

**Evidences and counter-evidences of Maltese Eurolect.
Focusing on the relevance of sociolinguistic variables.
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Preliminary investigations on EU Legal Maltese highlighted the widespread use of technical words of Semitic origin and a good number of compound noun phrases where Italian loanwords are combined with Arabic-origin ones.

From the comparison between EU Legal Maltese in Directives and National Legal Maltese, many Semitic influences are blurred and Italian or English-origin words are rather preferred in Maltese laws of implementation; these European languages being the traditional sources for lexical innovation in Maltese.

The passage from the EU dimension to the National level affects the language to some extent: in order to comply with the internal tradition the variety of National Legal Maltese in Subsidiary Legislation shows a preference for a more European-oriented terminology (technicalities either of Italian or English-origin).

EU Maltese translators are playing a fundamental role in this process of lexical expansion of Maltese and first results show their positive attitude towards the enhancement of its Semitic component of Maltese, considered to be the original linguistic nucleus.

Somewhat interestingly, the attitude of lawyer-linguists working at a National level seems to be more oriented towards the maintenance of a traditional bond with the European languages that have affected Maltese development so far.

In order to substantiate this result, the present paper intends to investigate the effect of two variables: the domain of EU Law under examination and the translators' socio-cultural profile.

Therefore, the intra-linguistic analysis will be lead on a sample of Directives and relative Laws of implementation comprising various fields where different translators are involved.

At the same time Maltese EU translators responsible for different areas (i.e. Freedom of Movement for workers and Social Policy; Agriculture; Industrial Policy and Internal Market; Environment, Consumers and health protection) will be asked to answer a blind questionnaire conceived to collect information on their linguistic biography and language attitudes, socio-linguistic awareness and educational training.

Trends emerging from the direct linguistic analysis will be interpreted considering relevant sociolinguistic data resulted from the indirect observation through translators' interviews.