

*Dialect contact in a border area: the birth of a new dialect in Puglia*

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The aim of this speech is to sketch a preliminary outline of a recently arisen dialect of the South of Italy. This variety, spoken in a small village called Bax – which has 409 inhabitants – seems to come out of dialect contact. The village was settled at the end of the XVIII century as a result of the migration of incomers from two different towns (Ceglie Messapica and Francavilla Fontana) of the Alto Salento (Italy) – the area where Salento meets Apulia (Rohlf's 1966-1968; Avolio 1995; Sobrero & Tempesta 2002; Loporcaro 2009). On the basis of the *New-Dialect Formation* model (Trudgill 1986, 2004), we intend to investigate whether the koine (Siegel 1985; Regis 2009, 2011) spoken in this New Town is an effective new dialect or not. This framework, indeed, postulates that, when people speaking mutually intelligible dialects occupy a new uninhabited territory (in a so-called *tabula rasa* situation), the emersion of a new variety, come up by linguistic mixing and confluence, is highly presumptive (Kerswill 2002; Kerswill & Trudgill 2005). Our data suggest that the variety currently spoken in Bax, still not focussing, lays upon an intermediate stage of the *New-Dialect Formation* process. We will therefore provide some examples that will show (a) the effects of dialect levelling, (b) the high variability between speakers and (c) the emergence of interdialect forms.

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