**“From Left to Right”: the Influence of Political Orientation on the Language Attitudes of the Population of Palma de Mallorca toward Catalan and Spanish**

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**Introduction**

The Balearic Islands are an archipelago in the western Mediterranean Sea, consisting of four main islands: Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Formentera. It is situated near the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, and it is one of the seventeen Autonomous Communities of Spain. The Balearic Islands have a population of over 1.2 million inhabitants, with just under 40% of them living in Palma, the capital city (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2024). Additionally, there are two official languages in the Balearic Islands: Catalan and Spanish. Historically, the archipelago has been part of the Catalan linguistic domain along with other territories in Spain, mainly Catalonia and the Valencian community. However, since the introduction of Spanish in the 16th century, both languages have coexisted despite efforts by former governments to reduce the presence of Catalan, such as Franco’s dictatorship from 1939 to 1975.

Nowadays, forty years after the approval of a legal framework that aimed to recognize both Catalan and Spanish as the official languages and normalize and promote Catalan after decades of being proscribed under Franco’s regime, the linguistic situation of the Balearic Islands is completely different. The general knowledge of Catalan among the Balearic population has increased considerably (Vanrell & Melià, 2017) and the presence of the language in society has become much more noticeable and evident. The establishment of this legal framework, however, and the consequent implementation of certain language policies by previous and current local governments, seem to have been accompanied by a process of polarization in the Balearic society in terms of language attitudes, particularly in Palma (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Castell et al., 2023; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). This is not surprising, given the close relationship between language policy and language attitudes (Bertolotti & Coll, 2020; Errihani, 2008; Kester, 2020; Marley, 2004; Mukhuba, 2005). In fact, there is a common assumption that much policy and planning can or should be intended to change language attitudes (O’Rourke & Hogan‐Brun, 2012). Likewise, it appears that in recent years these language attitudes have become associated with certain political orientations, to the point of turning the linguistic situation in the Balearic Islands into a constant political debate (Amorós, 2017; Colmenero, 2018; Colom, 2023; Crespí, 2023; Galvín, 2017; Garau, 2023; Gentili, 2013; Manresa, 2015; Mateos, 2023; Olaizola, 2013; Pellicer, 2023; Sánchez, 2023).

Consequently, the present study delves deeper into the relationship between political orientation and language attitudes in the Balearic Islands by focusing on the particular case of Palma, the capital city. Specifically, the present study seeks to examine whether political orientation is a significant predictor of the language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma de Mallorca and, if so, to explore what the relationship is between different political orientations and language attitudes toward both languages. To do so, data on the language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish from a total of 99 participants (67 females) aged between 18 and 71 years old (mean = 37) from Palma were analyzed. In doing so, the present study contributes to previous literature exploring the close relationship between language policy and language attitudes. Additionally, it expands on previous knowledge on the role of different factors in the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands.

**Literature review**

In order to contextualize the study of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands, it is necessary to briefly present the legal framework surrounding both languages and their status there. Accordingly, three main documents constitute the legal framework concerning the two official languages of the Balearic Islands. The first one is the *Spanish Constitution* (1978). This document impacted the configuration of the linguistic reality of the Balearic Islands in three different ways. First, it recognized, for the first time in forty years, not only the existence of languages other than Spanish in the nation, but also their officiality in the territories where they were spoken (Art. 3.2). Likewise, it was also declared that these languages constituted a cultural heritage to be respected and protected, which granted legal protection for the Catalan language after forty years of repression, as stated in (Article 3.3)[[1]](#footnote-1). Finally, the Constitution gave the Autonomous Communities the jurisdiction in the teaching of their co-official languages (Art. 148.1.17). This was of particular relevance, since it gave the Government of the Balearic Islands the capacity to implement the teaching of Catalan, impacting not only the linguistic panorama of the islands, but also the status that this language had up to that point. Consequently, education became one of the most important tools in ending the situation of diglossia and linguistic substitution in the archipelago.

The second document is *Statute of Autonomy of the Balearic Islands* (1983), which led to the establishment of a system of self-government in the region. One of the most important aspects of this document in terms of language was the recognition of Catalan as the archipelago’s own language and its status as co-official with Spanish (Art. 4.1). Importantly, it also declared that every citizen had the right to use the language and prohibited discrimination on linguistic grounds (Art. 4.2). However, of special relevance was the Article 4.3, which committed the Government committed to taking all the necessary steps to reach equality between both languages in all domains, but especially to ensure that every citizen in the Balearic Islands had knowledge of both languages. This implied a complete renovation of the educational system and, to do so, the Government granted itself exclusive jurisdiction for the teaching of Catalan. In addition to the teaching of Catalan, the Government undertook the task of fostering the normalization of the language, that is, promoting the use of the language in all contexts (public administration, education, and the media). The idea was to encourage the Balearic society to become accustomed to using Catalan after forty years of being forbidden under Franco’s regime.

The third document, the *Linguistic Normalization of the Balearic Islands Act* (1986), was passed in response to this last goal stated in the previous paragraph. The main objectives of this regulation were (1) to make effective the progressive and normal use of the Catalan language in the official and administrative domain, (2) to ensure the knowledge and progressive use of Catalan as the main language of education, (3) to promote the use of the Catalan language in all means of social communication, and (4) to create social awareness of the importance of the knowledge and use of the Catalan language by all citizens (Art. 1.2). Accordingly, Catalan was made the preferred language of both local and autonomic institutions, official documents started to be available in both Catalan and Spanish, and citizens were granted the right to choose the language of their preference in both administrative and legal proceedings. Catalan was also made the main language and medium of instruction in all levels of education, a required training in Catalan among teachers and other professionals in the education domain was established, and the ultimate goal was to promote bilingual education in Catalan and Spanish was assumed. Additionally, Catalan was established as the usual language of the radio, television, and other media owned by the Administration the production and exhibition of movies, plays and other cultural manifestations in Catalan was encouraged.

The *Linguistic Normalization Act* led to a series of minor decrees and regulations that aimed at expanding certain aspects of the law. The most important ones were the *Decret de Mínims* (92/1997), by which Catalan was established as the primary language of education (except for higher education) and at least 50% of the subjects had to be taught in this language; the Decree 100/1990, by which the usual language of the Administration had to be Catalan; and the Decree 25/2001 which established the obligation to accredit knowledge of Catalan in order to work in the civil service (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017). Particularly relevant to this study, however, is the *Linguistic Normalization Regulation of the City Council of Palma* (1987) This regulation states that Catalan is Palma’s own language and both Catalan and Spanish are the official languages of the City Council. It also states that citizens have the right to communicate with the City Council in any of the two languages and no one can be discriminated against on linguistic grounds. In addition, it states that all communications from the City Council should be in Catalan by default, as well as any documents or certificates issued, and that the City Council is committed to promoting linguistic awareness and the use of Catalan.

Forty years after the approval of this legal framework, it is clear that many of the objectives proposed at the time have been achieved. For example, the general knowledge of Catalan among the Balearic population has increased considerably (Vanrell & Melià, 2017) and the presence of the language in society has become much more noticeable and evident. However, the establishment of this legal framework and the consequent implementation of certain language policies has been accompanied by a process of polarization in the Balearic society in terms of language attitudes, particularly in Palma, the capital city (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Castell et al., 2023; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). This is not surprising given the close relationship between language policy and language attitudes. In fact, there is a common assumption that much policy and planning can or should be intended to change language attitudes (O’Rourke & Hogan‐Brun, 2012).

Accordingly, many studies have examined this relationship in many different social contexts, in order to determine how policy affects language attitudes (Marley, 2004) and vice versa (Errihani, 2008; Mukhuba, 2005). With regard to the former, Bertolotti & Coll (2020) studied the language attitudes toward Portuguese in Uruguay during the Luo-Brazilian military occupation in the 19th century through the analysis of legislative documents, documents found in judicial or government archives, pieces published in the press, and literary writings. The analysis revealed two types of attitudes: negative and neutral. Negative attitudes were found in Montevideo, as a result of the language policy promoted by the government in its effort to build a nation-state that, they thought, was threatened by the presence of Portuguese. Neutral attitudes, on the other hand, were present at the border area, far from the capital city. Likewise, language attitudes can also exert an influence on language policy. For example, Kester (2020) studied the patterns of language use, language attitudes, and identity in Curaçao among people of different age groups and with different parental birth places and found that Papiamentu, aside from its widespread use, is considered an essential part of Curaçao’s identity and the attitudes toward it are predominantly positive. As a result, the authors contend that these findings could significantly contribute to language policy and planning initiatives in the Dutch Caribbean. The frequent use of Papiamentu, its importance in education and the job market, coupled with its role as a marker of local identity, strongly advocate for an expanded role of the language within the education system. Both studies, therefore, highlight the close relationship between language policy and language attitudes.

This relationship has also been explored in regions where Catalan and Spanish coexist and it has been approached from many different perspectives, such as education (Díaz-Torrent et al., 2017; Huguet, 2001; Huguet & Biscarri Gassió, 1995; Huguet & Suïls, 1997; Janés et al., 2008; Lapresta Rey et al., 2010), immigration and ethnic origin (Estors Sastre, 2014; Iglésias, 2010; Querol & Huguet, 2010), age (Joan i Marí, 2010; Ubalde, 2013), and family (Huguet, 2005), among others. In general terms, all these studies agree that the language policy implemented in Catalan-Spanish bilingual regions has had a positive impact on the attitudes toward both languages and, in particular, toward Catalan. This trend can especially be seen in the case of the school-age immigrant population, who perceive Catalan as the key to social and professional integration (Estors Sastre, 2014; Lapresta Rey et al., 2010). The vast majority of these studies, however, have been carried out in Catalonia, with only a few exceptions in other Catalan and Spanish-speaking regions. In the case of the Balearic Islands, a number of findings related to language attitudes can be reported.

First, place of residence has been found to play a role in the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Mallorca. Accordingly, the attitudes of those who live in areas with lower social contact with Catalan, such as Palma, tend to be less positive toward this language and more positive toward Spanish, as opposed to the attitudes of those who live outside of Palma, where the presence of Catalan is greater and, therefore, the attitudes toward this language tend to be more positive (Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019). Mother tongue has also been found to be a factor related to the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands. Those who have Catalan as their first language (L1) show more positive attitudes toward this language, whereas those who have Spanish as their L1 show more positive attitudes toward this other language (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017). With regard to education, some studies (Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019) have found that those who have Catalan as their L1 prefer it as the medium of instruction, those who have it as their L2 are indifferent, and those who have it as their L3 are either indifferent or against it. Similarly, it has also been found that those whose initial language is Catalan and are learning towards careers in the private sector are in favor of bilingual and even trilingual education. Contrary, those whose L1 is Spanish and are leaning towards careers in the private sector tend to be in favor of reducing the presence of Catalan in education. Interestingly, those whose initial language is Spanish but are leaning towards careers in the public sector see Catalan as a tool for social integration and employment (Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014). Other studies, however, have found that even those who have Spanish as their L1 agree that having Catalan as the main medium of instruction is positive, since it allows every student to learn both languages and promote bilingualism in society (Tudela Isanta, 2021).

Age has also been found to be a significant predictor in the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands. Accordingly, young people (including students) show more positive attitudes toward Catalan than toward Spanish, and older people (including the retired) tend to show more positive attitudes toward Spanish than toward Catalan (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017). Likewise, young people tend to consider Catalan as the authentic language of the archipelago, while Spanish is considered a language used for communication without a specific value (Castell et al., 2023). In fact, many studies have found a general consensus around the idea that Catalan is the authentic language of the Balearic Islands, in Gal and Woolard’s terms (2001), and an essential component of its identity, whereas Spanish tends to be perceived as a mere language of communication (Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). Related to identity, Ibáñez Ferreté (2014) found the existence of two identity groups in Mallorca: the “Mallorcans” and the “non-Mallorcans”. The former include people born in Mallorca to Mallorcan parents, who speak Catalan, and identify with the island’s culture and traditions. The latter, on the other hand, are people from or born to people from mainland Spain, who speak Spanish, and whose culture has been imported from outside of the island. Moreover, the “Mallorcans” tend to be perceived as nationalists, because of their willingness to defend the island’s own language and culture, while the “non-Mallorcans” tend to show a more passive or indifferent attitude toward Catalan culture and language.

Finally, another predictor found to be significant in the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands is political orientation. Accordingly, studies have found that people who identify as progressive show more positive attitudes toward Catalan and to the presence of the language in all domains. Contrary, those who identify as conservative show more positive attitudes toward Spanish and to the presence of the language in all domain (Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014). Likewise, preference for one language or the other as a function of political orientation has come to be associated with two specific urban tribes (Castell et al., 2023). Specifically, people who tend to display favorable attitudes towards Spanish are called *cayetanos*. This high-class social group is characterized for their snob style and linkage to right or extreme right political ideologies. They are also known for their marked *Spanishism*, a political movement that seeks to reaffirm Spain’s national identity, including the language. On the other hand, people who tend to display favorable attitudes toward Catalan are called *indepes*. This term is used to refer to individuals linked to left or extreme left ideologies who almost exclusively use Catalan, who are in favor of the independence of the Catalan-speaking regions from Spain, and who defend *Catalanism*, a political movement oriented to the exaltation of the Catalan language and culture. Consequently, there seems to be a lack of ideological unity within the Mallorcan society in terms of language attitudes (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017).

Altogether, it is evident that the linguistic situation in the Balearic Islands in terms of language attitudes is complex. The society seems to be divided into two main sectors: those who show more favorable attitudes toward Catalan, and those who show more favorable attitudes toward Spanish. In recent years, this polarization in the Balearic society in terms of language attitudes has intensified parallel to the implementation of a series of language policies by prior and current local governments catering to the ideologies of their respective political parties. For instance, the conservative government of the Popular Party implemented, from 2013 to 2015, a series of measures affecting the linguistic normalization of Catalan. One of these measures was the *Tractament Integrat de Llengües* or TIL ‘Comprehensive Treatment of Languages’, which mandated that schools teach a third of their curriculum in Spanish, another third in Catalan, and another third in English. The Government stated that its aim was to promote linguistic immersion in English, although many saw it as an attack on Catalan (Gentili, 2013; Manresa, 2015; Olaizola, 2013). In 2018, the progressive government of the Socialist Party of the Balearic Islands (PSIB-PSOE) and More for Mallorca (Més per Mallorca) passed the Decree 8/2018 which mandated healthcare personnel to be proficient in Catalan in order to work in the public healthcare system of the Balearic Islands. While the Government’s aim was to promote the normalization of Catalan, many people, including an important sector of the healthcare personnel, saw it as an imposition that prevented them from practicing because they were not proficient in the language (Amorós, 2017; Colmenero, 2018; Colom, 2023; Galvín, 2017). Consequently, the association between language attitudes and political orientation seems to have strengthen over the past decade, to the point of turning the linguistic situation in the Balearic Islands into a constant political debate (Crespí, 2023; Garau, 2023; Mateos, 2023; Pellicer, 2023; Sánchez, 2023).

Therefore, the present study delves deeper into this phenomenon by focusing on the specific case of Palma, the capital of the Balearic Islands. This city is particularly interesting for several reasons. First, the city concentrates just under 40% of the archipelago’s population (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2024), making it the largest city. Second, it is the most diverse city in the Balearic Islands, concentrating a third of the foreign residents of the Balearic Islands (IBESTAT, 2022). According to Blas–Arroyo, this situation makes the Palma “a melting pot of people from different geographic, economic and cultural origins” (2007, p. 80), making a significant impact on the linguistic situation of the city. Finally, previous studies have shown that the language attitudes of people who live in areas with lower social contact with Catalan, such as Palma, tend to be less positive toward this language and more positive toward Spanish (Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019). Additionally, none of the studies exploring language attitudes in the context of the Balearic Islands have focused exclusively on the specific case of Palma. Accordingly, my research questions and hypotheses are as follows:

1. Is political orientation a significant predictor of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma de Mallorca?
2. What is the relationship between different political orientations and language attitudes of the population of Palma de Mallorca toward Catalan and Spanish?

With regard to research question one, and based on previous literature (Castell et al., 2023; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014) and the current political debate regarding the linguistic situation in the Balearic Islands (Crespí, 2023; Garau, 2023; Mateos, 2023; Pellicer, 2023; Sánchez, 2023), I hypothesize that political orientation will be a significant predictor of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma. With regard to research question two, and also based on previous literature (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Castell et al., 2023; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014) and past reactions of the population of the Balearic Islands to certain language policies by prior governments (Amorós, 2017; Colmenero, 2018; Colom, 2023; Galvín, 2017; Gentili, 2013; Manresa, 2015; Olaizola, 2013), I hypothesize that people who identify as progressive will have more positive attitudes toward Catalan than toward Spanish, and that people who identify as conservative will have more positive attitudes toward Spanish than toward Catalan.

**Methodology**

*Participants*

A total of 127 responses to the questionnaire were collected. Of these, 28 responses were incomplete and were therefore discarded. Data are drawn from a total of 99 participants (67 females) aged between 18 and 71 years old (mean = 37) from Palma de Mallorca who were recruited during a ten-day period during the Fall 2023 semester. In order to be eligible to take part in the study, participants had to meet the following three requirements: to be over 18 years of age, to live or have lived in Palma for at least five years, and to be proficient in both Catalan and Spanish. Figure 1 shows the distribution of proficiency levels in both languages.

**Table 1.** Number of participants by gender and average age.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | Count | Avg. Age | Std. Deviation |
| Male | 32 | 34.7 | 12.1 |
| Female | 67 | 38 | 14.6 |
| Total | 99 | 36.9 | 13.9 |

**Figure 1.** Distribution of proficiency levels in Catalan and Spanish.

A graph of different colored rectangular shapes

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Since this study focuses on the relationship between political orientation and language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma, participants were also asked to indicate their political orientation in the questionnaire. Participants had seven options to choose from: far-left, left, center-left, center, center-right, right, and far-right. Interestingly, no participant selected far-right and, therefore, only the first six political orientations will be considered for this study. Figure 2 shows the distribution of political orientation among participants, and figure 3 shows distribution of mother tongues by political orientation.

**Figure 2**. Distribution of political orientation among participants

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**Figure 3.** Distribution of mother tongues by political orientation

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*Materials*

Data were collected using an online survey that was hosted on Qualtrics and consisted of three parts. In the first part, a demographic questionnaire, collected information regarding participant gender, age, country of birth, autonomous community of birth, ethnic origin, neighborhood of residence in Palma, level of education, employment situation, household income, national identity, and political orientation.

The second portion of the survey, a language use questionnaire, was designed to collect information regarding participants’ self-reported knowledge and usage of Catalan and Spanish. Specifically, this section included questions about native language or languages, proficiency in Catalan and Spanish (understanding, reading, speaking, and writing), languages studied other than Catalan and Spanish, use of Catalan and Spanish with different social groups (parents, children, siblings, grandparents, friends, neighbors, partners, relatives, professors, classmates, coworkers, and immigrants), and use of Catalan and Spanish in different contexts (administration, school, workplace, financial institutions, local commerce, department stores, social networks, etc.).

The third part collected data on the language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in two parts. The first section consisted of series incomplete of statements such as ‘the official language of the Balearic Islands should be X’ or ‘the medium of instruction in public education should be X’ followed by three possible answers: Catalan, Spanish, or both. The second section included a series of statements regarding Catalan and Spanish such as ‘I like it when people use Spanish, ‘Catalan is worth learning’, ‘Catalan is part of the identity of the Balearic Islands’, followed by a 100-point draggable sliding scale to indicate level of agreement or disagreement with the content of the statement. For the purpose of this study, only the answers to this last question were analyzed.

*Procedure*

Participants self-identified for this study. Recruitment materials in Catalan and Spanish with information about the study, the requirements to participate and a link to the consent form and the survey were posted on different social networks and online communication channels, such as WhatsApp and Instagram. Participants who were interested and wanted to participate clicked on the link and read the consent form. Those who agreed with the terms clicked on the ‘I agree’ button and began the survey. Participants completed the survey on their own electronic devices and at their own pace without being observed. On average, the survey took approximately 15 minutes to be completed. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the survey at any time without being penalized as well as their right to request the elimination of their data after survey completion. All participants who completed the survey received 10 EUR of monetary compensation for their time.

*Data analysis*

Data were analyzed in R (R Core Team, 2023). First, I performed both a descriptive that consisted in creating a series of plots and tables to summarize and describe the features of the dataset and to identify some potential trends and relationships. This analysis allowed us to see the number of males and females who completed the survey, their ages, and the number of participants in each political orientation. After that, I performed a statistical analysis. For each of the 60 evaluative statements, I created a series of hierarchically nested linear regression models using the lme4 package (Bates et al., 2015) in order to assess the relationship between language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish among the population of Palma (dependent variable) and political orientation (independent variable). To determine the best fit model for each statement, I used the anova() function (Fox & Weisberg, 2019).

**Results and discussion**

The statistical analysis revealed a significant association of political orientation (p < .05) on the language attitudes of the population of Palma de Mallorca toward Catalan and Spanish. In what follows, I explore the results for some of the most relevant statements organized in six different categories: language preference, language difficulty and enjoyment, language importance and usefulness, language policy and integration, cultural and identity aspects, and popular trends. These categories are based on the different domains in which language attitudes toward both languages are present in the Balearic Islands.

**Language preference**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated related to language preference. These statements are shown in Table 2. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 2.** Statements related to language preference in Catalan, Spanish, and English.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *M’agrada que la gent faci servir el català*  *Me gusta que la gente utilice el catalán*  ‘I like that people use Catalan’ | *M’agrada que la gent faci server el castellà*  *Me gusta que la gente utilice el castellano*  ‘I like that people use Spanish’ |
| *M’agrada escoltar català*  *Me gusta escuchar catalán*  I like listening to Catalan | *M’agrada escoltar castellà*  *Me gusta escuchar castellano*  I like listening to Spanish |
| *M’agrada fer servir el català*  *Me gusta utilizar el catalán*  ‘I like to use Catalan’ | *M’agrada fer servir el català*  *Me gusta utilizar el catalán*  ‘I like to use Catalan’ |
| *A vegades em sent obligat a fer servir el català*  *A veces me siento obligado a usar el catalán*  ‘Sometimes I feel compelled to use Catalan’ | *A vegades em sent obligat a fer servir el castellà*  *A veces me siento obligado a usar el castellano*  ‘Sometimes I feel compelled to use Spanish |
| *Intent fer servir català sempre que puc*  *Intento usar catalán siempre que puedo*  ‘I try to use Catalan whenever I can’ | *Intent fer servir el castellà sempre que puc*  *Intento usar el castellano siempre que puedo*  ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’ |
| *Si tenc fills, m’agradaria que xerrassin en català*  *Si tengo hijos, me gustaría que hablasen en catalán*  ‘If I have children, I would like them to speak Catalan’ | *Si tenc fills, m’agradaria que xerrassin en castellà*  *Si tengo hijos, me gustaría que hablasen en castellano*  ‘If I have children, I would like them to speak Spanish |
| *No és de bona educació respondre en català a algú que et xerra en castellà*  *No es de buena educación responder en castellano a alguien que te habla en catalán.*  ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish’ | *No és de bona educació respondre en castellà a algú que et xerra en català*  *No es de buena educación responder en catalán a alguien que te habla en castellano.*  **‘**It is not good manners to answer in Spanish to someone who speaks to you in Catalan |

Participant responses to the statements ‘I like that people use Spanish’ and ‘I like that people use Catalan” showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 77.36), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement “I like that people use Catalan”, those who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) showed a greater level of agreement with it. Conversely, those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), showed significantly lower levels of agreement with it, as shown in Table 3. Additionally, Figure 4 indicates that there was more consensus among progressive people around this statement.

**Table 3.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I like that people use Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.000 | 8.359 | 11.963 | < 2e-16 |
| Left | -7.667 | 8.948 | -0.857 | 0.39373 |
| Center-Left | -8.250 | 9.7120 | 0.849 | 0.3978 |
| Center | -35.600 | 12.949 | -2.749 | 0.00718 |
| Center-Right | -25.833 | 10.518 | -2.456 | 0.01590 |
| Right | -28.286 | 11.821 | -2.393 | 0.01873 |

Interestingly, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. It is possible that this is due to the fact that the participants who identified their political ideology as center, in reality, were closer to more conservative and right-wing positions.

**Figure 4.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I like that people use Catalan’.

A graph showing the different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘I like listening to Spanish’ and ‘I like listening to Catalan” showed interesting differences as well. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 81.84), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement “I like listening to Catalan”, those who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) showed a greater level of agreement with it as opposed to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), who showed significantly lower levels of agreement with it, as presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I like listening to Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.000 | 8.821 | 11.336 | < 2e-16 |
| Left | -6.979 | 9.442 | -0.739 | 0.46169 |
| Center-Left | -8.650 | 10.249 | -0.844 | 0.40085 |
| Center | -36.600 | 13.666 | -2.678 | 0.00875 |
| Center-Right | -23.417 | 11.100 | -2.110 | 0.03757 |
| Right | -37.000 | 12.475 | -2.966 | 0.00383 |

Once again, those who identified themselves as centrist showed significantly lower levels of agreement with this statement than those who identified their political orientation as center-right, showing very similar results to those who indicated having a right-leaning political orientation. This indicates an emerging trend in which self-identified centrists actually more closely align with right-wing ideologies, or at times even exceed the far right. Additionally, the analysis also revealed considerably more consensus among participants with a more progressive ideology, as opposed to those with a more conservative ideology, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 5.

**Figure 5.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I like listening to Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘I like to use Spanish’ and ‘I like to use Catalan” also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 79.48), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement “I like to use Catalan”, those who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) showed a significantly greater level of agreement with this statement as opposed to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), who showed a significantly lower level of agreement, as presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I like to use Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.000 | 11.07 | 9.035 | 2.25e-14 |
| Left | -11.15 | 11.85 | -0.941 | 0.349273 |
| Center-Left | -19.350 | 12.860 | -1.505 | 0.13580 |
| Center | -43.60 | 17.15 | -2.543 | 0.012651 |
| Center-Right | -42.33 | 13.93 | -3.040 | 0.003076 |
| Right | -55.71 | 15.65 | -3.559 | 0.000588 |

As was the case with the two previous statements, those who identified themselves as centrist showed a lower level of agreement with this statement than those who identified their political orientation as center-right, which seems to confirm the emerging trend proposed previously. Additionally, the analysis also revealed considerably more consensus among participants with a more progressive ideology, as opposed to those with a more conservative ideology, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 6.

**Figure 6.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I like to use Catalan’.

A graph showing the different colored rhombuses

Description automatically generated

Participant responses to the statements ‘Sometimes I feel compelled to use Catalan” and “Sometimes I feel compelled to use Spanish” also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 23.76), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Catalan. However, when participants were presented with the statement “Sometimes I feel compelled to use Spanish”, those who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) showed a significantly greater level of agreement with this statement as opposed to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), who showed a significantly lower level of agreement, as presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Sometimes I feel compelled to use Spanish’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 82.57 | 13.00 | 6.351 | 7.77e-09 |
| Left | -19.11 | 13.92 | -1.373 | 0.17293 |
| Center-Left | -31.971 | 15.11 | -2.117 | 0.03697 |
| Center | -54.17 | 20.14 | -2.690 | 0.00848 |
| Center-Right | -74.07 | 16.36 | -4.528 | 1.76e-05 |
| Right | -60.86 | 18.39 | -3.310 | 0.00133 |

Interestingly, those who self-identified as centrists did not show a lower level of agreement with this statement than those who identified themselves as center-right or right-wing. However, those who self-identified as center-right showed a significantly lower level of agreement with this statement than those who self-identified as right wing. Additionally, the analysis also revealed more consensus among conservative participants, as opposed to those with a more progressive political ideology, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 7.

**Figure 7.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Sometimes I feel compelled to use Spanish’.

A graph of political orientation

Description automatically generated

Participant responses to the statements ‘I try to use Catalan whenever I can” and ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’ showed interesting results. Analysis of both statements revealed statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. When participants were presented with the statement ‘I try to use Catalan whenever I can’, participants who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) expressed a greater level agreement with it than those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), who showed a significantly lower level of agreement, as presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I try to use Catalan whenever I can’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 94.29 | 12.46 | 7.568 | 2.67e-11 |
| Left | -12.76 | 13.34 | -0.957 | 0.34093 |
| Center-Left | -16.19 | 14.47 | -1.118 | 0.26636 |
| Center | -48.89 | 19.30 | -2.533 | 0.01298 |
| Center-Right | -47.70 | 15.68 | -3.043 | 0.00304 |
| Right | -50.86 | 17.62 | -2.887 | 0.00484 |

Once again, those who self-identified as centrist showed lower levels of agreement with this statement than those who self-identified as center-right, showing very similar results to those who indicated having a right-leaning political orientation. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among progressive participants as opposed to among conservative participants, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 8.

**Figure 8.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I try to use Catalan whenever I can’.

A graph of different colored rhombuses

Description automatically generated

Opposite trends were found, however, when participants were presented with the statement ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’. Those participants who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) indicated a lower level of agreement with this statement. Conversely, those who identified as conservative (center-right and right) showed a significantly greater level of agreement with it, as presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 44.143 | 13.897 | 3.176 | 0.00202 |
| Left | 11.315 | 14.876 | 0.761 | 0.44878 |
| Center-Left | 12.3071 | 16.1467 | 0.762 | 0.44786 |
| Center | 6.857 | 21.529 | 0.319 | 0.75081 |
| Center-Right | 54.857 | 17.487 | 3.137 | 0.00229 |
| Right | 40.143 | 19.653 | 2.043 | 0.04393 |

Interestingly, the responses of those who identified themselves as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). In fact, their level of agreement with this statement was even lower than that of those who identified as left and center-left. This could be due to the fact that the majority of those who self-identified as centrists, despite being able to manifest negative attitudes toward Catalan, have this language as their first language (L1) and, therefore, do not feel the need to use Spanish whenever they can. This could be indicating the need to distinguish more clearly between language attitudes and languages uses. Perhaps these two things are not as closely related as one might think, at least in cases where people’s political orientation is not as sided. It is also important to note that people who self-identified as center-right showed a significantly greater level of agreement with this statement than those who identified as right-wing. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among conservative participants than among progressive participants, especially among those who self-identified as left-wing, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 9.

**Figure 9.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘If I had children, I would like them to speak Spanish’ and ‘If I had children, I would like them to speak Catalan’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 84.77), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘If I had children, I would like them to speak Catalan’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far left, left, and center-left) indicated a greater level of agreement with this statement than conservative participants (center-right and right), as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘If I had children, I would like them to speak Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.000 | 8.743 | 11.438 | <2e-16 |
| Left | -6.938 | 9.359 | -0.741 | 0.46039 |
| Center-Left | -14.000 | 10.158 | -1.378 | 0.1715 |
| Center | -6.000 | 13.544 | -0.443 | 0.65880 |
| Center-Right | -22.750 | 11.001 | -2.068 | 0.04142 |
| Right | -46.000 | 12.364 | -3.720 | 0.00034 |

Similar to what was seen with the statement ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’, the responses of those who identified themselves as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). In fact, their level of agreement with this statement was even greater than that of those who identified as left and center-left. This could be due, once again, to a possible separation between language attitudes and linguistic uses in people whose political orientation is not sided. As previously mentioned, the majority of people who identified as centrist have Catalan as their L1, and it is possible that they want the same for their children, so that they can exhibit the same patterns of language use seen in their families for decades. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among centrists and progressive participants than among conservative participants, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 10.

**Figure 10**. Participant responses to the statement ‘If I had children, I would like them to speak Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘It is not good manners to answer in Spanish to someone who speaks to you in Catalan’ and ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 33.43), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish’, those who identified as progressive (far left, left, and center-left) indicated a lower level of agreement with it than those who identified as conservative (center-right and right), as presented in Table 10.

**Table 10.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 16.714 | 14.598 | 1.145 | 0.25517 |
| Left | 5.452 | 15.627 | 0.349 | 0.72794 |
| Center-Left | 26.436 | 16.962 | 1.559 | 0.1225 |
| Center | 15.886 | 22.616 | 0.702 | 0.48417 |
| Center-Right | 51.952 | 18.369 | 2.828 | 0.00573 |
| Right | 47.143 | 20.645 | 2.283 | 0.02468 |

Similar to what was seen with the previous two statements, the responses of those who identified themselves as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). In fact, their level of agreement with this statement was even lower than that of those who identified as center-left. This could be due, once again, to a possible separation between language attitudes and linguistic uses in people whose political orientation is not sided. As mentioned before, the majority of people who identified as centrist have Catalan as their L1 and, therefore, use it on a daily basis even in situations where the other person speaks in Spanish. This explanation would align with the results from the statement ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’, which showed that people who self-identify as centrist do not normally use Spanish whenever they can, similar to those who self-identify as progressive.

**Figure 11.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish.

**A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence**

**Language difficulty and enjoyment**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated also related to language difficulty and enjoyment. These statements are shown in Table 11. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 11.** Statements related to language difficulty and enjoyment in Catalan, Spanish, and English

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *El català és una llengua difícil d’aprendre*  *El castalán es una lengua difícil de aprender*  Catalan is a difficult language to learn | *El castellà és una llengua difícil d’aprendre*  *El castellano es una lengua difícil de aprender*  Spanish is a difficult language to learn |
| *A una persona de fora li costarà menys aprendre el castellà que el català*  *A una persona de fuera le costará menos aprender el castellano que el catalán*  An outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan | N/A |
| *És desagradable aprendre català*  *Es desagradable aprender catalán*  It is unpleasant to learn Catalan | *És desagradable aprendre castellà*  *Es desagradable aprender castellano*  It is unpleasant to learn Spanish |
| *És avorrit aprendre català*  *Es aburrido aprender catalán*  It is boring to learn Catalan | *És avorrit aprendre castellà*  *Es aburrido aprender castellano*  It is boring to learn Spanish |
| *El català és una llengua bonica*  *El catalán es una lengua bonita*  Catalan is a beautiful language | *El castellà és una llengua bonica*  *El castellano es una lengua bonita*  Spanish is a beautiful language |
| *El català és una llengua que sona malament*  *El catalán es una lengua que suena mal*  Catalan is a language that sounds bad | *El castellà és una llengua que sona malament*  *El castellano es una lengua que suena mal*  Spanish is a language that sounds bad |

Analysis of participant responses to the statements ‘Catalan is a difficult language to learn’, ‘Spanish is a difficult language to learn’, ‘Catalan is a language that sounds bad’, and ‘Spanish is a language that sounds bad’ revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to these statements, indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards perceived the level of difficulty of both Catalan and Spanish as well as toward how both languages sound.

Participant responses to the statement ‘An outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan’ showed interesting differences. Those participants who identified as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left) as well as those who identified as centrists showed a lower level of agreement with this statement than those who identified as conservative, specially than those who self-identified as center-right, as presented in Table 12.

**Table 12.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘An outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 22.29 | 14.47 | 1.540 | 0.1270 |
| Left | 12.42 | 15.49 | 0.802 | 0.4247 |
| Center-Left | 14.21 | 16.82 | 0.845 | 0.4001 |
| Center | 12.71 | 22.42 | 0.567 | 0.5721 |
| Center-Right | 38.71 | 18.21 | 2.126 | 0.0362 |
| Right | 23.71 | 20.47 | 1.159 | 0.2496 |

Similar to what was seen with the statement ‘It is not good manners to answer in Catalan to someone who speaks to you in Spanish’, those who self-identified as center-right showed a significantly greater level of agreement with this statement than those who self-identified as right-wing. This seems to indicate another emerging trend in which those who self-identify as center-right actually more closely align with right-wing ideologies. Equally interesting is the fact that the responses of those who identified themselves as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). In fact, their level of agreement with this statement is even lower than that of those who identified as center-left. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among participants in both extremes, far-left and right, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 12.

**Figure 12.** Participant responses to the statement ‘An outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘It is unpleasant to learn Spanish’ and ‘It is unpleasant to learn Catalan’, also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 8.79), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘It is unpleasant to learn Catalan’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far left, left, and center-left) indicated a lower level of agreement with this statement than those participants who self-identified as conservative (center-right and right), as shown in Table 13.

**Table 13.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It is unpleasant to learn Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 2.571 | 7.493 | 0.343 | 0.7322 |
| Left | 3.429 | 8.020 | 0.427 | 0.6700 |
| Center-Left | 9.879 | 8.706 | 1.135 | 0.2594 |
| Center | 6.829 | 11.608 | 0.588 | 0.5578 |
| Center-Right | 15.429 | 9.428 | 1.636 | 0.1051 |
| Right | 23.714 | 10.596 | 2.238 | 0.0276 |

Once again, the responses of those who self-identified as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). In fact, their level of agreement with this statement is even lower than that of those who identified as center-left. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among progressive and centrist participants, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 13.

**Figure 13.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It is unpleasant to learn Catalan’.

**A graph of political orientation

Description automatically generated**

Participant responses to the statements ‘It is boring to learn Spanish’ and ‘It is boring to learn Catalan’, also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 14.67), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘It is boring to learn Catalan’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far left and left) indicated a lower level of agreement with this statement than those participants who self-identified as conservative (center, center-right and right), and those who self-identified as center-left, as shown in Table 14.

**Table 14.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It is boring to learn Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 1.857 | 9.638 | 0.193 | 0.8476 |
| Left | 8.685 | 10.317 | 0.842 | 0.4021 |
| Center-Left | 18.643 | 11.198 | 1.665 | 0.0993 |
| Center | 37.943 | 14.931 | 2.541 | 0.0127 |
| Center-Right | 28.143 | 12.127 | 2.321 | 0.0225 |
| Right | 21.286 | 13.630 | 1.562 | 0.1218 |

Interestingly, the responses of those who self-identified as centrist are more extreme than the responses of those who self-identified ideologically as center-right and right-wing. Centrists, therefore, are the ones who agree the most with the fact that Catalan is a boring language to learn. It seems, therefore, that the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. This could be due to the fact that this statement is more related to language attitudes than to linguistic uses. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among more progressive participants (far-left and left), as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 14.

**Figure 14.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It is boring to learn Catalan’.

A graph of political orientation

Description automatically generated

Participant responses to the statements ‘Spanish is a beautiful language’ and ‘Catalan is a beautiful language’, also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 86.66), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘Catalan is a beautiful language’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far left and left) indicated a greater level of agreement with this statement, whereas those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) indicated a much lower level of agreement with it, as presented in Table 15.

**Table 15.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan is a beautiful language’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 97.429 | 10.850 | 8.980 | 2.94e-14 |
| Left | -10.387 | 11.614 | -0.894 | 0.37344 |
| Center-Left | -8.179 | 12.606 | -0.649 | 0.51808 |
| Center | -35.829 | 16.808 | -2.132 | 0.03567 |
| Center-Right | -36.512 | 13.652 | -2.674 | 0.00884 |
| Right | -42.429 | 15.344 | -2.765 | 0.00686 |

Similar to the results observed with the previous statement, the responses of those who identified themselves as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as more conservative (center-right and right). These results, once again, seem to confirm the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions, at least in terms of language attitudes. Additionally, the analysis revealed greater consensus around this statement among progressive participants, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 15.

**Figure 15.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is a beautiful language’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Language importance and usefulness**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated also related to language importance and usefulness. These statements are shown in Table 16. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 16.** Statements related to language importance and usefulness in Catalan, Spanish, and English

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *El català pot arribar a ser una llengua important en el context europeu.*  *El catalán puede llegar a ser una lengua importante en el contexto europeo.*  Catalan can become an important language in the European context. | *El castellà pot arribar a ser una llengua important en el context europeu.*  *El castellano puede llegar a ser una lengua importante en el contexto europeo.*  Spanish can become an important language in the European context. |
| *El català és tan important com l’anglès.*  *El catalán es tan importante como el inglés.*  Catalan is as important as English | *El castellà és tan important com l’anglès.*  *El castellano es tan importante como el inglés.*  Catalan is as important as English |
| *Ambues llengües són igual d’importants*  *Ambas lenguas son igual de importantes*  Both languages are equally important | N/A |
| *Val la pena aprendre català*  *Vale la pena aprender catalán*  Catalan is worth learning\* | *Val la pena aprendre castellà*  *Vale la pena aprender castellano*  Spanish is worth learning |
| *Estudiar català em serà útil en el futur per trobar feina.*  *Estudiar catalán me resultará útil en el futuro para encontrar trabajo.*  Learning Catalan will be useful to find a job in the future. | *Estudiar castellà em serà útil en el futur per trobar feina.*  *Estudiar castellano me resultará útil en el futuro para encontrar trabajo.*  Learning Spanish will be useful to find a job in the future. |
| *El català serveix per a un àmbits i el castellà per a uns altres.*  *El catalán sirve para unos ámbitos y el castellano para otros*.  Catalan is used in some contexts and Spanish in some others. | N/A |
| *El català és una llengua rural*  *El catalán es una lengua rural*  Catalan is a rural language | N/A |

Analysis of participant responses to the statements ‘Both languages are equally important’, ‘Learning Catalan will be useful to find a job in the future’, ‘Learning Spanish will be useful to find a job in the future’, ‘Catalan is used in some contexts and Spanish in some others’, and ‘Catalan is a rural language’ revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed similar responses to these statements, indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards perceived importance and usefulness of both Catalan and Spanish.

Participant responses to the statements ‘Spanish can become an important language in the European context’ and ‘Catalan can become an important language in the European context’ showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 79.45), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘Catalan can become an important language in the European context’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far-left, left, and center-left) indicated a greater level of agreement with this statement, whereas those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) indicated a much lower level of agreement with it, as presented in Table 17.

**Table 17.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan can become an important language in the European context’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 79.00 | 13.44 | 5.879 | 6.41e-08 |
| Left | -18.46 | 14.38 | -1.283 | 0.2026 |
| Center-Left | -27.80 | 15.61 | -1.780 | 0.0783 |
| Center | -52.80 | 20.80 | -2.536 | 0.0129 |
| Center-Right | -50.83 | 16.91 | -3.006 | 0.0034 |
| Right | -49.14 | 19.00 | -2.586 | 0.0113 |

Once again,people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing**.** These results are in line with the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions, at least in terms of language attitudes. Also interesting is the fact that even among progressive participants there seems to be a certain caution when it comes to affirming that Catalan can become an important language at the European context, especially among those who define themselves as center-left. It is clear, however, that as political orientation moves closer to the center, as well as to more conservative positions, the degree of agreement with this statement decreases significantly. Additionally, the analysis revealed greater consensus around this statement among participants self-identified as far-left-wing and centrists, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 16.

**Figure 16.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan can be important in the European context.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘Catalan is as important as English’ and ‘Spanish is as important as English’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of both statements revealed statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. When presented with the statement ‘Catalan is as important as English’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far-left and left) indicated a greater level of agreement with this statement, compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) and to those who said their political orientation was center-left, as presented in Table 18.

**Table 18.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan is as important as English’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 81.86 | 14.70 | 5.567 | 2.49e-07 |
| Left | -25.04 | 15.74 | -1.591 | 0.114941 |
| Center-Left | -61.21 | 17.08 | -3.583 | 0.000543 |
| Center | -48.26 | 22.78 | -2.119 | 0.036791 |
| Center-Right | -53.11 | 18.50 | -2.871 | 0.005074 |
| Right | -59.57 | 20.79 | -2.865 | 0.005156 |

Interestingly, those who expressed the lowest level of agreement with this statement are the ones who identified their political orientation as center-left. Their responses, therefore, resemble the ones of those who identified themselves as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). This could be due to the role of English as an international language and its importance around the world. However, it is worth noting that those who showed a greater level of agreement with this statement are the ones who identified their political orientation as far-left and left. This demonstrates that very progressive people in Palma, in particular, and in the Balearic Islands, in general, have really positive attitudes toward Catalan, to the point of putting it on the same level as English. Additionally, the analysis also revealed a greater level of consensus among participants in both extremes, far-left and right, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 17.

**Figure 17**. Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is as important as English’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Similar results were found when participants were presented with the statement ‘Spanish is as important as English’. Interestingly, participants of all political orientation, but center-left, showed a similar level of agreement with this statement, as presented in Table 19.

Table 19. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Spanish is as important as English’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 81.857 | 12.257 | 6.678 | 1.74e-09 |
| Left | -6.961 | 13.121 | -0.531 | 0.5970 |
| Center-Left | -34.357 | 14.242 | -2.412 | 0.017810 |
| Center | -15.657 | 18.989 | -0.825 | 0.4117 |
| Center-Right | 9.643 | 15.424 | 0.625 | 0.5334 |
| Right | -9.143 | 17.335 | -0.527 | 0.5991 |

This, again, could be due to the perceived role of English as an international language and its importance around the world. One possible explanation, however, for why the lowest level of agreement with this statement is among those who define themselves as center-left, and centrists, could be that as political orientation becomes more extreme, either to the left or to the right, attitudes toward one’s own languages become more acute and no longer neutral. That is to say, the more left-wing or right-wing one’s political orientation is, the less neutral one’s linguistic attitudes are, always in favor of the language of preference. This could explain why people on the center-left, and to a lesser extent, people in the center, show a higher level of disagreement with the idea that Spanish is as important as English, because their language attitudes are more neutral.

**Figure 18.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Spanish is as important as English’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘It is worth learning Spanish’ and ‘It is worth learning Catalan’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 89.23), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘It is worth learning Catalan’, participants with a more progressive political orientation (far-left, left, and, to a lesser extent, center-left) indicated a greater level of agreement with this statement, whereas those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) indicated a much lower level of agreement with it, as presented in Table 20.

**Table 20.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It is worth learning Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.00 | 9.867 | 10.135 | <2e-16 |
| Left | -8.000 | 10.562 | -0.757 | 0.45069 |
| Center-Left | -20.200 | 11.464 | -1.762 | 0.08135 |
| Center | -43.600 | 15.285 | -2.852 | 0.00535 |
| Center-Right | -29.583 | 12.415 | -2.383 | 0.01921 |
| Right | -39.857 | 13.953 | -2.856 | 0.00528 |

Similar to what has been observed with other statements,people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing**.** These results are in line with the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions, at least in terms of language attitudes. Also interesting are the responses from those who identified themselves ideologically as center-left, which showed a much lower level of agreement with this statement compared to the other two progressive ideologies. These results are in line with the idea mentioned before about an increase of neutrality in terms of language attitudes as political orientation moves toward the center. It is possible, therefore, that people who self-identify as center-left are comparing the potential benefits of learning Catalan for the future (economically, professionally, etc.) to the potential benefits or learning Spanish, or even English, from a more neutral perspective. Additionally, the analysis revealed greater consensus around this statement among participants self-identified as far-left-wing, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 19.

**Figure 19.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It is worth learning Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Language policy and integration**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated also related to language policy and integration. These statements are shown in Table 21. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 21.** Statements related to language policy and integration in Catalan, Spanish, and English

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *Hauria de ser obligatori que els alumnes de Balears cursassin, com a mínim, el 50% de les assignatures en català.*  *Tendría que ser obligatorio que los alumnus de Baleares cursasen, como mínimo, el 50% de las asignaturas en catalán.*  It should be mandatory for all students from the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of the subjects in Catalan | *Hauria de ser obligatori que els alumnes de Balears cursassin, com a mínim, el 50% de les assignatures en castellà.*  *Tendría que ser obligatorio que los alumnus de Baleares cursasen, como mínimo, el 50% de las asignaturas en castellano.*  It should be mandatory for all students from the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of the subjects in Spanish. |
| *El català hauria de ser una asignatura voluntària a les escoles i instituts de les Balears*  *El catalán debería de ser una asignatura voluntaria en las escuelas e institutos de Baleares*  Catalan should be a voluntary subject in schools and high schools in the Balearic Islands | *El castellà hauria de ser una asignatura voluntària a les escoles i instituts de les Balears*  *El castellano debería de ser una asignatura voluntaria en las escuelas e institutos de Baleares*  Spanish should be a voluntary subject in schools and high schools in the Balearic Islands |
| *El català ha de ser un requisite per ocupar un lloc de feina a l’administración pública*  *El catalán tiene que ser un requisite para ocupar un puesto de trabajo en la administración pública.*  Catalan must be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration | N/A |
| *Per al personal sanitari, és més important saber català que castellà.*  *Para el personal sanitario, es más importante saber catalán que castellano.*  For healthcare staff, it is more important to know Catalan than Spanish | *Per al personal sanitari, és més important saber castellà que català.*  *Para el personal sanitario, es más importante saber castellano que catalán.*  For healthcare staff, it is more important to know Spanish than Catalan |
| *Com tots xerram castellà, no és necessari que la gent que ve d’altres comunitats autònomes o països de parla castellana aprenguin català.*  *Como todos hablamos castellano, no es necesario que la gente que viene de otras comunidades autónomas o países de habla hispana aprendan catalán.*  Since we all speak Spanish, it is not necessary for people coming from other Autonomous communities in Spain or Spanish-speaking countries to learn Catalan. | N/A |

Participant responses to the statements ‘It should be mandatory for all students in the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of their subjects in Catalan’ and ‘It should be mandatory for all students in the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of their subjects in Spanish’ showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed similar responses to this statement (mean = 68.87), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Catalan. However, when presented with the statement ‘It should be mandatory for all students in the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of their subjects in Spanish’, participants who identified as more progressive (far-left and left) expressed a much lower level of agreement with this statement compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), as presented in Table 22.

**Table 22.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It should be mandatory for all students in the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of their subjects in Spanish’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 11.71 | 14.45 | 0.811 | 0.419671 |
| Left | 25.26 | 15.47 | 1.633 | 0.105807 |
| Center-Left | 36.79 | 16.79 | 2.191 | 0.0310 |
| Center | 51.69 | 22.39 | 2.309 | 0.023181 |
| Center-Right | 63.12 | 18.18 | 3.471 | 0.000788 |
| Right | 59.71 | 20.44 | 2.922 | 0.004368 |

Additionally, the analysis revealed more consensus around this statement among those participants who identified as far-lefties and less consensus in all other political orientations, especially in the center-left, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 20.

**Figure 20.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It should be mandatory for all students in the Balearic Islands to take at least 50% of their subjects in Spanish’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements “Catalan must be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration” also showed interesting differences. Participants who identified as more progressive (far-left and left) expressed a greater level of agreement with this statement compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), as presented in Table 23.

**Table 23**. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan must be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.00 | 13.67 | 7.314 | 8.93e-11 |
| Left | -27.15 | 14.63 | -1.855 | 0.066780 |
| Center-Left | -33.700 | 15.885 | -2.121 | 0.03654 |
| Center | -55.20 | 21.18 | -2.606 | 0.010662 |
| Center-Right | -74.17 | 17.20 | -4.311 | 4.03e-05 |
| Right | -73.57 | 19.33 | -3.805 | 0.000254 |

Similar to what has been observed with other statements, the responses from those who identified themselves ideologically as center-left showed a much lower level of agreement with this statement compared to the other two progressive ideologies. These results are in line with the idea mentioned before about an increase of neutrality in terms of language attitudes as political orientation moves toward the center. Additionally, the analysis revealed more consensus around this statement among those participants who indicated their political orientation was far-left, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 21.

**Figure 21.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan must be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘For healthcare staff it is more important to know Spanish than Catalan’ and ‘For healthcare staff it is more important to know Catalan than Spanish also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed similar responses to this statement (mean = 42.67), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘For healthcare staff it is more important to know Catalan than Spanish’, participants who identified as more progressive (far-left and left) expressed a much greater level of agreement with this statement compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), as presented in Table 24.

**Table 24**. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘For healthcare staff it is more important to know Catalan than Spanish’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 60.29 | 11.52 | 5.235 | 1.02e-16 |
| Left | -29.60 | 12.33 | -2.401 | 0.01834 |
| Center-Left | -35.14 | 13.38 | -2.626 | 0.01011 |
| Center | -49.09 | 17.84 | -2.751 | 0.00714 |
| Center-Right | -47.37 | 14.49 | -3.269 | 0.00151 |
| Right | -38.14 | 16.29 | -2.342 | 0.02132 |

Similar to what has been observed with other statements,people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing**.** These results are in line with the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions, at least in terms of language attitudes. Also interesting are the responses from those who identified themselves ideologically as center-left, which showed a much lower level of agreement with this statement compared to the other two progressive ideologies. These results are in line with the idea mentioned before about an increase of neutrality in terms of language attitudes as political orientation moves toward the center. In this case, it is possible that all political orientations are prioritizing the quality medical treatment and not the language used by the healthcare staff. Essentially, they are stating that the procedure itself is more important than the language, and this is more evident as political orientation moves toward the center, since people here seem to be more neutral and not as influenced by their political orientations. Additionally, the analysis revealed more consensus around this statement among conservative participants, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 22.

**Figure 22.** Participant responses to the statement ‘For healthcare staff it is more important to know Catalan than Spanish’.

A graph of political orientation

Description automatically generated

Participant responses to the statement ‘Since we all speak Spanish, it is not necessary for people who come from other Autonomous Communities or Spanish-speaking countries to learn Catalan’, also showed interesting differences. Participants who identified as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left) indicated a much lower level of agreement with this statement than those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) as shown in Table 25.

**Table 25.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Since we all speak Spanish, it is not necessary for people who come from other Autonomous Communities or Spanish-speaking countries to learn Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 7.2857 | 11.2065 | 0.650 | 0.51721 |
| Left | 10.9018 | 11.9959 | 0.909 | 0.36581 |
| Center-Left | 0.6643 | 13.0208 | 0.051 | 0.9595 |
| Center | 29.5143 | 17.3611 | 1.700 | 0.09247 |
| Center-Right | 37.6310 | 14.1013 | 2.740 | 0.00738 |
| Right | 28.486 | 15.8484 | 1.794 | 0.07610 |

It is worth noting that, despite showing greater agreement with this statement, the average score of the responses of the most conservative participants does not, in any case, exceed 50 points out of a maximum of 100. The highest mean corresponds to those who identified themselves as center-right (mean = 45.92). This indicates that there is a generalized consensus around the idea that Catalan is a relevant element to be taken into account in the Balearic context, regardless of political orientation. Additionally, the analysis revealed more consensus around this statement among progressive participants, especially among those who said their political orientation was far-left and center left, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 23.

**Figure 23.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Since we all speak Spanish, it is not necessary for people who come from other Autonomous Communities or Spanish-speaking countries to learn Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Cultural and identity aspects**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated also related to cultural and identity aspects. These statements are shown in Table 26. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 26.** Statements related to language policy and integration in Catalan, Spanish, and English

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *El català és un element indentitari de les Balears*  *El catalán es un elemento identitario de las Baleares*  Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands | N/A |
| *El català és la llengua que hauria de predominar a las Balears*  *El catalán es la lengua que debería predominar en las Baleares*  Catalan is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands | *El castellà és la llengua que hauria de predominar a las Balears*  *El castellano es la lengua que debería predominar en las Baleares*  Spanish is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands |
| *Totes les persones que viuen a les Balears haurien de saber català i castella.*  *Todas las personas que viven en Baleares deberían saber catalán y castellano.*  All people living in the Balearic Islands should know Catalan and Spanish |  |
| *Visc a les Balears i, per això, he de saber, estudiar i fer servir el català.*  *Vivo en Baleares y, por eso, tengo que saber, estudiar y utilizer el catalán.*  I live in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, I need to know, study and use Catalan. | *Visc a les Balears i, per això, he de saber, estudiar i fer servir el castellà.*  *Vivo en Baleares y, por eso, tengo que saber, estudiar y utilizer el castellano.*  I live in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, I need to know, study and use Spanish. |
| *És necessari aprendre català per integrar-se totalment a les Balears.*  *Es necesario aprender catalán para integrarse totalmente en las Baleares.*  It is necessary to know Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands. |  |

Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands’ showed interesting differences. Participants who identified as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left) showed a greater level of agreement with this statement compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), as presented in Table 27.

**Table 27.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.00 | 10.60 | 9.430 | 3.28e-15 |
| Left | -12.13 | 11.35 | -1.068 | 0.28819 |
| Center-Left | -13.800 | 12.321 | -1.1120 | 0.26557 |
| Center | -37.20 | 16.43 | -2.264 | 0.02587 |
| Center-Right | -41.58 | 13.34 | -3.116 | 0.00243 |
| Right | -33.86 | 15.00 | -2.258 | 0.02630 |

As was the case with previous statements, those who identified themselves as centrist showed a lower level of agreement with this statement than those who identified their political orientation as right-wing. It seems, therefore, that the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. It is worth noting that, despite showing a lower agreement with this statement, the average score of the responses of the most conservative participants does not, in any case, fall below 50 points, from a range of 0 to 100. The lowest mean corresponds to those who identified themselves as center-right (mean = 58.42, as seen in Figure 24). This indicates, as with the previous statement, that there is a general consensus around the idea that Catalan is a relevant element to be taken into account in the Balearic context, regardless of political orientation.

Figure 24. Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘Spanish is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands’ and ‘Catalan is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed similar responses to this statement (mean = 26.78), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘Catalan is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands’, those participants who identified as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left) showed a greater level of agreement with it. Conversely, those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), showed significantly lower levels of agreement with it, as shown in Table 28.

**Table 28.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 94.29 | 12.67 | 7.439 | 4.95e-11 |
| Left | -22.45 | 13.57 | -1.655 | 0.101305 |
| Center-Left | -25.54 | 14.73 | -1.734 | 0.08622 |
| Center | -69.09 | 19.63 | -3.519 | 0.000673 |
| Center-Right | -66.95 | 15.95 | -4.198 | 6.15e-05 |
| Right | -68.29 | 17.92 | -3.810 | 0.000250 |

As was the case with previous statements, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater, but very similar, than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. These results support the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. Additionally, the analysis revealed a strong consensus among those who said their political orientation was far-left, as shown in Figure 25.

**Figure 25.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is the language that should predominate in the Balearic Islands’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statement ‘It is necessary to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands’ also showed interesting differences. Participants who identified as more progressive (far-left and left) showed a greater level of agreement with this statement compared to those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) as well as those who self-identified as center-left, as presented in Table 29.

**Table 29.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘It is necessary to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 94.86 | 13.53 | 7.011 | 3.72e-10 |
| Left | -21.25 | 14.48 | -1.467 | 0.14562 |
| Center-Left | -33.26 | 15.72 | -2.116 | 0.03705 |
| Center | -38.46 | 20.96 | -1.835 | 0.06974 |
| Center-Right | -49.69 | 17.02 | -2.919 | 0.00441 |
| Right | -46.71 | 19.13 | -2.441 | 0.01652 |

In this case, it is particularly interesting that the responses from those who identified themselves ideologically as center-left showed a much lower level of agreement with this statement compared to the other two progressive ideologies. In fact, their responses closely resemble the ones from those who identified as conservative. These results, however, are in line with the idea mentioned before about an increase of neutrality in terms of language attitudes as political orientation moves toward the center. It is possible, therefore, that people who self-identify as center-left recognize the strong presence of Spanish in the Balearic Islands and, particularly, in Palma. Consequently, while still acknowledging the importance of Catalan and its role as an identity element of the Balearic Islands, they also believe that it is not necessary to learn it to fully integrate in the society, given the widespread presence of Spanish. Additionally, the analysis revealed more consensus among those who identified as far-left, as shown in Figure 26.

**Figure 26.** Participant responses to the statement ‘It is necessary to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘I live in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, I need to know, use, and study Spanish’ and ‘I live in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, I need to know, use, and study Catalan’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed favorable responses to this statement (mean = 64.58), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when presented with the statement ‘I live in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, I need to know, use, and study Catalan’, those participants who identified as progressive (far-left, left, and center-left) indicated a greater level of agreement with it. Conversely, those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right) showed a much lower level of agreement with this statement, as shown in Table 30.

**Table 30.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘I live in the Balearic Islands and therefore I need to know, use, and study Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 100.00 | 11.41 | 8.762 | 8.51e-14 |
| Left | -12.52 | 12.22 | -1.025 | 0.30810 |
| Center-Left | -13.700 | 13.261 | -1.033 | 0.3042 |
| Center | -42.80 | 17.68 | -2.421 | 0.01744 |
| Center-Right | -38.25 | 14.36 | -2.663 | 0.00912 |
| Right | -38.86 | 16.14 | -2.407 | 0.01804 |

As was the case with previous statements, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. These results support the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. Additionally, the analysis revealed a strong consensus among those identified as progressive, as shown in Figure 27.

**Figure 27.** Participant responses to the statement ‘I live in the Balearic Islands and therefore I need to know, use, and study Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Population trends**

Several of the statements that participants evaluated also related to population trends. These statements are shown in Table 31. In what follows, I detail the relationship between participant responses to each of these statements and political orientation.

**Table 31.** Statements related to population trends in Catalan, Spanish, and English

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Statements related to Catalan | Statements related to Spanish |
| *De cada vegada menys gent sap català.*  *De cada vez menos gente sabe catalán.*  Fewer and fewer people know Catalan. | *De cada vegada menys gent sap castellà.*  *De cada vez menos gente sabe castellano.*  Fewer and fewer people know Spanish. |
| *El català està en perill de desaparèixer a les Balears.*  *El catalán está en peligro de desaparecer en las Baleares.*  Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands. | *El castellà està en perill de desaparèixer a les Balears.*  *El castellano está en peligro de desaparecer en las Baleares.*  Spanish is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands. |
| *La gent hauria d’esforçar-se més en fer servir el català.*  *La gente debería esforzarse más en utilizar el catalán.*  People should put more effort into using Catalan. | *La gent hauria d’esforçar-se més en fer servir el castellà.*  *La gente debería esforzarse más en utilizar el castellano.*  People should put more effort into using Spanish. |

Participant responses to the statements ‘Fewer and fewer people know Spanish’ and ‘Fewer and fewer people know Catalan’ showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 11.84), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when participants were presented with the statement “Fewer and fewer people know Catalan,” progressive participants (far-left, left, and center-left) expressed a greater agreement with it. Conversely, those participants who identified as more conservative (center, center-right, and right) showed a greater disagreement with this statement, as presented in Table 32.

Table 32. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Fewer and fewer people know Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 99.86 | 12.57 | 7.947 | 4.38e-12 |
| Left | -28.73 | 13.45 | -2.136 | 0.03530 |
| Center-Left | -19.257 | 14.600 | -1.319 | 0.19041 |
| Center | -72.26 | 19.47 | -3.712 | 0.00035 |
| Center-Right | -50.02 | 15.81 | -3.164 | 0.00210 |
| Right | -47.00 | 17.77 | -2.645 | 0.00960 |

As was the case with previous statements, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. These results support the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. Additionally, the analysis revealed a strong consensus among those who self-identified ideologically as far-left, as shown in Figure 28.

**Figure 28.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Fewer and fewer people know Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘Spanish is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands’ and ‘Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands’ also showed interesting differences. Analysis of the first statement revealed no statistically significant differences in responses with regard to political orientation. All participants, independent of political orientation, showed unfavorable responses to this statement (mean = 10.61), indicating general consensus regarding attitudes towards Spanish. However, when participants were presented with the statement ‘Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands’, progressive participants far-left, left, and center-left) showed a significantly greater agreement with this than those who identified as conservative (center, center-right, and right), as shown in Table 33.

**Table 33.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 97.71 | 12.93 | 7.559 | 2.80e-11 |
| Left | -27.03 | 13.84 | -1.953 | 0.053815 |
| Center-Left | -25.164 | 15.020 | -1.675 | 0.09722 |
| Center | -84.51 | 20.03 | -4.220 | 5.68e-05 |
| Center-Right | -65.46 | 16.27 | -4.024 | 0.000116 |
| Right | -43.14 | 18.28 | -2.360 | 0.020373 |

As was the case with previous statements, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. These results support the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. Additionally, the analysis revealed a strong consensus among those who self-identified ideologically as far-left, as shown in Figure 29.

**Figure 29.** Participant responses to the statement ‘Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Participant responses to the statements ‘People should put more effort into using Catalan’ and ‘People should put more effort into using Spanish’ also revealed interesting differences. When people were presented with the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Catalan’, progressive participants showed a greater level of agreement with it than conservative participants, who showed a much lower level of agreement, as presented in Table 34.

Table 34. Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Catalan’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 98.29 | 12.55 | 7.829 | 7.69e-12 |
| Left | -21.37 | 13.44 | -1.590 | 0.11518 |
| Center-Left | -23.786 | 14.586 | -1.631 | 0.1063 |
| Center | -62.09 | 19.45 | -3.192 | 0.00193 |
| Center-Right | -52.54 | 15.80 | -3.326 | 0.00126 |
| Right | -51.43 | 17.75 | -2.897 | 0.00470 |

Similar to what has been observed with other statements, people who identified themselves ideologically as centrist were the ones who showed the greatest degree of disagreement with the statement, even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. These results support the trend observed with previous statements by which participants who identified as centrists, in reality, are closer to more conservative and right-wing positions is seen again with this statement. Additionally, the analysis revealed a strong consensus among those who self-identified ideologically as far-left, as shown in Figure 30.

**Figure 30.** Participant responses to the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Catalan’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Conversely, when participants were presented with the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Spanish’, progressive participants showed a much lower level of agreement with it than conservative participants, as presented in Table 35.

**Table 35.** Best fit linear regression model output for the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Spanish’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimate | Std. Error | t-Value | Pr(>|t|) |
| *Intercept* | 21.000 | 12.542 | 1.674 | 0.0974 |
| Left | 3.563 | 13.426 | 0.265 | 0.7913 |
| Center-Left | 2.200 | 14.573 | 0.151 | 0.88033 |
| Center | 16.800 | 19.430 | 0.865 | 0.3895 |
| Center-Right | 33.833 | 15.782 | 2.144 | 0.0347 |
| Right | 32.000 | 17.737 | 1.804 | 0.0745 |

It is worth noting that, despite agreeing more with this statement, the mean score of the responses from conservative participants barely exceeds 50 points out of 100. The highest mean corresponds to those who self- identified as center-right (mean = 54.83). This indicates a generalized consensus around the idea that Spanish is significantly present in the Balearic Islands and, therefore, the need for people to use is lower than the need to use more Catalan. Additionally, the analysis revealed a greater level of consensus among participants in both extremes, far-left and right, as shown by the much wider range of responses in Figure 31.

**Figure 31.** Participant responses to the statement ‘People should put more effort into using Spanish’.

A graph of different colored squares

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Discussion**

The current study was designed to ascertain whether political orientation is a significant predictor of the language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma de Mallorca (RQ1) and, if so, to explore what the relationship is between different political orientations and language attitudes toward both languages (RQ2). With respect to RQ1, results revealed a significant association between political orientation and the language attitudes of the population of Palma de Mallorca toward Catalan and Spanish. These results are in line with previous studies (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Castell et al., 2023; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014) and help us understand (1) why previous and current local governments have implemented certain language policies and (2) the reactions of the Balearic population to the implementation of these policies.

With respect to RQ2, results reveal several interesting findings regarding the association between political orientation and language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma de Mallorca. First, there seems to be a clear division between progressive and conservative people in terms of language attitudes (Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014). People who self-identify as progressive exhibit positive language attitudes toward both Catalan and Spanish, with a stronger preference for Catalan, whereas people who self-identify as conservative exhibit very positive attitudes toward Spanish and not so positive attitudes toward Catalan. These findings seem to reflect the current political debate in the Balearic Islands regarding the status and the presence that each language should have both at a societal and political level. Those initiatives and language policies aimed at promoting the normalization of Catalan and its presence in the Balearic society tend to be supported by progressive governments, progressive political parties, and the progressive sector of the society (Amorós, 2017; Colmenero, 2018; Colom, 2023; Galvín, 2017). On the other hand, those initiatives and language policies aimed at expanding the presence of Spanish tend to be supported by conservative governments, conservative parties, and the conservative sector of the society (Gentili, 2013; Manresa, 2015; Olaizola, 2013). For instance, the current conservative government of the Balearic Islands, Popular Party (PP), supported by the far-right political party Vox, is working to implement free choice of language in the schools of the Balearic Islands (Bohórquez, 2023; Calleja, 2023; Ribas, 2023). This new language policy would give parents the possibility to choose the language in which they would like their children to study, which would imply a segregation of students based to the language choice. Both the PP and Vox, as well as the more conservative sectors of the society, see in this measure an opportunity to put an end to the imposition of Catalan and to be free to choose the language of instruction. Contrary, the progressive political parties of the Balearic Islands, as well as the progressive sector of the society, however, argue that this measure will only lead to situations of linguistic discrimination and inequality of opportunities. Furthermore, they consider it an attack on the linguistic legal framework established in the Balearic Islands more than forty years ago. This situation serves as an example of how language policy and language attitudes mutually influence each other.

This dynamic was also found in each of the six categories in which the statements on language attitudes were organized. In terms of language preference, progressive people like to listen to and use both Catalan and Spanish and enjoy it when others use either language as well. They also believe that there is nothing wrong with passive bilingualism and are happy with the idea of their children speaking both languages. Interestingly, however, they report feeling compelled to use Spanish in certain situations, but not Catalan. Conversely, conservative people exhibit a preference for listening to and using Spanish over Catalan and seem to enjoy it more when others use Spanish and not Catalan. They also believe that passive bilingualism is not appropriate if someone starts a conversation in Spanish and the other person responds in Catalan, but they believe that it is appropriate when someone starts a conversation in Catalan and the other person responds in Spanish. They also seem to express a preference for their children speaking Spanish over Catalan. Interestingly, conservative people do not seem compelled to use either Catalan or Spanish. In terms of language difficulty and enjoyment, people who self-identify as progressive consider that it is not unpleasant or boring to learn Catalan and Spanish and agree with the idea that both languages are beautiful. They also disagree with the idea that an outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan. Contrary, people who self-identify as conservative agree more with the idea that it is unpleasant and boring to learn Catalan, but not Spanish. They also do not really consider the latter a beautiful language, but they do with respect to Spanish. Likewise, they also tend to believe that that an outsider will find it less difficult to learn Spanish than Catalan. In terms of language importance and usefulness, people who self-identify as progressive believe that both Catalan and Spanish can become important language in the European context. They also believe that both languages are as important as English and that it is worth learning both of them. Conversely, people who self-identify as conservative believe that only Spanish can become an important language in the European context. Likewise, they also believe that only Spanish is as important as English, and they value learning it over Catalan.

In terms of language policy and integration, people who self-identify as progressive believe that at least 50% of the subjects taught in school should be in Catalan, but not in Spanish. They also agree with the idea that Catalan must be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration, especially in the healthcare field. Moreover, they believe that it is necessary for people coming from Spanish-speaking areas to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands. Contrary, people who self-identify as conservative believe that at least 50% of the subjects taught in school should be in Spanish. They also disagree with the idea that Catalan should be a requirement to hold a job in the public administration, especially in the healthcare field. Likewise, they believe that it is not necessary for people coming from Spanish-speaking areas to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic Islands. In terms of cultural and identity aspects, people who self-identify as progressive strongly believe that Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands and that, therefore, it is the language that should predominate in the archipelago. They also believe that it is necessary to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic society and that all residents need to know, use, and study both languages. Contrary, people who self-identify as conservative express a much lower agreement with the idea that Catalan is an identity element of the Balearic Islands, and they do not consider that it is the language that should predominate in the archipelago. They also believe that it is not that necessary to learn Catalan to fully integrate in the Balearic society and that all resident need to know, use, and study Catalan. Finally, in terms of population trends, people who self-identify as progressive strongly believe that fewer and fewer people know Catalan, but not Spanish, and that, therefore, Catalan is in danger of disappearing in the archipelago. Likewise, they consider that people should put more effort into using Catalan and not Spanish. Conversely, people who self-identify as conservative do not really believe that fewer and fewer people are using Catalan, and that this language is in danger of disappearing in the Balearic Islands. Additionally, they do not believe that people should put more effort into using Catalan, but they overall think that people should put more effort into using Spanish.

Altogether, it could be argued that people who self-identify as progressive exhibit more positive attitudes toward bilingualism in the Balearic Islands, whereas people who self-identify as conservative do not. The analysis of the different statements in each category shows that even though progressive people have a preference for Catalan, in reality, they have positive attitudes towards both languages. Their preference for Catalan could be due to many reasons. For instance, the majority of people who identified as progressive had Catalan as their mother tongue, and previous studies have found that mother tongue is a factor related to the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands. Accordingly, those who have Catalan as their first language (L1) show more positive attitudes toward this language, whereas those who have Spanish as their L1 show more positive attitudes toward this other language (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). Another reason why progressive people exhibit a preference for Catalan could be related to identity. While the present study did not explored how identity is associated with the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands, previous studies have found that identity can be a significant predictor. Ibáñez Ferreté (2014), for instance, reported the existence of two identity groups in Mallorca, the “Mallorcans” and the “non-Mallorcans”. The former include people born in Mallorca to Mallorcan parents, who speak Catalan, and identify with the island’s culture. The latter, on the other hand, are people from or born to people from mainland Spain, who speak Spanish, and whose culture has been imported from outside of the island. These two groups exhibited different language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish, the former exhibiting mainly positive attitudes toward Catalan, and the latter toward Spanish. The analysis of the different statements, on the other hand, revealed that conservative people tend to clearly exhibit positive attitudes toward Spanish and not toward Catalan, which could imply a desire to move towards a monolingual society with Spanish as the only official language.

Second, and in relation to these findings, the association between political orientation and language attitudes in Palma seems to be especially true toward Catalan and not so much toward Spanish, which seems to be more neutral. These findings are in line with previous studies that have found a general consensus around the idea that Catalan is the authentic language of the Balearic Islands and an essential component of its identity, whereas Spanish tends to be perceived as a mere language of communication, with no specific value attached to it (Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). This situation reflects Woolard’s (2007) concepts of authentic language and anonymous language. Essentially, an authentic language or linguistic variety is defined as one that is related to an identity and sentimental aspect. Authenticity, then, is understood as a value attached to a language or variety in its association with a particular community and as an expression of its spirit. In the specific case of the Balearic Islands, and based on current and previous findings, Catalan would be considered the authentic language. An anonymous language or variety, on the other hand, is one that is not related to a specific identity aspect and has based its legitimacy or linguistic authority on the ideological construct of anonymity. Anonymous languages or varieties are usually the hegemonic ones in the public sphere and, therefore, become a common language, a language of nowhere, universal and non-ethnic, a neutral language. In the specific case of the Balearic Islands, and based on current and previous findings, Spanish would be considered an anonymous language.

Third, results also revealed two trends related to political orientation that have not been identified by prior studies on language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in the Balearic Islands. The first one has to do with the people who self-identified as centrists. The analysis of the responses to the different statements showed how the responses of this particular group aligned with different political orientation depending on the nature of the statement. Consequently, when the statement was more related to language attitudes, such as ‘It is boring to learn Catalan’, the responses of people who self-identified as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as more conservative (center-right and right). In fact, their level of agreement or disagreement with certain statements was even greater than that indicated by those who identified themselves ideologically as center-right and right-wing. Conversely, when the statement was more related to language use, such as ‘I try to use Spanish whenever I can’, the responses of people who self-identified as centrist closely resembled the responses of those who identified themselves as more progressive (far-left, left, and center-left). This pattern exhibited by centrists could be due to the fact that the majority of those who self-identified as centrists have Catalan as their L1 and, as previously mentioned, those who have Catalan as their first language (L1) show more positive attitudes toward this language (Aguiló-Mora & Lynch, 2017; Calafat Vila & Calero-Pons, 2019; Ibáñez Ferreté, 2014; Tudela Isanta, 2021). These results, therefore, could be indicating a need to distinguish more clearly between language attitudes and languages uses. Perhaps these two concepts are not as closely related as one might think, at least in cases where people’s political orientation is not as sided.

The second trend observed has to do with people who identified themselves ideologically as center-left. The analysis of the different statements revealed how, on many occasions, the responses of those who self-identified ideologically as center-left closely resembled the responses of those who self-identified ideologically as centrist or more conservative (center-right and right-wing). One possible explanation for this pattern may have to do with neutrality, that is, as political orientation moves toward the center, language attitudes become more neutral and less sided. Essentially, they become less influenced by political orientation. Contrary, as political orientation becomes more extreme, either to the left or to the right, attitudes toward one’s own languages become more acute and no longer neutral. That is, the more left-wing or right-wing one’s political orientation is, the less neutral one’s linguistic attitudes are, always in favor of the language of preference. This would explain why people who self-identified ideologically as center-left showed a much lower level of agree with statements such as ‘Spanish is more important than English’ or ‘It is worth learning Catalan’, compared to people who identified themselves ideologically as center-left or far-left. With respect to the first one, it is possible that people who self-identified as center-left consider the role of English as an international language and its importance around the world from a more neutral stand-point, without letting their political orientation bias their attitudes. That is why they do not consider that Spanish is more important than English, contrary to what those who self-identified as more conservative for this study indicated. With respect to the second statement, it is possible that people who self-identify as center-left are comparing the potential benefits of learning Catalan for the future (economically, professionally, etc.) to the potential benefits or learning Spanish, or even English, from a more neutral perspective. And that could explain why their level of agreement with this statement is much lower compared to that indicated by those who self-identified ideologically as left and far-left. It is worth noting that this increment of neutrality in the language attitudes of those who self-identify ideologically as center-left goes in both directions, that is, it affects both Catalan and Spanish.

**Conclusions**

The present study has sought to examine whether political orientation is a significant predictor of the language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma de Mallorca and, if so, to explore what the relationship is between different political orientations and language attitudes toward both languages. An important contribution of this analysis is that political orientation has been found to be inextricably linked to the language attitudes of the population of Palma de Mallorca toward the two co-official languages of the Balearic Islands: Catalan and Spanish. This finding can help us understand why previous and current local governments, both progressive and conservative, have implemented certain language policies over the past decades, as well as the reaction of the Balearic society to the implementation of these policies. Consequently, this study contributes to previous literature examining the relationship between language policy and language attitudes and supports the idea that they mutually influence each other.

Additionally, the present study expands on the previous knowledge on the dynamic of the relationship between political orientation and language attitudes in the Balearic context in general, and in the city of Palma in particular. First, a clear division has been found between progressive and conservative people in terms of language attitudes. That is, people who self-identify as progressive exhibit positive language attitudes toward both Catalan and Spanish, with a stronger preference for Catalan, whereas people who self-identify as conservative exhibit very positive attitudes toward Spanish and not so positive attitudes toward Catalan. Second, it was also found that people who self-identify as progressive exhibit more positive attitudes toward bilingualism in the Balearic Islands than people who self-identify as conservative. Third, results also revealed two trends related to political orientation that have not been identified by prior studies. The first one has to do with the people who self-identified as centrists. It was found that the responses of this particular group aligned with different political orientation, more progressive or more conservative, depending on the nature of the statement: language attitudes or language use. The second one has to do with people who identified themselves ideologically as center-left. It was found that as political orientation moves toward the center, language attitudes become more neutral and less sided, that is, they become less influenced by political orientation. Contrary, as political orientation becomes more extreme, either to the left or to the right, attitudes toward one’s own languages become more acute and no longer neutral.

While this study provides interesting and relevant findings on the role of political orientation in the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma, more studies are needed in order to explore the role of other factors that previous literature has identified as significant predictors as well. These factors include, but are not limited to, place of residence, mother tongue, age, and identity. Additionally, future studies focused on uncovering new factors related to the formation of language attitudes toward Catalan and Spanish in Palma, such as socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, and language use, are also needed. All in all, it is evident that the linguistic situation in the Balearic Islands in terms of language attitudes is complex, even forty years after the implementation of a legal framework that aimed at regulating the role of Catalan and Spanish in the archipelago.

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1. Despite the importance of these articles, it should be noted that the specific names of the co-official languages (Catalan, Basque, and Galician) are not mentioned (Joan i Marí, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)