragraph above, would have entailed including *darba* 'once' and *fatt* 'fact' as single tokens, but it is clear that their function in such phrases is strictly related to the locution as a whole. As far as etymology is concerned, in the first case the adverbial locution is clearly entirely of Arabic origin. In the second case, where an Arabic preposition *fil-* 'in the' is in unison with an Italian term *fatt*, the etymology of the token form was classified as 'mixed'.

Words were not isolated as single tokens even where variants are present as a result of orthographic rules. This is mainly the case of the distinction between *tal-* and *ta' l-* 'of' as this preposition features very prominently in the corpus. In such cases both forms were computed equally as one single token.

As mentioned above, the token words in the corpus were classified according to their language of origin. Again, as was expected, a number of cases had to be included in the mixed category as many words in Maltese are the result of contact between two (or more) languages. Among these one may mention *bilfors* 'by force' (Arabic: *bil-*; Italian *forza*); *ghaldaqstant* 'so/as a result' (Arabic *ghal/daqs*; Italian *tanto*); *sadattant* 'in the meantime' (Arabic *sa/dan*; Italian *tanto*).

Another category which poses problems regarding classification on etymological grounds, is that composed by words of Italian origin which are influenced by their English connotation. This is the case of terms which are used semantically on the basis of their English nuance. The following two verbs, which feature in more than one instance in the corpus, are representative of this issue. The verb *iffaċċja* is used transitively in Maltese, just like in the English form 'to face'. In Italian, however, this verb is mainly used intransitively or in its reflexive form. Thus whereas in Maltese *iffaċċja problema* 'he faced a problem' is perfectly acceptable in Italian *affacciare un problema* is not. Another case is represented by the verb *immaniġġja* 'he managed', which also leads to an action noun (nomen actionis) *immaniġġjar* 'management'. Again, whereas Aquilina (1987–1990) attributes the origin of this verb to Italian, its more recent nuance is clearly reflecting the English use of the verb, especially within the noun phrase *'waste management'*, in Maltese *maniġġjar ta' l-iskart*. These verbs were not included in the count of verbs of Italian origin as the 'mixed origin' category is more appropriate for them.

5. Results

The results of the token analysis of the words included in the websites are represented in Table 2. The grand total of this category, which takes account of all the words of Arabic and Italian origin in the corpus, is also represented in Figure 1. Considerations regarding the used of terms of English origin are included in the comments included in this section.

Table 2. Origin of words included in the website corpus

	Italian origin	Arabic origin	Total
EU website			
2005	604 (37%)	1,034 (63%)	1,638
2007	504 (33%)	1,015 (67%)	1,519
Total	1,108 (35%)	2,049 (65%)	3,157
Other Maltese websites			
2005	269 (26%)	758 (74%)	1,027
2007	217 (20.5%)	838 (79.5%)	1,055
Total	486 (23%)	1,596 (77%)	2,082

The results clearly indicate that the amount of words of Italian origin is considerably higher in the EU website than it is in other Maltese websites. The trend is present both in the results obtained in 2005 as well as in those obtained in 2007. In fact results show that whereas in the EU website words of Italian etymology constitute a percentage
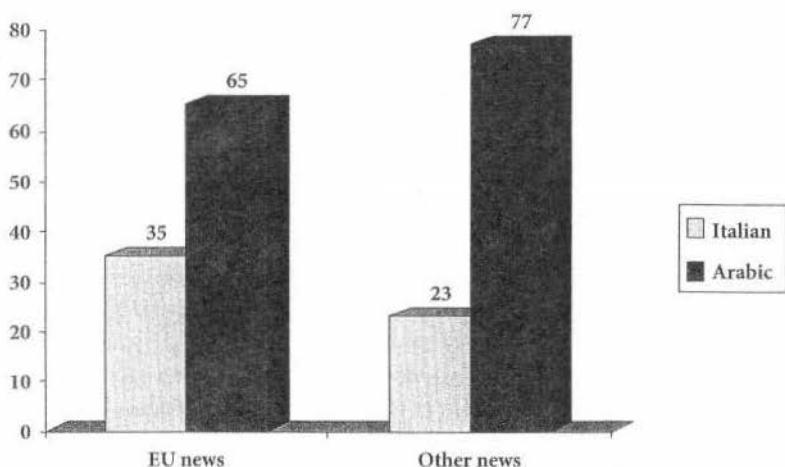
Figure 1. Origin of words included in the website corpus (totals)

of 35%, this percentage drops to 23% in local sites. When comparing the two stages during which the corpus was collected, one also observes a reduction of words of Italian etymology, both in EU and in local websites. This, however, may be due to the fact that the websites examined in the two stages of the data collection were not identical, and even when this was the case (such as the EU website) the articles included in the corpus obviously did not treat the same issues.

Words derived from English figure in much smaller numbers than the ones reported in the corpus above. In fact, in addition to the numbers included in Table 1, there were 50 English words (or words of English origin, as documented in Aquilina [1987–1990]) in the EU website and 41 such words in the Maltese websites. Tallies were even smaller for words from other languages (including French and Latin) and for words of mixed origin (as described in the methodology section). Since the numbers regarding these categories are small it is deemed necessary to have a larger corpus than the one included in this study in order to achieve more noteworthy conclusions.

The words of Italian and Arabic origin in the corpus are classified in grammatical categories in Table 3. In this table the 'verb, copula, PvM[13]' category also includes Maltese pronouns (such as *hija* and *huwa*) which are used as copulas in nominal sentences. Other markers which form part of periphrastic verbal forms, are also tallied in this category.

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13. PvM = Periphrastic verbal form markers, such as the progressive marker *qed*, the future particles *se/ser*, the aspectual marker *għad*, as well as other pseudoverbs such as *ilu* 'it has been a while' and *donnu* 'it seems to be'.

Table 3. Words of Italian and Arabic origin in the websites (percentages within brackets)

	Italian						Arabic					
	Nouns	Verbs, Copulas, PvM	Adj.	Adv.	Inv.	Total	Nouns	Verbs, Copulas, PvM	Adj.	Adv.	Inv.	Total
EU websites												
2005	371 (23)	71 (4)	140 (8.5)	8 (0.5)	14 (1)	604 (37)	68 (4)	180 (11)	75 (4.5)	37 (2.5)	674 (41)	1,034 (63)
2007	305 (20)	69 (4.5)	107 (7)	19 (1.2)	4 (0.2)	504 (33)	85 (5.5)	182 (11)	93 (6)	39 (2.5)	616 (40.5)	1,015 (67)
Total	676 (21.5)	140 (4.25)	247 (7.75)	27 (0.85)	18 (0.6)	1,108 (35)	153 (4.75)	362 (11)	168 (5.25)	76 (2.5)	1,290 (40.75)	2,049 (65)
Other web-sites												
2005	178 (17)	32 (3)	52 (5)	7 (1)	0	269 (26)	121 (12)	112 (11)	62 (6)	30 (3)	433 (42)	758 (74)
2007	147 (14)	25 (2.3)	28 (2.6)	5 (0.5)	12 (1.1)	217 (20.5)	139 (13.2)	183 (17.3)	58 (5.5)	37 (3.5)	421 (40)	838 (79.5)
Total	325 (15.6)	57 (3)	80 (4)	12 (0.6)	12 (0.6)	486 (23)	260 (12.5)	295 (14)	120 (5.5)	67 (3)	854 (41)	1,596 (77)

Results included in this table clearly show that the words of Italian origin in the EU website are largely nouns, though the presence of these terms among adjectives and verbs is also noteworthy. Words of Arabic origin, on the other hand, as occurs normally in Maltese, are highly present among invariables, namely pronouns, articles, conjunctions and prepositions.

A further examination of the figures presented in Table 3, reveals how the presence of nouns of Arabic origin is very limited indeed in the EU website: in fact these nouns on the EU website amount to less than 5% of the corpus, considerably less than nouns of Italian origin (21%). Within the 'verbs, copulas, PvM' category forms of Arabic origin are present in a higher number when compared to those that derive from Italian. This, however, is also due to the high occurrence of copulas, as well as markers and modals of Arabic origin in the periphrastic forms which were all tallied as tokens. These results are represented graphically in Figure 2.

The points on the graph in Figure 2 are especially distant when one considers nouns, with a clear sequence in terms of frequency: the most numerous being of Italian origin (first in EU websites, then in local websites) followed by nouns of Arabic origin in local websites and then in EU websites. The other categories are more clustered with the exception of the 'verb, copulas, PvM' category and, most notably, the invariables, where, as already stated above, the predominance of terms of Arabic origin is clear.

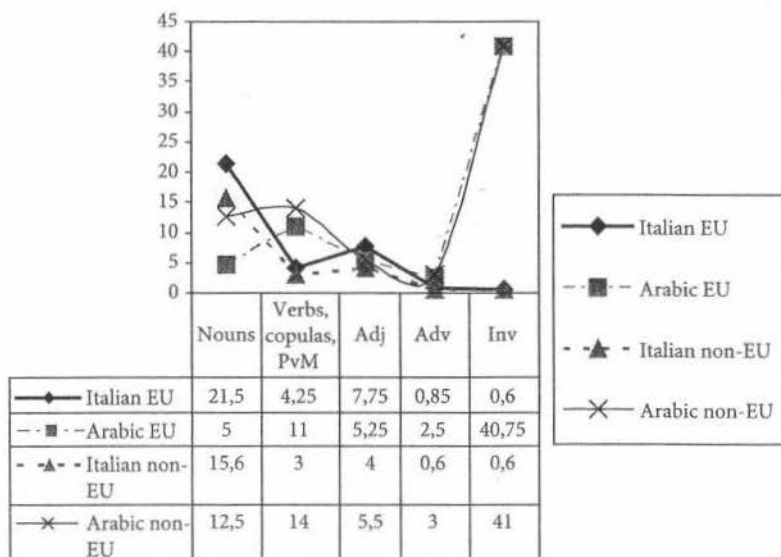|	Nouns	Verbs, copulas, PvM	Adj	Adv	Inv
◆ Italian EU	21,5	4,25	7,75	0,85	0,6
■ Arabic EU	5	11	5,25	2,5	40,75
▲ Italian non-EU	15,6	3	4	0,6	0,6
✕ Arabic non-EU	12,5	14	5,5	3	41

Figure 2. Words of Italian and Arabic origin in the websites

These considerations can also be applied, within the limits imposed by the numbers of the corpus, to the terms of English origin used on the website. In fact, even in this case the terms feature almost exclusively as nouns, though some verbs are also present.

In Table 4 the results are placed in a wider perspective. In fact, the results of the websites are compared to data regarding the frequency of use of terms of Italian origin on television and in local newspapers.

Table 4. Percentage of words of Italian origin on the media

	EU info	Local news	Foreign news
Newspapers			
2005	29%	21%	26%
2007	25%	20.5%	25%
Average	27%	20.75%	25.5%
TV			
2005	32%	30.5%	31%
2007	32%	32%	32%
Average	32%	31.25%	31.5%
Websites			
2005	37%	26%	
2007	33%	20.5%	
Average	35%	23%	

The results indicate that, as far as frequency is concerned, the number of terms of Italian origin present in the EU website is somewhat higher than that used on TV news and especially in newspapers. Results show that in TV news broadcasts the number of Italian-derived terms varies very minimally, irrespectively of whether one is reporting EU news or foreign or local news. This result does indeed represent a rather striking contrast when compared to the two other media and indicates that TV broadcasts are rather consistent in content and in form irrespectively of the news item that is being transmitted. On the other hand, there is a marked difference in the presence of words of Italian origin in newspapers: in fact, in reports concerning local news, terms of Italian origin are less abundant then elsewhere.

Overall, results confirm that, due to their technical nature, Italian terms are present in a higher percentage in the EU website. However, the fact that the percentages regarding newspapers indicate a considerable presence of these terms, may indicate that terms of Italian origin used in EU contexts are also used in the local media when reporting EU news. The limited number of words of English origin and of mixed origin, as well as terms from other languages, is too small in number to be able to present a feasible comparison between the different media on which they are used.

6.   Discussion

One of the major difficulties regarding the EU Maltese language versions undoubtedly concerns technical or sectorial terms which are not used regularly, or which are not present in the language. The analysis of the corpus clearly indicates that words are incorporated into EU Maltese on the basis of Italian, and less frequently on the basis of English. Furthermore most terms derived from Italian used in EU Maltese are nouns, though adjectives and some verbs are also present in considerable amounts.

The extent to which these terms penetrate into local media needs to be analysed in further detail. Results, however, do indicate that EU terminology does penetrate to some extent in the media and that the presence of terms from Italian in EU-related news is indeed higher in newspapers when compared to other news items. Thus, it can be claimed that although a number of technical EU terms in the Maltese language version website will not go beyond that domain, other terms will reach a wider audience.

The rather limited amount of words of English origin in the corpus is due to the fact that the sources examined pertain mainly to a written variety of Maltese and all require the use of a rather formal register. In such contexts, of course, strategies such as code-switching and code-mixing, which are highly present in everyday spoken Maltese, do not feature. Consequently the use of English in the corpus is restricted to technical terms which feature in Maltese as borrowings.

As far as EU terminology is concerned, from the corpus analysed one may note that extension of meaning is a technique which is widely used by translators. By means of this, certain terms, which may or may not be used frequently in Maltese, are used in different areas and this may lead to a change of the connotation they carry. This is normally achieved by means of noun phrases and by forming calques on the basis of forms originally present in EU documentation in English, which is the primary source language for most Maltese translators.

In noun/verb phrases like *immunità parlamentari* 'parliamentary immunity' and *tiżviluppa s-sinerġija* 'develop the synergy', scientific terms *immunità* and *sinerġija* are transferred to a wider context replicating a strategy already widely used in other languages, amongst which English and Italian. Similarly in *Kumitat dwar l-Affarijiet Legali* 'committee of Legal Affairs', a generic term *affarijiet* 'things' is used to translate a more specific one 'affairs'. Other terms carry metaphorical implications such as *dibattitu trasparenti* 'transparent debate', with *trasparenti* clearly carrying a political connotation.

Terms like *sħubija* 'partnership'; *msieħba* 'partners' *adeżjoni* 'accession', *konvenzjoni* 'convention' and *riżoluzzjoni* 'resolution' feature repeatedly in the corpus. Though such terms have retained their original meaning the fact that they are used frequently in EU Maltese have rendered them familiar to native speakers who, in many cases, readily associate them to EU institutions. This also occurs in many noun phrases, such as *l-irkupru ekonomiku* 'economic recovery' and *ir-riformi strutturali* 'structural reforms'.

Translators also resort to paraphrase in order to translate a specific concept: *il-kunċett tat-tagħlim tul il-ħajja* 'the concept of lifelong learning'; *seduta tas-smigħ* 'hearing'. *It-tagħlim tul il-ħajja*, literally 'the learning throughout life', is used for 'lifelong learning' and *seduta tas-smigħ* literally 'sitting of hearing', for 'hearing'. In this technique one often encounters the use of words of Arabic origin. This occurs because the very nature of paraphrase involves the use of invariables like prepositions and articles and entails translating technical terms by resorting to words which may be familiar among native speakers.

Technical terms, in a number of instances are left unaltered. Examples of this include *l-abbozz ta' corrigendum* 'draft corrigendum', *filters, standards, test, agenda, ombudsman* and *rapporteur*. Other forms are adapted to Maltese: *baġit* 'budget'; *lejbil* 'lable; *kompjuter* 'computer'; *trejning* 'training'. Adaptation to Maltese presumably, though somewhat subjectively, seems to depend mainly on whether or not a term is already used widely locally.

In other cases terms not attested in Maltese are adapted to the language on the basis of analogy. An example of this is *trasferiment ta' approprjazzjonijiet* 'transfers of appropriations' where *approprjazzjonijiet* which is formed on the pattern of nouns such as: portion = *porzione* (Italian) = *porzjoni* (Maltese, singular); *porzjonijiet* (Maltese, plural). In other cases, in the absence of equivalent terms, translators also resort to coining new words. This however, is a resort which is seldom found in the corpus and seems to be limited to highly technical terms like *privattivi* 'patents', *addittivi* 'additives' or *ftalati* 'phthalates'.

Lexical choice is another issue which is sometimes manifest. For example in *imminimizzar ta' l-ispejjeż amministrattivi* 'minimisation of administrative expenses', lexical choice is involved in order to translate 'minimisation' with an action noun (*minimizzar*) rather than using a more generic term *tnaqqis* 'lessening/a decrease'. Whereas the latter is of Arabic origin, the former is based on the Italian infinitive form *minimizzare*. This, again, is typical in Maltese: the more specific a term becomes, the more one tends to prefer an Italian (or English) adaptation instead of using a term of Arabic roots. Another example of this is present in the pairs *innovazzjoni/ tiġdid* 'innovation'; *opzjoni/għażla* 'choice'; *jirrikjedu/jeħtieġu* 'they require' and *trejning/taħriġ* 'training'. Other, more extreme cases, include coining of terms despite the existence of corresponding Maltese terms (e.g., the case of *polluzzjoni* 'pollution' used instead of *tniġġis* or *admissibbli* 'admissible' instead of *ammissibbli*).

Other examples, include notions which are of problematic intelligibility when transferred to Maltese. An example of this would be a title such as *Ittikkettar dwar l-effiċjenza ta' l-enerġija*. This translation evidently was coined on the basis of the Italian translation (*Etichettatura in materia di efficienza energetica*) of an article which in English is simply entitled 'Energy Star', evidently referring to some sort of prize or certification awarded for energy saving. In some cases, as included in the quote

reported in section 1 of this paper: "(translators) are working on documents dealing with methods of transportation which are not even used in Malta". An example of this evident in an article entitled *Dwar l-implimentazzjoni ta'l-ewwel pakkett ferrovjarju* 'Regarding the implementation of the first train package', in the EU website, as this includes terminology related to railways, a transport system which has been abandoned in Malta since 1931.

In the following paragraphs I analyse some of the terms included in the EU-related parts of the corpus, in order to identify morphological and syntactic characteristics by means of which they are integrated into Maltese. As stated earlier, especially as far as morphology is concerned, integration of such terms is by no means a novelty for the Maltese language.

First of all, as already documented above, it is necessary to highlight how terms deriving from English tend to be integrated less readily into Maltese morphological patterns when compared to terms of Italian origin. Consequently terms like *icons, database, rebate, summit, software, email* are used in their original form in the Maltese EU website and can be classified as non-integrated borrowings.

The following characteristics pertain mainly to words of Italian origin. The examples, provided from the corpus, integrate into the language with ease following patterns used by most Italian borrowings: nouns adapt themselves to the phonological and morphological patterns of Maltese, even in the case of terms which are not used commonly in everyday speech. In many cases one may note the vocalic shifts o > u; e > i, as well as the apocope at the end of words: *fornituri* 'suppliers'; *pajjiżi* 'countries'; *rilanċ* 'relaunch'; *kompromess* 'compromise'.

There is an extensive use of prefixes and prefixoids which are directly related to Eurolect: *bi-laterali* 'bilateral'; *inter-governattivi* 'intergoverning (bodies)'; *ko-finanzjament* 'co-financing'; *Ewro-deputat* 'member of the Europarliament'; *Ewro-parlamentari* 'Europarliamentarian'; *makro-/mikro-ekonomiċi* 'macro-/micro economical'; *ż-valutar* 'devaluation'.

Nouns tend to replicate the original Italian form (included within brackets) very closely: *akkwist* (acquisto) 'acquisition'; *interpellanza* (interpellanza) 'interpellation'; *ratifika* (ratifica) 'ratification'; *fondaturi* (fondatore) 'founders'; *eliġibilità* (eligibilità) 'eligibility'; *pragmatiżmu* (pragmatismo) 'pragmatism' *koordinazzjoni* (coordinazione) 'coordination'; *iffirmar* (firma) 'signing'; *ippjanar* (piano) 'planning'. However, the nuance of some nouns can distance itself from Italian especially in cases in which contact with English leads to a change in connotation

The *-joni, -ment* and *-ar* suffixes are extended to terms which are clearly the result of language contact with English. This is the case of *evalwazzjoni* 'evaluation' (*valutazione* in Italian) and *involviment* 'involvement' (*coinvolgimento* in Italian). The *-ar* suffix from the Italian infinitive form, a productive marker of action nouns, is also subject to the same procedure, as in the aforementioned *immaniġġjar* 'to manage'.

Verbs are also integrated smoothly into the Maltese perfective and imperfective patterns: *aġixxa* 'he acted'; *ibbaża* 'he based'; *ikkontesta* 'he contested'; *immanuvra* 'he maneuvered'; *ippospona* 'he postponed'; *ippresjeda* 'he presided'; *issospenda* 'he suspended'. Yet again, in these cases, contact with English could lead to changes in connotation.

The effect of English nuances is evident in *argumenta*, 'he argued', *immonitorja*, 'he monitored', *ammonta*, '(it) amounted to' and *ibbilancja*, 'he balanced'. Though similar terms are attested in Italian one could easily attribute their presence in Maltese, and the meaning they carry, to the frequent use of such terms in English, rather than associating them to the use of the corresponding term in Italian. The form *iffaċċja* 'he faced', referred to earlier is another clear example of a term which is derived in form from Italian but in meaning from English. The same can be said of other terms found in the corpus, which are widely attested in daily Maltese: *effettwa* 'to be affected by something' (*condizionare/influenzare* in Italian); *attentat* 'an attempt' (*tentativo* in Italian).

Adjectives integrate into morphological patterns in a similar way to nouns: *gradwali* 'gradual'; *ġudizjarja* 'judicial'; *repressiv* 'repressive'; *disponibbli* 'available'; *eliġibbli* 'eligible'; *leġislattivi* 'legislative'. Past participles (also with an adjectival function) formed on the basis of Italian suffix *-at* (or other variants such as *-ut*, or other irregular variants) are extremely widespread in the corpus: *applikat* 'applied'; *imblukkata* 'blocked'; *intitolata* 'entitled/named'; *mobiliżżati* 'mobilised'; *offruta* 'offered'; *previst* 'expected'; *ratifikat* 'ratified'; *rikonċiljati* 'reconciled'. Again, even in this category Anglicisms are integrated without difficulty. (e.g., *iffokat* 'focused'; *solvuti* ' solved').

Syntactic calques are extremely widespread as documented earlier. This is one of the main features of EU Maltese because they lead to the inclusion of forms which are then referred to frequently on the local media. These include: *il-Fondi Strutturali* 'Structural Funds'; *espressjoni ta' interess,* 'expression of interest'; *pagna ta'l-ghajnuna,* 'help page'; *mobiliżżati r-riżorsi nazzjonali,* 'national resources are mobilised'; *l-allokazzjoni ta' fondi* 'allocation of funds'; *l-eliġibilità ta' l-akkomodazzjoni* 'eligibility to be granted accommodation'.

From the corpus analyses there is a clear indication that such terms are widely used in news coverage regarding the EU and that their frequency of use could increase as a result of Malta's presence within this institution.

7. Conclusion

EU institutional documentation is being translated into Maltese and the language versions that are being produced have legal bearing. Terms which are not used regularly in daily, spoken Maltese are present on the EU website in Maltese and these terms are

also used, albeit in a more limited or in different manner, even when EU-related news is transmitted on the local media.

If, as documented in Brincat (2003), one considers that more than half of the words enlisted in Aquilina's (1987–1990) dictionary derive from European languages, one can safely state that Europeanisation, in the strict sense of the word, is part-and-parcel of Maltese. However, Maltese in the EU is adding a new dimension to Europeanisation, especially as far as sectorial terminology is concerned. This is evident as in the Maltese language version of EU documentation the presence of terms of Arabic origin is indeed considerably less than it is in other contexts. One could argue that this trend would be present if one were to analyse any other modern sectorial language in Maltese: however, even if this were the case, Maltese in the EU does constitute a new dimension for the language, especially from a sociolinguistic perspective. First of all lexical choices regarding Maltese are indeed being discussed and are evolving in a context which is distant from the Maltese shores. Secondly, one of the main characteristics of Europeanisation, which is also manifest in EU Maltese, is the very fact that it encompasses a series of sectorial languages: it is a language variety which includes 'subsets' of many other domains.

However, if Europeanisation as described by Tosi & Visconti (2004) and by Tosi (2007) is heavily influenced by English, in the case of Maltese other factors must be taken into consideration. In fact, Italian plays a highly important role in the formulation and adaptation of EU-related technical terms in Maltese, while the role of Arabic, which forms the stratum of Maltese, is very marginal in this respect. When producing EU Maltese language version texts there is a constant use of terms deriving from Italian, which, especially in the case of nouns, outnumber considerably words of Semitic origin. This inevitably 'spills over' to the Maltese media reporting EU news and results confirm that this particularly significant in the case of local newspapers. Maltese in the EU encompasses a large number of sectorial languages and the terminology pertaining to many of these languages did not have Maltese equivalents prior to accession. Furthermore, the number of texts written in Maltese in EU institutions on a daily basis is considerable, so it is indeed a variety which is evolving rapidly. Undoubtedly this field deserves the attention of researchers and the development of technological tools for corpus analyses will lead to further insight regarding the frequency of use of terms of different origin in diverse domains of Maltese.

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