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9 Dialectal Variation

Abstract: This chapter outlines of the main patterns of spatial variation in contemporary Galician at the phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical levels. The first two sections discuss some aspects linked to the history of the study of Galician dialects and the dialectal documentation work carried out in the last century. The following section presents a list of phonetic, morphosyntactic and lexical variables within the Galician linguistic domain. This is followed by a characterisation of the main dialectal varieties based on the classification propositions made in recent years. The contribution concludes with an exposition on the relationship between dialects and standard language, on the vitality of dialectal varieties at present and the study of linguistic changes in these varieties.

Keywords: dialectology, dialectal variation, geolinguistics, linguistic domain, Galician dialects

1 Introduction

Since the middle of the last century, dialectal variation in Galician has been one of the preferred domains of linguistic research and the field of study in which the first works on Galician linguistics were carried out. The background to this interest can be found in the reflections expressed by different authors since the 18th century on the differences observed in the language of different parts of Galicia. Martín Sarmiento (1695–1772), considered by some authors as the first prescientific peninsular dialectologist (Pop 1950), acknowledged the existence of regional differences and proposed to distinguish, based on the experience of his travels in Galicia, between an Atlantic Galician and an inland Galician (Santamarina 1997). One century later, Saco y Arce stated in his grammar that the varieties of Galician could be limited to two, a northern and a southern one (Saco Arce 1868; Sánchez Rei 2011). During the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century, the recognition of dialectal diversity came to be used as an argument in the controversy over the need for the cultivation and codification of the language, both for and against (González Seoane 1991; Dubert García 2020). On the one hand, Galician was portrayed as a set of diverse and archaic varieties used by illiterate villagers; the state of extreme diversity prevented it from being used as a literary language, as Pardo Bazán objected (González García/Soto Arias 2000). On the other hand, the diversity of varieties justified the need for the constitution of a general language to overcome the extreme local diversity, as Carballo Calero maintained a century later (Recalde 2018). The most realistic views recognised Galician as essentially unitary and with differences between the

varieties that did not prevent intercomprehension and were not much greater than those discovered in other Romance linguistic areas.

Until the mid-twentieth century, the opinions on the dialectal diversity of Galician were based on imprecise and punctual observations on the spoken language and the literary texts of canonised authors of the nineteenth century. At that time, the scholars researching into the Hispanic linguistic varieties regretted the lack of a systematic collection of data that would shed light on the diversity and characteristics of modern spoken Galician (Alonso 1972). The few reliable studies existing at the time were by German researchers in the interwar period who were interested in studying lexical and ethnographical aspects of the peripheral areas of the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. In the years before the Spanish Civil War, the fieldwork of the *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica*, a project on the linguistic geography of the Romance varieties of the Iberian Peninsula promoted by Menéndez Pidal and directed by his disciple Navarro Tomás, was completed in Galicia (Sousa 2008). Despite the rigour and coherence with which the research was conducted, the linguistic documentation of this project was not of much use until the beginning of the present century, since only the first volume of the work was published (Navarro Tomás et al. 1962) and it hardly had any impact on the description of Galician dialectal (Dubert García 2021; Sousa 2022). In the 1950s and 1960s, Spanish philologist Zamora Vicente published a series of works on phonetic and morphological variables considered to be the first scientific descriptions of the set of Galician varieties. These investigations reveal some of the fundamental standards of the territorial structure of the Galician linguistic domain (Zamora Vicente 1986).

In the mid-1960s, with the establishment of Romance philology studies at the University of Santiago de Compostela, research into the documentation and description of local varieties began within the framework of pre-sociolinguistic dialectology. The focus of this research, which took mostly the form of degree and doctoral theses, was on the lexical and grammatical descriptions of rural dialects. In this research context, the *Atlas Lingüístico Galego* was conceived and developed as a linguistic geography project undertaken in 1974 by researchers at the Instituto da Lingua Galega (García et al. 1977). This endeavour to document the linguistic variation of rural Galician is the main basis for the current descriptions of the dialectal varieties.

Before continuing with the description of the varieties, it must be specified that the term dialect is applied in Galician linguistics in the same sense as it has been used in Romance linguistics for more than a century. A dialect is a linguistic variety used in a spatial area of a linguistic domain associated with a specific historical language. Dialect is defined by a set of linguistic features shared among the speakers of the variety and which distinguish it from other varieties within the same domain. Dialect, in this sense, is a concept used as a tool for the classification of spatial linguistic variation. In the Galician domain, such dialectal differences by no means prevent understanding between speakers; on the other hand, it may be asserted that there are no varieties that are identified as clearly differentiated by their users to receive unique glottonyms (Dubert García 2020).

The analyses carried out on the geographic varieties of Galician are based on the methodology of traditional dialectology used for dialectal description in most European languages. Galician is part of the Romance linguistic domain, defined as a linguistic entity with strong similarities to the rest of the Ibero-Romance varieties and with close links to Portuguese and also to Asturleonese and the northern varieties of Spanish (Dubert García/Galves 2016).

2 The documentation of dialectal varieties

The two works on documentation that offer complete information to understand dialectal variation in the Galician linguistic domain are the *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica* (ALPI) and the *Atlas Lingüístico Gallego* (ALGa). Both were designed as projects of traditional linguistic geography and therefore coincide in investigating the linguistic variety used by the speakers characterised by Chambers and Trudgill (1998) as non-mobile, older, rural male speakers (NORMs). They both combine linguistic and ethnographical interests, although in different proportions.

2.1 The *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica* (ALPI) in Galicia

The ALPI is the first scientific dialectology project to document the Romance varieties of the Iberian Peninsula. It is also the first research to provide complete and reliable information on spatial linguistic variation in the Galician domain. The Galician area is part of the linguistic zone identified in the work as Galician-Portuguese, delimited by the isoglosses of diphthongisation of Latin *Ē* and *Ō*, and comprises 62 localities, most of them in Galicia. The Galician domain is well represented in the set of ALPI survey points, which benefited from the researchers' aim to make the survey network more thorough in areas known to have the greatest dialectal diversity (Sousa 2022). The fieldwork was mainly carried out in the 1930s, in the years before the Spanish Civil War, in smaller localities. At that time, 90% of the Galician population lived in small towns and villages scattered throughout the territory. Most people were engaged in agriculture and only 60% were literate (Barreiro Fernández 1981; Gabriel 2013). Consequently, the variety documented in the ALPI is a sample of the Galician spoken by most of the Galician population in the first third of the 20th century.

The information collected in this work is now being fully published and has given rise to works that are helping to learn about the dialectal varieties of Galician in the first decades of the 20th century and their evolution throughout the century (García Mouton et al. 2019). The ALPI questionnaires are very rich in

information (1,244 questions), compared to other atlases of their time, given that together with phonetic and lexical questions, they contain a considerable set of inquiries on morphology and syntax.

2.2 The *Atlas Lingüístico Galego* (ALGa)

Unlike the ALPI, the ALGa is a project for the documentation of Galician dialectal varieties only, along the lines of the regional atlas projects started in Europe from the mid-20th century onwards. The research network is made up of 167 villages and towns in Galicia, Asturias, León and Zamora. The field interviews were conducted in the mid-1970s with the intention of describing the language of authentic speakers, which was the rule in traditional dialectology (Britain 2014). The questionnaire contained close to three thousand questions that sought to delve deeper into the internal variation of Galician, delimit its boundaries and detail its characteristics in the peninsular, Romance and European framework (García et al. 1977). However, it should be borne in mind that the rural population of Galicia in the 1970s had different characteristics from the linguistic community portrayed in the ALPI. From the mid-1950s onwards, there was a significant exodus from the villages to the Atlantic urban areas. Communication between villages, towns and cities became easier, more frequent and more convenient. Literacy and compulsory education, in Spanish, had reached the majority of the population (Gabriel 2013); in addition, the press, radio and television, also in Spanish, had a wider social reach. Consequently, although the linguistic profile of ALPI and ALGa respondents was very similar in theory, in practice, the economic, demographic and social context was very different.

The first volume of this atlas was published in 1990 and the project materials served both to describe and analyse in detail the dialectal varieties of Galician from different perspectives (Santamarina 1982; Fernández Rei 1985; Dubert García 2011; Sousa 2017) and to substantiate some of the morphosyntactic choices of the modern Galician standard (Sousa 2020b). The description of the regional variation of Galician presented below is based on these materials, as they allow for a more detailed and rigorous characterisation. To know the precise distribution of the variables selected and commented on, the published volumes of the work should be consulted (Álvarez Blanco et al. 1990-2020). It should be borne in mind that the variety documented in ALGa is not that of present-day Galician, but, in general, that of the adult speakers with permanent residence in rural localities in the mid-1970s; the milieu in which Galician was the first language and the one used habitually and preferentially (###18 Social History of the Galician Language).

2.3 The Galician linguistic domain

Before approaching the characteristics and classification of Galician varieties, it is necessary to delimit the Galician linguistic domain in relation to the Ibero-Romance varieties. In order to draw the limits in the east of the domain with the Asturleonese varieties, the phonetic variables determined by the evolution of Latin elements and shared with the northern varieties of European Portuguese are normally used: the diphthongisation/non-diphthongisation of Latin Ē and Ō (*medo* ‘fear’, *porta* ‘door’ vs. *miedo*, *puerta*), the preservation/disappearance of -N- and -L- (*ter* ‘to have’, *moer* ‘to grind’ vs. *tener*, *moler*), the result of L- and -LL- (*lobo* ‘wolf’, *galo* ‘rooster’ vs. *llobo-lobo*, *gallo*) and the different results of the consonant clusters PL-, CL- and FL- (*chuvia* ‘rain’, *chave* ‘key’, *chama* ‘flame’ vs. *lluvia*, *llave*, *llama*). The first variable is highlighted in the works of Menéndez Pidal (1906, 1926), it was used in the ALPI to distinguish between the three major peninsular Romance domains and is still considered decisive by many scholars (Fernández Rei 1990). However, some authors point out that the distinctive property of the Iberian Galician and Portuguese dialects is the loss of intervocalic -N- and -L- (Menéndez Pidal 2005: 435; Castro 2013). According to the distribution of these variants, the Galician domain spreads eastwards to the westernmost areas of the Principality of Asturias and the provinces of León and Zamora (Seco Orosa 2001; Babarro 2003; Andrés et al. 2017).

The limits to the south, less studied due to the lack of a detailed description of the Portuguese dialects, are set on the political border with Portugal. The main determining variables are phonological: the nonexistence/existence of nasal vowels with a phonological value and voiced sibilant phonemes, and also the lower elevation of unstressed vowels in Galician (Gal. *xunco* [ˈxuŋko] ‘rush’ vs. Pt. [ˈzũku]); (Cintra 1971; Fernández Rei 1990; Mota 2001; Segura 2013; Andrés 2013; Ossenkop 2018). The studies on the morphological and lexical traits marking the boundaries are still scarce and partial (Dubert García/Sousa 2002; Álvarez Blanco 2015, 2018). The full publication of the ALPI materials and the *Atlas Lingüístico-Etnográfico de Portugal e da Galiza* will contribute in the future to collate in more detail the southern border of the Galician domain (Saramago 2006; Álvarez Pérez 2013).

Considering the boundaries resulting from the distribution of the varieties in the ALGa materials for the above-referred features, the Galician linguistic domain extends over a continuum of about 33,000 km². The varieties included in this territory are intelligible without any difficulties for the speakers and, except for the areas towards the eastern border, there are no recognisable deep-rooted autoglotonyms for the local and regional varieties (Navarro Tomás et al. 1962, map 4).

It should be noted that, in some localities of three municipalities in the west of the Cáceres province of, there is a set of varieties spoken whose origin is included in the Galician-Portuguese supradialectal group. They share features with Asturleonese and are known as *Fala* (Segura 2013). The dialectal classification of such varieties is a matter of discussion among scholars who

recognise the characteristics they share with Portuguese, Leonese and south-eastern Galician (Costas González 2013; Álvarez Pérez 2014; Carrasco González 2019; Ossenkop 2018; Gargallo Gil 1999, 2021). In this contribution, they will not be considered as dialectal varieties of modern Galician.

3 Linguistic features and spatial variation

The ALGa materials allow us to identify a series of variables of interest to characterise the dialectal varieties in the territory of Galician. The selection of features that follows is guided by the relevance they were given in previous work on Galician varieties and by variables that are formalised as variants whose spatial distribution comprises compact territorial areas.

3.1 Phonetic and phonological variation

The phonetics of modern Galician is the most fruitful and best-studied area of research into linguistic variation. The phonetic features of the Galician varieties are used by specialists as fundamental identifiers of primary dialectal areas. Some of these features, such as *seseo* (absence of [θ]) and *gheada* (presence of the segments [x], [h] and [h̃]), also have a special perceptual relevance for speakers, as they are recognised as the most salient to identify the speakers' origins and function as stereotypes (Fernández Rei 1990: 161–261; Recalde 2002–2003).

Although there are phonetic differences that enable to delimit smaller areas, the distribution of the variants generally follows an arrangement in areas separated by isoglosses drawn in a north-south direction (Martínez-Gil 2021). The indications on the distribution of the variants are based on the three main dialectal areas and the provinces included in the domain (Figure 1).

3.1.1 Vowels

The variation observed in the set of varieties coincides with the series of mid-low stressed vowels and also with the diphthongs formed from different evolutionary processes of Latin vowel and consonant sequences. The Galician, Portuguese and western Asturleonese dialects differ from the central Ibero-Romance varieties by the non-diphthongisation of the Latin short mid-low vowels (*porto* 'harbour', *mel* 'honey' vs. *puerto*, *miel*). There is a parish in the south of the Pontevedra province where the stressed /ɛ/ is diphthongised in the variants [je] *nieve* 'snow', [ja] *tiarra* 'earth' and [jo] *miou* 'mine', with some exceptions. Some researchers link the phenomenon to similar diphthongisation occurring in varieties from

north-western Portugal (Pousa Ortega 2004; Brissos/Rodrigues 2016; Brissos 2018).

The inventory of Galician vowel phonemes is made of seven units in stressed position and is maintained with few changes throughout the territory (###2 Phonetics and Phonology). Most of the divergences affect the middle vowels and involve differences in height. Some of these variations are explained by different processes of internal change, among which are metaphony (Álvarez Blanco 1988; Mariño Paz 1994; Penny 2009) and the influence of palatal and nasal consonants (###20 Historical Phonetics and Phonology). The territorial distribution of the variants shows few matches between the words concerned.

- a) [ɛ]/[e]. For the words *ela* ‘she’ and *aquela* ‘that’ (fem.), the variants with [ɛ] are typical of the western area of the domain and those with [e] of the eastern area; for *dente* ‘tooth’ and *tempo* ‘time’, [e] is recorded in the western area and [ɛ] in the central and eastern areas; for *medo* ‘fear’, [e] is characteristic of the western and central varieties and [ɛ] of the eastern ones. In a small area at the southern end of the Pontevedra province of, [e] occurs in words such as *dez* ‘ten’, *quente* ‘hot’, *sempre* ‘always’, *cen* ‘one hundred’, *neve* ‘snow’, *pé* ‘foot’, for which [ɛ] is more common for the rest of the territory.
- b) [ɔ]/[o]. For the word *hora*, the variant with [ɔ] is characteristic of the western half; for *ollo* ‘eye’, the variant with [o] is recorded in the western area and [ɔ] in the central and eastern areas; for *novo* ‘new’ (masc.) and *posto* ‘post, position’, the variants with [o] are characteristic of the varieties of the western end; for the words *folla* ‘leaf’, *fonte* ‘fountain’, *ponte* ‘bridge’, *monte* ‘hill’, *voz* ‘voice’, *corpo* ‘body’ and *sogro* ‘father in law’, the variants with [o] are the most widespread, while the variants with [ɔ] are characteristic of the easternmost area close to the Asturian zone.
- c) [e]/[i]. This variation mainly affects grammatical units. The stressed pronouns *el* ‘he’ and *eles* ‘they’ and the masculine demonstratives *este* ‘this’, *estes* ‘these’, *ese* ‘that’, *eses* ‘those’ *aquel* ‘those’ and *aqueles* ‘those’ occur as variants with [i] ([‘il], [‘istɛ], [a‘kil]) in a continuous area in the central-western part of Ourense and part of the southern half of Lugo, in the rest of the domain, the variants with [e] are recorded. The demonstrative pronouns *isto* ‘this’, *iso* ‘that’ and *aquilo* ‘that’ with [‘i] variants are characteristic of two small isolated areas located in the southern half of the Pontevedra province of and the northern end of A Coruña; the forms with [‘e] (*esto*, *eso*, *aquelo*) are common in the remaining areas.
- d) [u]/[o]. The variation in this series affects only a small number of words: the adverb *hoxe* ‘today’ and nouns such as *concha* ‘shell’ and *pozo* ‘well’. The variants with [u] are less frequent and are distributed in areas that do not always coincide: [‘uʃɛ] in the southwest of Ourense, [‘kuntʃ̃a] in the western end of A Coruña and Pontevedra and [‘puθɔ] in inland Pontevedra and the northwestern end of Ourense. In the second person of the imperative of

second-conjugation verbs, there is a variation affecting the stressed vowel; for example, [ˈkoreɾ]/[ˈkureɟ] for *correr* ‘to run’, [ˈbende]/[ˈbinde] for *vender* ‘to sell’. The variants with close vowels [ˈi] and [ˈu] are typical of areas in the south of the Ourense and Lugo provinces.

3.1.2 Diphthongs

Another dialectal variation affects a group of words that in some variants implies the existence of a stressed diphthong.

- a) [oj]/[uj]/[ow]. A set of words derived from certain Latin groups shows a variation with an interesting territorial distribution: i) Lat. -ŪLT- (MŪLTŪM ‘a lot’) gave rise to the variants [ˈmojto], [ˈmujto], [ˈmutjo] and [ˈmuto]; ii) Lat. -ŪCT- (TRŪCTĀM ‘trout’) gave rise to [ˈtrojta], [ˈtrujta], [ˈtrutja] and [ˈtruta]; iii) Lat. -ŌCT- (NŌCTĒM ‘night’) became [ˈnojte] and [ˈnujte]; and iv) Lat. -ŌRĪ- (CŌRĪŪM ‘leather’) became [ˈkojro], [ˈkujro] and [ˈkowro]. The variants with [ˈoj] are the most common and are distributed over a large zone occupying the central part of the territory and the lateral areas. In a western corner of the A Coruña province, the forms with [ˈmujto], [ˈnujte], [ˈtrujta] and [ˈkujro] are characteristic. In part of the south end of the Pontevedra province, the variants [ˈnojte], [ˈmujto], [ˈtrujta] and [ˈkowro] are used. The forms [ˈmujto] and [ˈtrujta] are also found in a belt extending from north to south over most of the eastern end of the domain. In the southern part of this territory, the variants [ˈnowte], [ˈtruta] and [ˈmutto] are found; the minority variants [ˈmutjo] and [ˈtrutja] are found in localities in León and Zamora.
- b) [wa]/[a]. In words such as *cal* ‘which’, *catro* ‘four’, *canto* ‘how much’, *cando* ‘when’ (derived from the Latin group QUA-), in addition to the most widespread forms throughout the territory with [ˈka]-, there are variants with a stressed diphthong [ˈkwa]- ([ˈkwal], [ˈkwandɔ]) in a continuous belt along the eastern end of the domain, the southern half of the Ourense province and the western corner of the south of Pontevedra. This variation is also seen in other words (*gardar* ‘to keep’, *gadaña* ‘scythe’, of a Germanic origin), but their distribution does not always coincide.
- c) [aw]/[a]. The main variants of the word *agua* ‘water’ are [ˈawɣa] and [ˈaywa], the latter being characteristic of western Galician.
- d) [aj]/[a]. In a group of words with the stressed diphthong [ˈaj] followed by the consonant [j], there is variation between variants without a diphthong ([ˈaʃ]: *caxa* ‘box’, *baxo* ‘low’, *baxar* ‘to go down’) typical of the east of Lugo and the Asturian zone and variants with a diphthong ([ˈaʃj]: *caixa*, *baixo*, *baixar*), common to the rest of the varieties.

3.1.3 Consonants

The dialectal variation in the consonantal system is concentrated in the series of fricative consonants. This variation gives rise to two very noticeable phenomena for speakers because of the systematic distribution of the variants, the high frequency with which they appear in speech and because of their distinction with respect to the common varieties of Galician and Spanish.

- a) The phonological distinction /s/–/θ/. In most of the westernmost area of A Coruña and Pontevedra, the sound [θ] is not recorded in a syllabic attack position, but as an apical or laminal alveolar fricative segment, *cebola* [se'βola] 'onion'; in most of the A Coruña province this absence also occurs to the coda position as in *luz* ['lus] 'light'. In the rest of the territory an opposition between /s/ and /θ/ is observed, *cebola* [θe'βola] 'onion', *seco* ['sekθ] 'dry', *vez* ['beθ] 'turn'. The absence of the [θ] sound is popularly known by the name of *seseo*.
- b) Realisations of /s/. The common variant in most of the varieties is the voiceless apicoalveolar fricative *saber* [sa'βer] 'to know'; in the west end of of the A Coruña and Pontevedra provinces, there is the laminoalveolar realisation [sa'βer] and in a small area of the coast of Pontevedra the laminodental realisation [ʃa'βer] occurs sporadically. In some areas where the laminoalveolar realisation of /s/ occurs, there are depalatalised realisations of /f/ and, sporadically, palatalised realisations of /s/ in a final position. A few localities in the south of the Ourense province and a part of Zamora show a more complex system of sibilant consonants with preservation of the voiced/voiceless opposition (Fernández Rei 1990: 189–215; Vidal Figueroa 1993).
- c) The varieties in the western half are characterised by the lack of occlusive and approximant realisations of the phoneme /g/ that occur elsewhere in the territory (['galo] 'rooster', [fre'ʝar] 'to scrub'); the varieties that do not have these segments are usually referred to as varieties with *gheada*. In these varieties, the segments recorded are the voiceless pharyngeal fricative [ħ], the voiceless glottal fricative [h] and, as a minority and characteristic of the westernmost end, the voiceless velar fricative [x] (*goma* ['homa] 'ruber', ['homa], ['xoma]). After a nasal consonant (*domingo* 'Sunday'), in western Galician, the sounds [h], [x] and [k] ([do'miŋho], [do'miŋxo], [do'miŋko]) are recorded; in the rest of the territory, and also in the areas with *gheada*, the common one is [g] ([do'miŋgo]).

The phenomena of *gheada* and *seseo* function as stereotypes and, in recent decades, their territorial extension and frequency of use have decreased (Regueira Fernández 2009).

Although other phonetic features such as rhotacism (*lesma* ['lerma] 'slug', *ascenso* [ar'θensθ] 'ascent'), the delateralisation of [ʎ] (*coello* [ko'eʝθ] 'rabbit')

or certain metatheses (*pobre* ['prɔβɐ] 'poor', *merlo* ['mɛlrɔ]) 'blackbird' are more prevalent in some areas, it may not be asserted that they have a homogeneous territorial distribution.

3.1.4 Stress

The dialectal variations in word accentual patterns are paroxytone and proparoxytone variants (###2 Phonetics and Phonology). This variation affects a small number of words and, more systematically, some forms of the verbal paradigm. For example, in *pexego* 'peach', the paroxytone variant [pe'ʃeɣɔ] is characteristic of western Galician and the proparoxytone ['peʃeɣɔ] of central and eastern Galician; in the noun *paxaro* 'bird', the paroxytone form [pa'ʃarɔ] is the most common and the proparoxytone is found in discontinuous areas, mainly in the north of Lugo and the eastern half of Ourense. In the verbal paradigm, the accentual variation occurs in the first and second person of the imperfect tense (indicative and subjunctive), in the conditional and the pluperfect:

cantábamos/cantabamos, *cantásedes/cantasedes*, *cantariamos/cantariamos*, *cantáramos/cantaramos*. Although the proparoxytone forms are more frequent in the eastern half, the distribution of variants is not coincident and they do not always constitute compact areas (Fernández Rei 1990: 84–85).

3.1.5 Intonation

The prosodic variation of Galician dialects is important in the studies linked to the AMPER project (*Atlas Multimedia Prosódico do Espazo Románico*) since no information on this characteristic is recorded in the ALGa (###2 Phonetics and Phonology). The analysis of neutral absolute interrogative utterances allowed us to recognise the existence of shared patterns among the Romance languages of the north of the Iberian Peninsula and differences in the Galician domain (Fernández Rei/Martínez-Calvo 2014; Fernández Rei 2019). This type of utterances reveal two fundamental dialectal patterns in Galician: i) an intonational configuration with a falling ending that occurs in most of the territory (*common pattern*), and ii) a rising-falling nuclear configuration that is found in the southwestern area of Galicia (*Rías Baixas pattern*). The first pattern shares characteristics with Asturian, while the second shows affinities with varieties of European Portuguese and western Spanish (Fernández Rei 2019).

3.2 Morphosyntactic variation

The ALGa materials provide information on variation at the morphological and syntactic levels, especially with regard to nominal and verbal morphology. The atlas, like other geolinguistic works of its time, collected little information on syntactic variables.

3.2.1 Nouns and adjectives

The formation of the plural of oxytone words ending in *-n* (*botón* ‘button’) defines three different areas according to the solution: western (*botóns* ‘buttons’), central (*botós*) and eastern (*botois*). This variable is used as a reference to distinguish the three main dialectal varieties (Fernández Rei 1990: 152–160).

The solutions of the words with Latin endings *-ANUM* and *-ANAM* gave rise to variants which are distributed in vertical belts from north to south: i) the masculine noun *chan* ‘ground’ (*PLANUM*) has the variants *chan* (western), *chao* (central and eastern) and *cha* (a small area around the ria of Ferrol); ii) the feminine noun *mazá* ‘apple’ (*MATTIANAM*) has the variants *mazán* (western) and *mazá* (central and eastern). As a consequence of this variation, for nouns such as *irmán* (‘brother’) and *irmá* (‘sister’) there are variants: a) *irmao* masc. and *irmá* fem. (central and eastern); b) *irmán* masc. and fem. (western); c) *irmá* masc. and fem. (the area around the city of Ferrol); as well as other combinations characteristic of the contact areas between the western and central areas (*irmán* masc. and *irmá* fem.; *irmao* masc. and *irmán* fem.).

The variants of the adjective *bo* (masc.)/*boa* (fem.) ‘good’ have a compact distribution: a) *bo*, *boa* (Pontevedra, most of western A Coruña and Ourense); b) *bon*, *boa* (Lugo and eastern ends of A Coruña and Ourense); and c) *bon*, *búa* (Asturian area).

The Latin endings *-INUM* and *-INAM* which appear in words and formations with diminutive suffixes show the variants *-ín* (masc.)/*-ía* (fem.) and *-iño* (masc.)/*-iña* (fem.); the first ones are characteristic of the northern half of eastern Galician (*camín* ‘path’, *pequenín* ‘tiny’) while the others are common in the rest of the territory (*camiño*, *pequeniño*). In nouns with masculine and feminine forms, such as *veciño* ‘neighbour’, we find the pairs: *vecín/vecía* in the Asturian territory, *vecín/veciña* elsewhere in the north of the eastern area and *veciño/veciña*, the common forms in most of the domain.

3.2.2 Verbs

The dialectal variation in verb forms mainly affects thematic vowels and the tense and person morphemes; this variation is mainly concentrated in the verb forms of the perfect tense.

The variation in the thematic vowel is observed in the forms of the indicative past perfect in the second-person singular: *colleches* (western; ‘you picked up’ sg.) vs. *colliches* (central and eastern). In the third person of the same tense, there is also variation in the verbs of the second and third conjugation: i) in the second conjugation the variant with *-i-* (*morriu*; ‘he/she died’) is typical of the northwestern end of A Coruña and the variant with *-e-* (*morreu*) common in the rest of the territory; ii) in the third conjugation, the variant with *-e-* (*parteu*; ‘he/she broke’) is found in a diagonal belt from the north of the provinces of Lugo and A Coruña to the Rías Baixas and the variant with *-i-* (*partiu*) is found in the rest of the territory.

The variation in the tense and person morphemes affects different elements of the paradigm. Some tenses show a variation in the morpheme of the second-person plural: i) the variant *-ais* (*cantais* ‘you sing’) is recorded in eastern Galician and in the southern end of Pontevedra; ii) the variant with *-s* (*cantás*) is recorded in several areas of the west of A Coruña province of; iii) the variant *-ndes* (*cantandes*) is proper to the southwest of Ourense and part of southern Pontevedra; and iv) the variant *-des* (*cantades*) is spread over the rest of the territory. A similar variation is also observed in the second-person imperative (*cantande*, *cantade*, *cantai*, *cantá*), although in this case the variant *cantai* is found in the south of Pontevedra and most of Ourense.

In the past simple tense, the variation affects several persons. In the first-person singular of the first-conjugation verbs, the variants *cantín* ‘I sang’ (coastal localities of the rias of Arousa and Pontevedra), *cantein* (varieties of the eastern area), *cantén* (southern end of Pontevedra) and *cantei* (widespread in the rest of the domain) are documented. In the same personal form in verbs of the second and third conjugations, there is a variant without final nasal sound (*collí* ‘I picked up’, *partí* ‘I broke’) characteristic of an area in the southern end of eastern Galician and another with *-n* in the rest of the territory (*collín*, *partín*). In the inflexion of the second-person singular, two variants are also distinguished: i) *-stes* (*cantastes* ‘you sang’) characteristic of the west of A Coruña and the south and northwest of Pontevedra; and ii) *-ches* (*cantaches*), spread across the rest of the territory. In the third-person plural of the past simple, the variants *-non* (*cantanon* ‘they sang’, *collenon* ‘they picked up’, *fonon* ‘they went’) and *-ron* (*cantaron*, *colleron*, *foron*) are differentiated by the inflexion: the former is typical of the western end of A Coruña and some isolated areas of western Pontevedra; the latter is generalised across the rest of the territory.

Together with the above-mentioned phenomena, irregular verbs show variation that essentially affect the roots in the perfect and present subjunctive tenses (Fernández Rei 1990: 92–103).

3.2.3 Grammatical words

The paradigm of personal pronouns shows variations that affect both the morphology of the stressed and unstressed forms and the functional distribution.

- a) In the stressed first-person plural, the variants *nosoutros* (masc.), *nosoutras* (fem.) ‘we’ (northern end of A Coruña, northern half of Lugo and Asturian areas) and *nós* (rest of the territory) are recorded. In these areas, there is also variation in the second-person plural: *vosoutros*, *vosoutras* vs. *vós* ‘you pl.’. The origin of this variation is the former distinction between inclusive and exclusive plural pronouns, which nowadays is rarely maintained in the spoken language (Álvarez Blanco 2010).
- b) In the stressed second-person singular pronoun, a distribution in two areas is distinguished: a) in the western half, *ti* ‘you’ is the same form for the subject and the prepositional term (*Ti estás contenta* ‘You are happy’, *A ti non che falou* ‘He/she did not talk to you’); and b) in the eastern half, a distinction is made between *tu* as the subject form and *ti* as the prepositional term (*Tu estás contenta*, *A ti non che falou*). In the clitic pronominal forms, the functional distinction between accusative (*te*) and dative (*che*) forms in the second-person singular of the pronoun (*Lévote de viaxe* ‘I take you on a trip’ and *Douche un regalo* ‘I give you a present’) is absent in some areas: in the west of A Coruña *che* is used as the sole form for the DO and IO functions (*Lévoche de viaxe* and *Douche un regalo*); in the southwestern end of Pontevedra and part of the southeast of the Ourense province the variant used for both functions is *te* (*Lévote de viaxe e Douche un regalo*).
- c) In third-person accusative clitic pronouns (*o*, *a*, *os*, *as*) there is a variation determined by the context: (i) after a verb ending in an unstressed vowel, the variants recorded are *o* (*lévo o* ‘I take it/him’) and *i* (*lévo i*), the former is the most widespread and the latter occurs in areas in the northern end of Lugo and the northeast of A Coruña; ii) when the pronoun appears enclitic to a verb ending in a diphthong, the documented variants are *o* (*leveio* ‘I took it/him’, *mirouo* ‘He/she looked at it/him’), typical of the eastern area, the south of Pontevedra and the west of A Coruña, and *no* (*leveino*, *mirouno*), common in the rest of the territory. In Asturian Galician, the actual forms of the pronouns are *lo*, *la*, *los*, *las*. In the dative, there is also a variation in the distinction of number: i) in most of the Lugo province and neighbouring areas of Asturias and León, there is a distinction between a singular form *lle* (*Entregueille o paquete a María* ‘I gave the parcel to Maria’) and a plural form *lles* (*Entregueilles o paquete aos destinatarios* ‘I gave the parcel to the recipients’); ii) in the rest of the territory, the use of the variant *lle* for singular and plural is more common (Álvarez Blanco 1994).

- d) In constructions with causative verbs (*facen* ‘to make’, *deixar* ‘to leave’, *mandar* ‘to order’), dialectal differences are observed in the selection of the pronoun case (Sousa 2012). In an area that occupies approximately the Lugo province, the dative pronoun is used both in the construction with transitive and intransitive infinitives (*Fixolle recoller os papeis* ‘He/she made him/her pick up the papers’ and *Fixolle marchar* ‘He/she made him leave’); in the rest of the domain, the case distinction is more frequent (*Fixolle recoller os papeis*, but *Fixoo marchar*). With the verb *chamar* ‘to call’, a variation in case selection is also present in some uses: *Chámalle para que nos axude* ‘Call him/her to help us’ (west of A Coruña) vs. *Chámao para que nos axude* (rest of the domain).

The masculine singular definite article has a majority variant *o* (*o home* ‘the man’) and another, *l’*, when used before a vowel (*l’home*), the latter being characteristic of Asturian Galician. When the definite articles are preceded by words ending in /s/ or /t/, especially verbs, pronouns and prepositions, the allomorphs *lo*, *la*, *los* and *las* [koˈjela ˈpeðra] (*coller a pedra* ‘to pick up the stone’) are common, except in an area in the centre and southwest of Ourense where the variants *o*, *a*, *os* and *as* [koˈjera ˈpeðra] are found (Dubert García 2016). In the use of definite articles, there is a variation in the proper names of people: i) in a large part of the Ourense province and southern Lugo, the use of articles with proper names of people is common (*A Luísa veu onte*); ii) in the rest of the territory, this use is rare (Louredo Rodríguez 2015).

The indefinite feminine article presents the variants *unha* ‘a’, the most widespread, and *úa*, typical of the Galician of Asturias and some localities in the west of Ourense. In the plural, the most common variants are *uns*, *unhos* and *us*; the first is characteristic of western Galician, the second of central and eastern Galician and the third is the sole form in Asturian Galician and also appears in areas of contact between western and central Galician.

In the Asturian area, characteristic variants of the possessives (*mía*, *mías* ‘mine, my’ fem. 1st person; *tou*, *tous* ‘your, yours’ masc. 2nd person) are used for some persons which are different from the common ones in the rest of the territory (*miña*, *miñas*; *teu*, *teus*).

3.3 Lexical variation

The lexical variants, as in other areas of the Romance domain, generally present an unequal and complex spatial distribution. On the one hand, the number of variants associated with each lexical variable is much greater than with phonological and morphological features; on the other hand, the territorial distribution of lexical variants is typically less regular than that of morphological or phonetic features. In addition, the linguistic distances between localities at the

lexical level can be much greater than those occurring in phonetic terms. Consequently, it is more difficult to identify compact and uniform lexical areas, since the isoglosses separating the variants rarely follow similar lines.

All the scholars recognise that the identification of dialectal lexical areas is more complex, given that the adoption and dissemination of lexical variants seem to follow very diverse timings, historical and social conditioning factors. Using ALGa materials, Sousa (2017) studied 136 lexical variables corresponding to different semantic fields. The quantitative analysis of these data allows us to identify three lexical zones. The first zone runs from north to south parallel to Galicia's eastern administrative boundary, covering parts of the Lugo and Ourense provinces and the Galician-speaking regions of Asturias, León, and Zamora. This eastern zone is the most stable and homogeneous and coincides with the territorial configuration with the so-called area of eastern Galician (Fernández Rei 1990). The other two zones are less compact and have a greater internal lexical diversity. One of them encompasses most of the A Coruña province and part of the northwest of Lugo; the other occupies a large part of the Pontevedra and Ourense provinces together with areas of Lugo and A Coruña.

Semantic regionalisms are infrequent and little studied, though some words show different meanings in some areas of the domain: *bico* 'kiss' and 'chin' vs. 'kiss' and 'mouth'; *braña* 'swampy terrain' vs. 'scrubland'; *cheirar* 'to smell' vs. 'to smell bad'; *derramar* 'to spill' vs. 'to ruin'; *fraga* 'forest' vs. 'rock', 'cliff'; *freita* 'natural channel' vs. 'landslide'; *mirar* 'to look at' vs. 'to see' and 'to look at'.

In addition to the published volumes of the ALGa, some lexicographical works and digital compilations published in recent years are useful to study the geographical distribution of lexical variants (García 1985; Santamarina 2006; Álvarez Blanco 2014; Álvarez Blanco et al. 2020; Sousa 2020a).

4 Classification of Galician dialects

It is impossible to state categorically how many dialects can be identified in the Galician domain. For all the above, it may be inferred that there are no varieties with a significant number of variants inside the domain to constitute clearly identifiable dialects individualised by the speakers. On the other hand, it is evident that the linguistic differences in the territory of Galician varieties are more noticeable if we travel from west to east than if we travel from north to south. Another finding is that there are no isoglossal bundles that coincide with administrative, historical, or cultural boundaries. Despite the absence of bundles of isoglosses marking clear divisions within the Galician linguistic domain, the research carried out since the mid-twentieth century agrees to establish an

organisation of dialectal varieties in three vertical belts arranged in a north-south direction. The variables used to identify and characterise these three areas are mainly phonetic and morphosyntactic.

The research carried out in the middle of the last century by Zamora Vicente (1953) on a small set of phonetic and morphosyntactic variables (*gheada*, *seseo* and endings in *-án*, fundamentally) made him suggest a division into three areas: a western, an eastern and an intermediate one. A few years later, Carballo Calero (1969) increased the variables analysed and identified four areas (southwestern, northwestern, central and eastern), with several transition zones in between.

From the end of the 20th century onwards, once the ALGa fieldwork had been completed, new contributions were published to analyse the materials of the project and offer more rigorous and better-founded propositions for a dialectal organisation. The most complete proposition was made by Fernández Rei (1990) in his monograph on Galician dialects. An analysis of more than one hundred phonetic and morphosyntactic variables allows for the classification of Galician varieties into three major linguistic complexes or *bloques* ('blocks, areas'): western, central and eastern (Fernández Rei 1990: 107–108). Within these areas, he sets minor divisions to distinguish three levels of detail in each zone: areas, subareas and micro-subareas (Fernández Rei 1990: 109). Following the qualitative procedure typical of traditional dialectology, the division into three areas is based on the isoglosses corresponding to the variants *cans/cas/cais* 'dogs' (formation of the plural of oxytone words ending in *-n*). Lesser divisions, for the most part, result from the consideration of morphosyntactic variables.

The ALGa data were also exploited using quantitative methods (Álvarez Blanco et al. 2006; Dubert García 2011), a procedure already suggested by Santamarina (1982) in one of the first works that analysed the ALGa materials. These works focus on the analysis of a larger number of phonetic and morphosyntactic variables and, consequently, offer a more thorough picture of the internal diversity of the domain. The results confirm the validity of the proposition to organise the dialectal varieties into three main zones: western, central and eastern (Figure 1). This research also shows the greater homogeneity of the central area, i.e., the varieties that it comprises share more characteristics and are linguistically closer to those that make up the other two areas. In the eastern area, there is a clear division between the varieties of the Asturian zone and the rest. In the western zone, there is greater diversity, especially at the morphological level.

Based on the research on the description and classification of the varieties, it is possible to establish a basic characterisation of the three dialectal varieties identified by dialectologists. Tables 1, 2 and 3 show some outstanding traits that characterise each of the zones, although they are not exclusive (Fernández Rei 1990: 152–160).

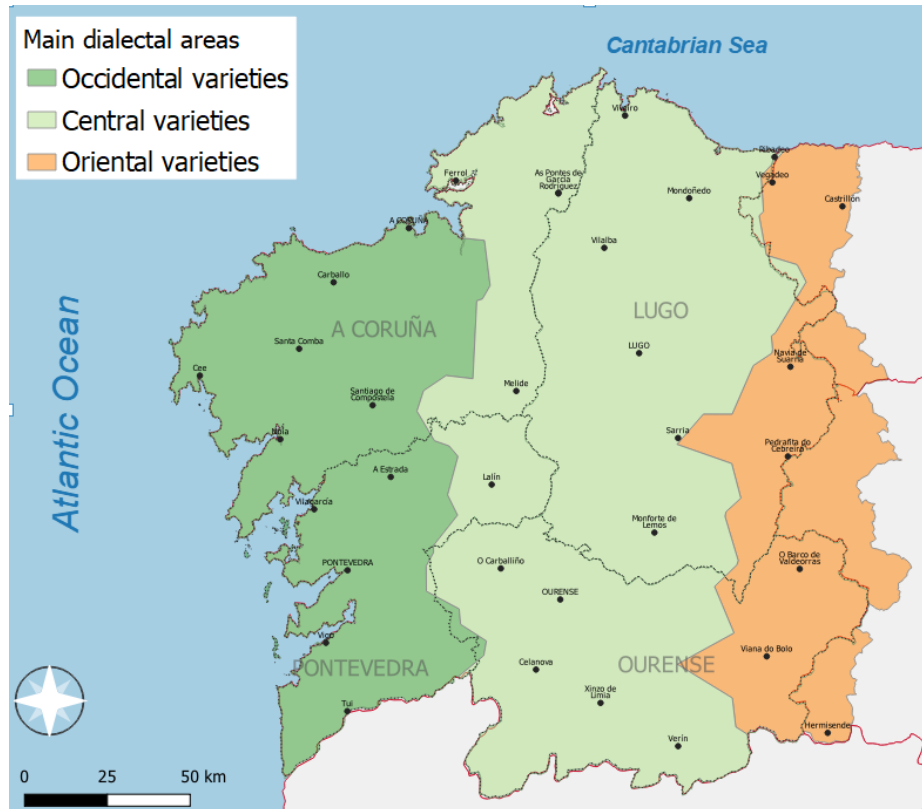


Figure 1: Main dialectal varieties in the Galician domain

4.1 Western varieties

The zone corresponding to the western varieties comprises the western two-thirds of the A Coruña and Pontevedra provinces. Its phonetic characteristics are more differentiated compared to the other dialectal varieties, because there are phonetic variants that are not found in the rest of the territory (Table 1). It also stands out for its great internal diversity in morphosyntactic variables. Within this area, two zones can be distinguished because they present a set of differentiated morphosyntactic variables: the western end of A Coruña and the southwestern end of Pontevedra (Santamarina 1982). The first of these areas is also distinctive for not being very permeable to innovations and loanwords from other varieties, especially in the lexical domain (Sousa/Dubert García 2020). In the other area, there are solutions shared with varieties of northwestern Portuguese.

PHONETIC	MORPHOSYNTACTIC
<p>Vocalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [ɛ] in <i>ela</i> ‘she’, <i>aquela</i> ‘that’; [e] in <i>tempo</i> ‘time’, <i>dente</i> ‘tooth’; [ɔ] in <i>hora</i> ‘hour’; [o] in <i>ollo</i> ‘eye’, <i>novo</i> ‘new’ • Diphthong [oj], [uj] and [ow]: <i>moito, muito</i> ‘a lot’; <i>noite, nuite</i> ‘night’; <i>troita, truita</i> ‘trout’; <i>coiro, cuiro, couro</i> ‘leather’ • [a] in <i>catro</i> ‘four’, <i>gardar</i> ‘to keep’ • [ˈajf] in words such as <i>caixa, baixo, baixar</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural <i>-ns</i> in <i>cans</i> ‘dogs’, <i>ladrons</i> ‘thieves’ • Ending <i>-iño</i>: <i>camiño</i> ‘path’, <i>padriño</i> ‘godfather’ • Ending <i>-án</i> (masc. and fem.) in <i>irmán</i> ‘brother, sister’, <i>verán</i> ‘summer’, <i>mañán</i> ‘morning, tomorrow’ • Stressed 2SP pronoun: <i>ti</i> (‘you’, Subj. and oblique). • Unstressed 2SP pronoun <i>che</i> (Direct Object and Indirect Object) and <i>te</i> (Direct Object and Indirect Object and reflexive) • Thematic vowel <i>e</i> (<i>colleches</i> ‘you picked up’, <i>vendeches</i> ‘you sold’) • 1SP perfect <i>cantei</i> ‘I sang’, <i>cantein, cantén, cantín</i> and future <i>cantarei</i> ‘I will sing’, <i>cantarein, cantarén</i> • 2PL suffix <i>-des</i> (<i>cantades</i>) and <i>-s</i> (<i>cantás</i>).
<p>Consonantism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [h], [ɦ] and [x] in <i>amigo</i> ‘friend’, <i>gato</i> ‘cat’ • Sibilants: [s] and [ʃ] • Absence of [θ] in <i>dez</i> ‘ten’ (general) and <i>ceo</i> ‘sky’ (western end). 	

Table 1: Characterising variants of the western varieties

4.2 Central varieties

The central zone extends from the north to the south of the centre of the domain and comprises most of the Lugo and Ourense provinces, as well as the eastern ends of A Coruña and Pontevedra. It is notable for its lack of exclusive phenomena and its lesser internal diversity in morphosyntax and phonetics (Table 2). In the north of this area, there is a zone that coincides in general with the diocese of Mondoñedo-Ferrol and shows distinctive features, especially in morphosyntax and lexicon. There is a corner in the southwest of Ourense, around the foothills of the Xurés mountains, which shares some features with varieties of Minhoto Portuguese.

In general, the phonetic traits of the varieties in this area are close to the varieties of the eastern dialect while they share morphosyntactic characteristics of western varieties.

PHONETIC	MORPHOSYNTACTIC
<p>Vocalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [e] in <i>ela, aquela</i>; [ɛ] in <i>tempo, dente</i>; [o] in <i>hora</i>; [ɔ] <i>ollo, novo</i> • Diphthong [oj]: <i>moito, noite, troita, coiro</i> • [ˈajf] in words such as <i>caixa, baixo, baixar</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural <i>-s</i> (sg. <i>-n</i>): <i>cas, ladrós</i>. • Ending <i>-iño</i>: <i>camiño, padriño</i> • Ending <i>-ao</i> (masc.)/<i>-á</i> (fem.): <i>irmao/irmá, verao, mañá</i>. • Stressed 2SP pronoun: <i>tu</i> (Subj.) and <i>ti</i> (Subj. and oblique) • Unstressed 2SP pronoun: <i>che</i> (Indirect Object) and <i>te</i> (Direct Object and reflexive) • Thematic vowel <i>i</i> in the 2SP for perfect tenses in C2: <i>colliches, vendiches</i> • 1SP perfect: <i>cantei</i> and future <i>cantarei</i> • 2PL suffix <i>-des</i> (<i>cantades</i>, majority) and <i>-ndes</i>.
<p>Consonantism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [g] and [h] in <i>amigo</i> and <i>gato</i> • Sibilant [ʒ] • [θ] in <i>dez</i> and <i>ceo</i> 	

Table 2: Characterising variants of the central varieties

4.3 Eastern varieties

The eastern zone is the smallest. It occupies part of western Asturias and the areas surrounding the borders between the Galician provinces of Lugo and Ourense and the provinces of León and Zamora. This area is very homogeneous from a phonetic and morphological point of view. In the set of varieties comprising this zone, the Asturian area is unique for its variants that are different from the rest of the Galician varieties and common with the Asturian dialects (Andrés et al. 2017). In quantitative analyses, this zone appears most distant from the rest of the varieties in the domain (Álvarez Blanco et al. 2006).

PHONETIC	MORPHOSYNTACTIC
<p>Vocalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [ɔ] <i>folla</i> ‘leave’; [o] <i>voz</i> ‘voice’ • Diphthong [wa] in <i>cuatro, guardar</i> • Diphthongs [oj] and [uj] in <i>moito, muito, coiro, truita</i>; and absence of stressed diphthong in <i>muto, mutio, truta, trutia</i> • [wa] in <i>cuatro, guardar</i> • [ˈajf] in words such as <i>caxa, baxo, baxar</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plural <i>-is</i> in <i>cais, ladrois</i> • Ending <i>-iño</i> and <i>-in</i>: <i>camiño, padriño</i> and <i>camín, padrín</i> (the northern half) • Ending <i>-ao</i> (masc.)/<i>-á</i> (fem.): <i>irmao/irmá, verao, mañá</i>. • Stressed 2SP pronoun: <i>tu</i> (‘you’ Subj.) and <i>ti</i> (oblique) • Unstressed 2SP pronoun: <i>che</i> (Indirect Object), <i>te</i> (Direct Object, Indirect Object and reflexive) • Thematic vowel <i>i</i> in the 2SP for perfect tenses in C2: <i>colliches, vendiches</i> • 1SP perfect <i>cantein, cantén</i> and
<p>Consonantism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [g] in <i>amigo, gato</i> • Sibilant [ʒ] 	

• [θ] in <i>dez, ceo</i>	future <i>cantarein, cantarén</i>
	• 2PL suffix <i>-is</i> in <i>cantais, cantabais</i>

Table 3: Characterising variants of the eastern varieties

4.4 The interpretation of dialectal diversity

The greater dialectal diversity that characterises Romance varieties of the northern third of the Iberian Peninsula, including Galician varieties, is related to the history of the settlement and dissemination of Latin in the area (Santamarina 1994; Penny 2000). Following the Arab occupation of the Peninsula, the *constitutive* varieties, which were used in the northern area since Romanisation, spread towards the south and gave way to *substitutive* varieties, which, due to levelling, had fewer differences between them. The dialectal *continuum* formed by the Romance varieties in the north of the Iberian Peninsula is perceptible when analysing the rural dialects studied in traditional dialectology and documented in linguistic atlases. From the Galician Atlantic coast to the Catalan seaboard, the isoglosses follow a north-south line and are clearly concentrated delimiting the three major peninsular linguistic groups (Penny 1999; Gargallo Gil 2021). These isoglosses mark boundaries between phonetic variants, which some scholars consider to be the most resistant to change and hence remain over time (Chambers 1992). It may be then assumed that the distribution of phonetic variants observed within the Galician domain, separated by isoglosses that also run from north to south, dates from far back and relates to ancient settlements and demographic movements. Some studies link the territorial distribution of certain phonetic phenomena, such as the *gheada*, to Pre-Roman peoples and languages (Zamora Vicente 1986).

Santamarina (Santamarina 1982: 175) analyses the territorial distribution of phonetic and morphosyntactic variants stating that it is possible to distinguish two ends in the linguistic domain in terms of the degree of evolution of the solutions recorded: the more innovative west (from Fisterra to A Guarda) and the more conservative east (east of Lugo and Ourense and areas of Asturias, León and Zamora). According to this author, between these two belts, there is an area shown as a graded continuum. This central area proves as rather homogeneous and with much less internal diversity than either one of the two end areas. It should be borne in mind that these characteristics are based exclusively on phonetic and morphosyntactic features. More precisely, the characterisation as innovative and conservative areas is made taking into account the evolution of the Latin variety used in the Iberian Peninsula to the present day (Dubert García/Mariño Paz 2004). If the Galician varieties are considered from a shorter time perspective, it may be seen that the outlying areas, especially to the west, are

more resistant to change and in this sense more conservative than other areas of the domain (Sousa/Dubert García 2020).

From a perceptual point of view, the western varieties are more easily identifiable by non-specialised speakers, given that they have more salient features, mainly the *seseo* and the *gheada*. All in all, from the point of view of linguistic analysis when assessing a large set of linguistic traits at different levels, the eastern varieties are more differentiated than the rest of the Galician dialects (Sousa 2020b).

Other aspects such as the population density in the domain from ancient times to the present day, the lack of large populated settlements until recent times, the rugged terrain or the layout of communication routes have not been sufficiently studied to establish how they could have influenced the spread of dialectal variants. There are also few detailed, reliable studies that analyse the consequences of contact with Spanish and other bordering Romance varieties on the spread and dissemination of dialectal variants (Álvarez Blanco 2015; Negro Romero/Sousa 2019; Sousa/Dubert García 2020).

5 The vitality of dialects

Galician, similarly to what happened to the other European languages, was affected by the socioeconomic and demographic transformations that took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. The consequences of the industrial revolution, the mechanisation of agriculture and the diminishing relevance of the primary sector in the economy were felt in Galicia later than in other European countries. Nevertheless, the population movements resulting from these changes had an impact on the use of Galician and the contact between dialects and languages. The concentration of the population in urban centres where the most widely used language is Spanish increased the influence of Galician Spanish on the varieties of Galician. This influence has had a direct impact on the spread of forms of Spanish and on those forms of the Galician variety which are identical to those of common Spanish.

5.1 Dialects and standard variety

Galician lacked a consolidated, recognised standard variety until the 1980s (Santamarina 1995; Ramallo/Rei-Doval 2015). Previous attempts to establish a conventional variety had little impact other than in the literary and journalistic written language. The characteristics of this variety were determined by the planners' intention to fix a supradialectal language model that was not based on a

single dialect, with the intention of ‘getting as many Galician speakers as possible to identify with the agreed solutions’ (Real Academida Galega/Instituto da Lingua Galega 2004: 11).¹ The standard language is a composite variety, the result of a selection pattern adopted by other European languages (Deumert/Vandenbussche 2003). This variety functioned as a language codex in the fixation of graphic and morphosyntactic aspects. Sousa (2020b) used quantitative methods to measure the linguistic distance, in morphosyntactic aspects, between the standard and the local varieties documented for the ALGa project, a work that the codifiers used as a primary source of information to collate the dissemination of the variants (Regueira Fernández 2008). The results of the analysis allow us to assess the supradialectal character of the standard variety. The conclusions highlight: i) a high degree of similarity between the standard variety and the different geographical varieties; ii) the existence of zones that display the highest degree of similarity with the standard variety, located in the central-western part of the Galician language area; and iii) the greater linguistic distance from the standard variety in the areas located in the east of the domain. Consequently, it may be asserted that the standard variety, in its morphosyntactic aspects, does not correspond to any of the three main varieties determined by the dialectal studies, although it shows great similarity to most of the local varieties, especially to those situated in the central and western areas.

The late implementation and slow socialisation of the standard delayed the appearance of studies on the influence of the variety used in teaching, in the media and formal contexts on the regional dialects (Roseman 1995). All in all, it is necessary to recognise, as Recalde (2021) points out, that the process of institutionalisation of the normative variety brought about among the people, generally speaking, and for different reasons, a negative attitude towards the rural varieties.

5.2 Dialects and linguistic change

Galician society has undergone many changes since the end of the last century. Possibly those which have most directly affected the rural dialectal varieties are linked to population movements and the spread of the use of Spanish. From the middle of the 20th century, internal migrations to urban areas intensified and, as a consequence, accentuated the depopulation of rural areas and also the process of language change (Monteagudo Romero 1999; Aldrey Vázquez 2006). The comparison of the ALPI and ALGa materials is making it possible to

¹ From the text: “Consecuentemente, o galego común non pode basearse nun único dialecto, senón que debe prestar atención preferentemente á extensión xeográfica e demográfica das formas para seleccionar as normativas. Ha de ser, pois, supradialectal e *lograr que o maior número posible de falantes galegos se identifiquen coas solucións acordadas*” (Real Academida Galega/Instituto da Lingua Galega (2004: 11).

assess the changes taking place in the context of the geographical varieties throughout the 20th century. The phonetic and morphosyntactic variables seem not to have undergone much change in the forty years between both projects; the distribution of variants associated with *seseo*, *gheada*, stressed vocalism and verbal morphology hardly changed during this period (Sousa 2010; Lago Caamaño/Sousa 2021). The changes also entailed a reduction in lexical diversity (in the number of variants associated with concepts) and an extension of the variants of Spanish or its cognates (Sousa/Rodríguez Lorenzo 2017).

While studies on the linguistic changes of recent decades are still being published, some of them help us to appreciate the changes brought about by contact between varieties (regional and social varieties) and languages (Galician and Spanish). As far as dialectal variation is concerned, these studies that the processes of change identified in previous decades have been intensifying. Linguistic change has been accelerating, usually involving a decrease in the extent of variants that did not coincide with Spanish, both in phonetics, morphosyntax and lexicon (Rodríguez Lorenzo 2012). Although the studies are not conclusive, there are indications that urban centres and overland communication routes have some influence on the dissemination of certain variants (Sousa/Dubert García 2020).

6 Bibliography

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