**Literature review**

The Balearic Islands are an archipelago in the western Mediterranean Sea, situated near the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, consisting of four main islands (Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Formentera) and more than a hundred small islands and islets. The archipelago is constituted as a province and as one of the seventeen Autonomous Communities of Spain, with Palma de Mallorca as its capital and largest city. The Balearic Islands have a population of approximately 1.8 million inhabitants, although 80% of these reside in Mallorca and, more specifically, in the city of Palma, which accounts for almost 50% of the island’s population (IBESTAT, 2023). Likewise, 46% of the population of the archipelago was born abroad, both in other Autonomous Communities and other countries. Of these, 74% reside in Mallorca, half of them in Palma (IBESTAT, 2023).

According to Blas–Arroyo, this situation makes the Balearic Islands “a melting pot of people from different geographic, economic and cultural origins” (2007: 80), which generates an immediate and significant impact on the linguistic situation of the archipelago. This phenomenon is particularly interesting in Palma, where all these linguistic and cultural backgrounds share the space with the two official languages of the Balearic Islands: Catalan and Spanish. Historically, the Balearic Islands have been part of the Catalan linguistic domain along with other territories in the east of the Iberian Peninsula, essentially Catalonia and the Valencian Community. For centuries, Catalan was the main language of communication and the archipelago’s own language, despite the introduction of Spanish later on. During Franco’s dictatorship, there was a strong process of language substitution derived from a situation of diglossia that removed Catalan from the public sphere. The use of the language was forbidden both in the administration and education, and Catalan was relegated to the family and personal domain. On the other hand, Spanish became the language of administration and education as well as the prestigious language used for official communications. However, Catalan continued to be the language used by the majority of the population, which prevented its disappearance. Forty years later, with the restoration of Spanish democracy, a process of linguistic normalization of Catalan began, and it became the official language of the Balearic Islands together with Spanish. Since then, a legal framework has been developed for both languages, although especially focused on Catalan, which has completely changed the linguistic reality of the islands.

**Legal framework**

Since the restoration of Spain’s democracy, the legal framework concerning the two official languages of the Balearic Islands has developed in the form of various laws, decrees, and regulations. Three of them, however, constitute the bedrock of them all: the *Constitución Española* [Spanish Constitution] (1978), the *Estatut d’Autonomia de les Illes Balears* [Statute of Autonomy of the Balearic Islands] (1983), and the *Llei de Normalització Lingüística a les Illes Balears* [Linguistic Normalization of the Balearic Islands Act] (1986).

The Spanish Constitution recognized, for the first time in forty years, not only the existence of languages other than Spanish in Spain, but also their officiality in the territories where they were spoken: “Las demás lenguas españolas serán también oficiales en las respectivas Comunidades Autónomas de acuerdo con sus Estatutos” [*The other Spanish languages will also be official in their respective Autonomous Communities in accordance with their Statutes*]. Likewise, it was declared that these languages constituted a cultural heritage to be respected and protected: “La riqueza de las distintas modalidades lingüísticas de España es un patrimonio cultural que será objeto de especial respeto y protección” [The richness of the different linguistic modalities of Spain is a cultural heritage that will be the object of special respect and protection]. Finally, it was also declared that the Autonomous Communities would assume the competences in the teaching of their co-official language.

The latter was as important a milestone as the recovery of the teaching of Catalan, both in the Balearic Islands and in the other territories where this language is spoken.