

## Dubbing as a tool for the integration of older people and language transmission

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### **Abstract**

This paper addresses the first stage of a three-year project developed in the community of Santo Amaro — Sao Tome and Principe — where many older people are living in circumstances of exclusion or risk of exclusion. Based on an understanding of language as an essential element of culture, dubbing is presented as a playful and attractive initiative for all generations, allowing them to socialise with one another and contribute to the transmission of Forro Creole, and also serving to integrate the older people into the wider community. We started by designing a series of questionnaires to measure participants' attitudes towards the language and its speakers. Secondly, groups of children and older people were organised to dub cartoons into Forro. Finally, the groups of children were surveyed again to learn about how they experienced these activities in terms of language and intergenerational interaction. We found that dubbing enhances socialisation between the participating older people and children, introduces Forro Creole to the youngest generation, and facilitates a change in the perception of Creoles and their speakers — mainly older people. It is also a useful tool for enhancing the well-being and integration of older people within coordinated projects for sustainable development cooperation in the community.

### **Keywords**

Sao Tome and Principe, dubbing, human development, intergenerational project, indigenous languages

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Sao Tome and Principe

Sao Tome and Principe (STP) is a multi-isle nation in central Africa with an approximate surface of 1,001 km<sup>2</sup> and 215,000 inhabitants. One third of the population is living below the poverty line, and more than two thirds are poor (World Bank, 2022).

After centuries of Portuguese colonisation, STP gained independence in 1975, and since then poverty in the country has progressively worsened (Caballero & Metzger, 2007). In terms of human development, STP is ranked 135th out of 189 countries (UNICEF, 2021). Among the many vulnerable groups are older people (Fernandes de Almeida, 2022; Guedes, 2018; PNUD, 2002), who are sometimes abused and marginalised as a consequence of household poverty, and this is exacerbated by intolerance and prejudice (Cooperación Bierzo Sur, 2012-2013). Occultism and sorcery play a major role in STP (Espírito Santo, 2016; Neves, 2009; Valverde, 2000), and many age-related symptoms are identified by some as characteristic of sorcerers, which can lead to the mistreatment of older people.

As for its linguistic reality, apart from Portuguese, four Creoles are spoken. Among these, Forro —also known as Santome or Dialecto— is considered to be the national Creole (Hagemeijer, 2009) and the most extensive (Araujo, 2020; Bouchard, 2022, p. 167). Notwithstanding this status, Forro is an endangered language, only used daily by older people (Mata, 2004; Ribeiro de Souza, 2015). During colonialism, Creole languages were vilified and were rarely used for fear of punishment (Ribeiro de Souza, 2015). After independence, Portuguese remained the only official language (Gonçalves & Hagemeijer, 2015; Ribeiro de Souza, 2015), leaving the Creoles as the languages of poor and illiterate people. Although at present Creoles are only used in the private sphere and do not have any institutional support, it must be acknowledged that in recent years important academic advances have been made (Agostinho & Bandeira, 2017; Araujo & Agostinho, 2010; Araujo & Hagemeijer, 2013; Bouchard, 2020; Hagemeijer *et al.*, 2014). Despite all these efforts, Creoles are still not included at any level of education (Hagemeijer *et al.*, 2018) with the exception of Lung'ie on Principe Island (Agostinho & Araujo, 2021). The media generally broadcast in Portuguese although with some exceptions (Bouchard, 2017; Hagemeijer *et al.*, 2018). Considering the situation of older people and the Creole with which they are connected, the following research question arises: Would it be possible to use dubbing as a tool for the inclusion of older people, to promote their socialisation and to encourage the transmission of their language?

### 1.2. The Intergenerational Project

Since 2015, the NGO Cooperación Bierzo Sur has been developing their Intergenerational Project in the community of Santo Amaro, on the island of Sao Tome. The aim of this project is to stimulate relationships between older people and children around shared activities that promote social bonds and the opportunity to overcome mutual stereotypes with a particular emphasis on cultural continuity. This project is based on Articles 17 and 22 of the African Charter (Carta Africana, 1981), which refers to the rights and freedoms related to the culture of communities, as well as the special protection needed for older people. The African Union Protocol on the Rights of Older People, adopted in 2012, specifies and contextualises these rights according to the African reality, including aspects such as independence, dignity, self-fulfilment, participation, and the elimination of social practices such as accusations of sorcery, which entail the violation of these rights, etc. (Yeung & Yeung, 2014), although STP is so far not among the small group of countries that have decided to sign and ratify it (African Union, 2020).

The project is also influenced by studies of how loneliness affects older people (Iglesias *et al.*, 2001; Rodríguez Carrajo, 2000; Rodríguez Martín, 2009; Rubio, 2011; Rueda, 2018; Yangués *et al.*, 2018), which is indicative of poor family relationships, loss of roles and status, impoverishment of social relationships, lack of enjoyable activities and prejudices as causes, and among the possible strategies and resources to alleviate them, they recommend social participation involving socialisation, communication, or self-fulfilment.

The NGO is now including Forro, with its unquestionable cultural value, in a dubbing workshop to assess its effects on how the youngest in the community perceive the older people and their language. This collaboration is planned to run over a two-year period and has the support of the UNESCO Chair on World Language Heritage. The project was implemented during one month of the school summer holidays. The activities included several cultural workshops, although in this paper we just discuss dubbing.

Each workshop had around 6 to 10 children between six and twelve years old. After they had chosen which workshop they preferred to be in, groups were formed to work in different areas with one volunteer from the community and one or two NGO members as coordinators. Workshops were developed from Monday to Friday for two or three hours in the morning and always included a series of previous and final games to get the children's engagement and make them feel comfortable about participating in the session.

### 1.3. Why dubbing?

Although the results of the previous surveys are not presented until Section 3.1, we would like to briefly preview some of the answers that were decisive for the design of the dubbing workshop. From the first two questions, we learned that the most frequently spoken language by the older people of the community was Forro and that children did not know this language. So it was clear that this would be the working language, especially considering that Forro was one of the children's least preferred languages but the favorite of the older people. Furthermore, from the answers to the third question we learned that the activities they mostly engaged in in Creole languages were listening to music and watching television, so the activities had to have some musical or audio-visual component. At this point, what activities would be carried out that year were decided together with the NGO team and community volunteers. As the local volunteer team wanted to organise a workshop on traditional songs and dances and therefore the musical element would already be present, the researcher and the NGO decided to organise a dubbing workshop so that the audio-visual component would also be present.

Before proceeding, it is necessary to review what we mean by dubbing. According to Chaume (2012, p. 1):

Technically, it consists of replacing the original track of the film's (or any audiovisual text) source language dialogues with another track on which translated dialogues have been recorded in the target language. The remaining tracks are left untouched (the soundtrack –including both music and special effects– and the images).

Now that this concept has been settled and having reviewed the context of the country and the Intergenerational Project as well as the pre-workshop surveys in the previous sections, it is time to clarify what additional reasons we identified to opt for this technique. Firstly, digital and audiovisual material — beyond the conclusions drawn from the previous survey — seemed to be one of the most attractive options for the younger generation, as the activity needed to be interesting enough to convince them to participate, even with older people. Moreover, as Sello (2019) notes:

Throughout the history of humankind, the power of film has been used to achieve certain goals. This might be because film is the most watched media, both on TV at home and in cinemas. Furthermore, film reflects societies and teaches viewers something, thereby creating a meaningful space in their existence. Each viewer identifies easily with one of the characters. Moreover, a well-made film ignites conversation. People debate about films they have just seen, whether in agreement or disagreement with the topic of the films, thereby creating meaningful social connections through a shared experience.

Not only did this socialisation and identification fit in with the NGO project, but different studies of translation and audiovisual translation and its relationship to development, inclusion and well-being (Dore & Vagnoli, 2020; Marais, 2018; Sello, 2019; Todorova & Marais, 2022), as well as to minority languages and language preservation (Belmar, 2017; Monaghan, 2022; de Ridder, 2022; de Ridder & O'Connell, 2018) pointed in this direction, and these are precisely the components of this project's approach: intergenerational transmission of knowledge, which implies learning the older people's language; the well-being, integration and development of older people; and the preservation of their cultural knowledge, in this case, Forro Creole. Since the idea was to enable effective language transmission from older people to children, we also took into account the existing evidence on the benefits of dubbing for language learning (Fernández-Costales, 2021; Ghia & Pavesi, 2016; Soler, 2020). Finally, in Montroy's work (2022) on the possibilities of subtitling as a tool for language revitalisation and the integration of older people in Sao Tome and Principe, dubbing was identified as an activity that was likely to be beneficial for this purpose.

All in all, the Intergenerational Project required an activity that would allow older people and children to socialise, that would somehow place older people in a role of usefulness to the community, and that would maintain the cultural background which is the basis of the project, as well as being sufficiently attractive so that the beneficiaries would want to participate. Under these conditions, dubbing emerges as an activity that aligns with the project and its objectives and which, moreover, fitted into the community according to the results obtained in the pre-workshop surveys and could be carried out while adapting to the material needs of the community, as we can see in Section 2.3.

## **2. Methodology**

We started by designing a series of questionnaires to measure participants' attitudes towards the language and its speakers in order to design the workshops accordingly. Each older person was visited at home and, as most of them could not read or write or had very basic literacy skills, a local volunteer they trusted (such as a neighbour, family friend or because they had cared for or helped them before) was in charge of reading the questionnaire and taking down their responses.

For the children, the school was visited, and the project and the survey were discussed with the headmaster, who agreed to inform teachers and parents and suggested the best dates and times to carry out the surveys. At the agreed time, different classes were visited and, with the collaboration of the teacher, the surveys were explained and each child answered them alone at their desk. If they had any questions, both the teacher and the volunteers present assisted them.

Secondly, the dubbing workshop in Forro was organised as a playful initiative for all generations. Finally, the participating children were surveyed again to learn about their perceptions of these activities in terms of language and intergenerational interaction. In this case, the researcher passed the survey to the children, summoning them one by one and letting them respond freely while their peers were playing in another activity to avoid group conditioning.

## 2.1. Pre-workshop questionnaire

In May 2022, 243 children and teenagers between 9 and 16 years old and 31 older people between 60 and 90 years old were surveyed. The design of this questionnaire was based on Casas Anguita *et al.* (2003a & 2003b) and on the Cluster de Sociolingüística (nd).

The first question asked which language the respondents speak in a number of suggested situations. The questionnaire allowed the selection of multiple responses, as it was taken into account that more than one language may be used in some situations. Secondly, respondents were asked to define the level of proficiency they consider themselves to have in the languages of STP with regard to understanding, speaking, reading and writing. The third question asked in which language they listen to music, watch television, read and use social networks. In this case, the option “none” was included on the assumption that not all respondents did all the suggested activities. The fourth question addressed the issue of attitudes and beliefs among Creole language speakers and presented 13 assumptions to which respondents were asked to answer “yes”, “no” or “I don’t know”. These assumptions were:

1. They are adults over the age of 50
2. They live far from the city
3. They speak Creoles only with their family or friends
4. They relate better to older people than people who only speak Portuguese
5. They know the culture and traditions of the country better
6. They have difficulties communicating with doctors or social services
7. They are better at making jokes
8. They have difficulties in speaking Portuguese correctly
9. They are less educated than people who speak only Portuguese
10. They have the same success rate at school as people who speak only Portuguese
11. They have the same job opportunities as those who speak only Portuguese
12. They would like more people to speak Creoles
13. They have some advantages over people who only speak Portuguese

The fifth question asked which language they like the most, the options being all the languages of STP and “other”. The sixth asked whether respondents would like Creoles to be taught at school, and if so, which one they would like to be taught. Finally, respondents were asked if they think that it is important to read and write Creole languages so that they do not disappear. The response options in this case were: “It is important to read and write Creoles so that they do not disappear,” “Creoles are languages to be spoken, they will not disappear for that reason,” “Creoles will disappear anyway,” and “I do not know”.

## 2.2. Dubbing workshop

An episode of a cartoon series — *Una mà de contes* — from Televisió de Catalunya was used for this workshop<sup>1</sup>. This video was chosen because it did not require lip synchronisation, which facilitated the task. The dubbing workshop involved five Forro-speaking older people in the translation process, two Forro-speaking older people in the dubbing, and six children between 8 and 12 years old, only one of whom could speak Forro. The other five were not able to understand or speak this language. Permission was, of course, obtained from the authors of the original video, the parents of the children, and the older participants.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ccma.cat/tv3/sx3/el-sol-i-la-lluna-21-llengua-forro/video/6179064/>

Regarding the authors of the video, there was a mutual interest in carrying out this project because of the multicultural and multilingual openness of the programme, so they willingly agreed to get the Forro version of the episode on the condition that they would be responsible for adapting the dialogues to the images to ensure that the episode maintained the standards of the programme. The permission of older people was collected orally by the researcher with the presence of a local volunteer and another volunteer from the NGO because older participants were either illiterate or had very low-level literacy skills. For the children's parents, however, since we were dealing with minors, a simple document was drawn up explaining what the activity would consist of and what it was for, and they were asked to read and sign it to give their consent to their child's participation.

After an initial translation of the original script in Catalan into Portuguese conducted by the researcher, five elders were visited by a local volunteer so that they could contribute to the translation into Forro. This phase involved individual visits to the homes of older people with whom we worked only on the script, although they were informed that the story was part of a video that they would be able to watch at the end of the workshop. One or two older people could be visited each morning and were assigned no more than three sentences at most so that they would not get tired. Sometimes they doubted how to translate a word or an expression. In these cases, the volunteer decided to ask at least three older people and to choose the option that the majority advised. Even so, some flexibility was allowed with respect to the original script to facilitate the translation, avoiding very long sentences by shortening them whenever possible and summarising information that was not essential in order to facilitate the dubbing for the children, but above all, for the older people, since they were illiterate and would have to memorise their sentences. This task lasted for two weeks, which was also used to play games with the children to practise voice modulation and acting, and to explore the content of the story and provide a brief introduction to the Forro language, with the support of another local volunteer, following the video and the script as the translation process progressed.

Once we had all the script translated and the children had rehearsed enough so that they understood the story, their interventions and how the dubbing would be done, visits to the local radio station Rádio Lobata were organised to make the recordings in one of their studios. It is worth mentioning the involvement of the employees of this radio station and the facilities they provided so that this activity could be carried out with the highest possible quality. The recording sessions took place over a week with one older person and three of the children in each session. During the previous weeks, the children had been trained through games to try to match their interventions to the images and each one of them had a copy of the script. For the older people, this task was much more complex, so although they had seen the whole video beforehand, they only recorded their interventions independently of the video, as they were not able to read. The rehearsal was much more difficult for them, as they were unable to imagine what it would be like in the recording session, so although some practice had been done with them at home, they had not prepared much for their interventions. We estimated that if this activity were to be repeated in the same community, this practice would make it easier, as the older people would already be familiar with the activity, either by having participated before or by having seen the resulting video, and would know what it was for.

Recordings were conducted one at a time (one recording for each individual sentence) as recording several dialogues at once could have led to more mistakes and repetitions. Also, we wanted to avoid exhausting the children and making the workshop seem burdensome. Afterwards, volunteers from the NGO were in charge of adapting all the interventions to the images, which would be further adapted if needed by the authors of the video as agreed. At this point a difficulty arose with two of the participating children, who refused to share an



activity with an older person. It took a lot of awareness-raising to get one of them to finally agree to “try it out”, assuring them that they could drop out if they did not feel comfortable. The second child decided not to attend the recording session.

During the recording process, the children correctly followed their script, which they had already practised many times, and were able to include, in the presence of the older people, the corrections they made in terms of pronunciation. The older people’s interventions, however, were done in a freer way, as they could not read and found it impossible to follow the script. Thus, the literal sentence that corresponded to them was read aloud and they expressed the sentence as they pleased, while retaining the essential meaning. For example, in one of the interventions of an older person, her character was angry with another character, complained and called him “arrogant”. For older people, this word was awkward, and she was asked to say it the way she would say it herself. The resulting phrase is “I don’t like what you have done”. As for the children’s dubbing, the older people tended to intervene mainly to correct their pronunciation or to encourage them in some cases.

It is important to highlight that the dubbing process was carried out in the least technical and most accessible way possible for the context of the participants. Besides giving some freedom when translating or reading the script verbatim, the recordings were made with a mobile phone with the device’s own basic voice recording app. This project considers that it is essential that the suggested activities can be conducted in STP without external intervention so as not to create dependency. In this way, although the result is not as professional as dubbing for cinema or television, quite a good quality was achieved by means of methods that are within the reach of almost any Santomean.

At the end of the month, once all the recordings had been completed and the video in Forro was ready, the older people were visited at their homes and the participating children were summoned to show them the full episode in Forro. In addition, during the final party that is always held to conclude the Intergenerational Project, and in which a sample from the workshops conducted is exhibited, the video was screened for all the attendees: community older people, participating children, their families, NGO members and community collaborators.

### **2.3. Post-workshop questionnaire**

After the workshop, another survey was conducted with the participating children to assess whether this activity might influence their attitudes and beliefs about Creoles and their speakers (older people), and also to find out their candid opinion about dubbing and their interaction with older people. In this post-workshop questionnaire, in addition to a series of specific questions, all the questions from the first survey that refer to attitudes and beliefs were repeated. It should be noted that the results of the pre-workshop surveys serve as a reference for the general thinking in Santo Amaro. However, this project could not cover the full number of respondents in May for reasons of time, logistics and available human resources, so the questionnaires are not comparable. However, they do provide us with information that can be contrasted with that obtained from the first questionnaire and the perceived attitudes of the children throughout the development of the activities. Having clarified this issue, we now turn to the questions that the children had to answer:

1. Did you enjoy doing activities with the older people?
2. Would you like to do more activities with older people?
3. Have you learnt anything from the older people with whom you have shared activities?
4. Did you enjoy doing activities in Forro?
5. Would you like to do more activities in the STP Creoles?

6. Would you like to repeat the workshops we did this summer next year?
7. Which language do you like the most?
8. Do you think the people who speak STP Creoles... (see Section 2.1).

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Findings from pre-workshops questionnaire

Despite the fact that the questionnaire includes all the STP Creoles, in this article we will only discuss the results related to Forro, as it was the working language chosen on this occasion. Likewise, we will avoid analysing all the percentages obtained and instead we will focus on those that we consider most relevant to the topic under discussion.

Among the elders, the most widely spoken languages are Portuguese and Forro. In the current uses of the languages, the higher the register, the lower the use of Forro, a point on which they coincide with the children's answers. 48.39% of the older people say they can understand Forro "a lot", a very different figure from that given by the children; only 11.52% consider themselves to know Forro "a lot". The majority of respondents enjoy all their leisure activities in Portuguese. However, the activity most frequently practised in Forro, both by older people and children, is listening to music. In terms of attitudes and beliefs, we observed a large number of "I don't know" answers from the older people. Beyond this question, they mostly believe that Creole speakers would like more people to speak Creoles and that they have some advantage over monolingual speakers of Portuguese. As their preferred language, the older people mostly chose Forro. They would like Creoles to be taught at school and, of these, the one they would most like to see included in the curriculum is Forro. They also consider it important to read and write Creoles so that they do not disappear.

As far as the children's use of the language is concerned, we see that the situations in which Forro is used most often are singing, joking and talking to grandparents; while it is used least to talk to the teacher and to the doctor, to go shopping, and to talk to other children. 60.91% of children say they understand little Forro and 25.51% say they do not understand anything. We have already seen that in leisure activities, when they use Forro the most, it is to listen to music and, secondly, to watch television, although we repeat that, even so, the percentages are far from those who practice these activities in Portuguese.

From the children's responses to the questions concerning attitudes and beliefs, we observed a large number of "I don't know" responses and a tendency towards a negative opinion. For them, the preferred language is Portuguese, secondly Cape Verdean, thirdly "other" and fourthly Forro, which is only ahead of Angolar. Most would like to learn Creoles at school and, when asked which of these languages they would like to learn, the preferred language is again Cape Verdean. Children also believe that it is important to read and write STP Creoles.

In short, we can see a clear generational difference both in terms of knowledge of this Creole and in terms of appreciation of the language. Moreover, both the older people and children agree that they use Forro less in situations involving a high register or children. The leisure activities that seem to be most attractive in Forro are related firstly to music and secondly to television. Both age groups think that Creoles should be taught in schools and, although they disagreed on which of them they would prefer to be taught, they agreed on the importance of reading and writing in these languages so that they do not disappear.

#### 3.2. Upsides and downsides of the dubbing workshop

The results of the dubbing workshop, classified into the positive and negative aspects that we have been able to identify, are presented below. Firstly, we review the most positive aspects and, secondly, those points that need to be improved.



Positive aspects include:

- **It is an attractive tool.** The fact that it was a different activity for them, that involved a visit to the radio station, that they would have the chance to see the result of, and show it to their families in the case of the children, and the fact of having an important role in which their knowledge and opinions were valued in the case of the older people, was motivating for them. Besides the post-workshop surveys, we were able to verify this when we presented the different workshops to all the participating children, as they all wanted to take part in the dubbing workshop and, those who ultimately stayed, did not miss a single day and were committed and enthusiastic about the task. In the case of the older people, numerous conversations were held with them throughout the workshop, in which they showed their satisfaction with the activity and emphasised the fact that they “had to help” for it to go well.

- **It stimulates interaction between older people and children or young people.** It was obvious that the support of the older people was needed in order to have the translation in Forro and to make sure that the pronunciation was correct, so the proposal for their involvement was not artificial.

- **It allows the integration of related local stories or games.** Dubbing practice for two or three hours every day would have been exhausting for the participants, so this practice was alternated with games involving some form of acting or voice modulation. In this context it is easy to involve traditional stories that support the theme of some of these activities. On the other hand, the theme of the video chosen for translation and dubbing, a Sioux legend about the sun and the moon, encouraged the transmission of the Saotomenese legend of the sun and the moon by the older people, which was unknown to the children.

- **It involves a friendly introduction to Forro.** Actually, the usefulness of dubbing as a language learning tool has already been addressed in several studies with very positive results as discussed in Section 2.2. In this case, the children did not receive Forro lessons as such, but they needed to understand their interventions, so they saw the direct usefulness of knowing the words, the correspondence of the sentences in Forro with the Portuguese sentences and the support of the video images, becoming familiar with words or expressions that are similar in one language and the other, and understanding in a very basic and intuitive way the grammatical form of this Creole, as well as some very basic pronunciation.

- **It encourages older people to leave their home environments.** This is a stimulating change in their routine as they are aware that their participation is indispensable for the activity and that their presence and criteria are counted on.

- **It makes older people feel valued.** They are conscious of the importance of their role in the activity, and this strengthens their motivation to carry it out and their well-being.

- **Participants can see the result of their contribution,** as it was screened for all the attendants at the final party plus it remains available for them on the Internet (TV3, 2022), which was also a motivation according to their enthusiastic reactions.

- **The simple way in which it has been done makes it possible for them to replicate this activity by themselves.** They already have the necessary tools: a mobile phone and a space in which they are allowed to make the recordings (although a room in the community could be soundproofed in a more rudimentary way to make it even easier). To integrate sound into the video they would require the willingness of some of the community members with a computer to participate and a brief course to learn how to use one of the free apps available.

- **It gives the language a usefulness and prestigious status,** as it is the protagonist of the workshop. In addition, this activity attracted the attention of one of the country’s leading

online newspapers, which dedicated a couple of articles to this Forro dubbing<sup>23</sup>.

We will now review the downsides of the dubbing workshop:

- **The distance between Santo Amaro and the radio**, which makes it necessary to use transport. On this occasion, this was taken care of by the organisation, but it is a complication if we intend this activity to be run by local people independently. Due to the economic situation, it could only be carried out by soundproofing a room in the community and if there was a volunteer among the people who had a computer to integrate the audio into the videos, as we have mentioned above.

- **Dubbing in this context requires much more time commitment**, which is difficult in the case of external volunteers or researchers who usually only have a certain amount of time to stay in STP. Firstly, many older people live in remote or inaccessible areas, which makes daily joint activity impossible, either in their homes or in another common space in the community. Secondly, children need physical activity and to participate in dynamic games even when attending the dubbing workshop, which they might otherwise find to be burdensome. This implies sufficiently solid and flexible preparations that include all these activities and foresee unexpected events, which would inevitably lengthen the dubbing process. Thirdly, older people need more time to do the translations and to get used to the dynamics of the activity. For example, when recording, given that they cannot read or can read very little, they have to do a more improvised dubbing, which requires more practice on their part, because they easily forget what they have to say, stutter, etc. At the same time, the repetition of these recordings in the same session should not be overused so as not to tire them. Ideally, these recording sessions should not exceed one hour.

### 3.3. Findings from the post-workshop questionnaire

As explained previously, this post-workshop survey consisted of a set of questions identical to those in the pre-workshop survey that referred to attitudes and beliefs about Creole languages and their speakers. A new set of questions was added for children to rate the workshops and their experiences of doing activities in Forro and with older people. In this article, however, we just analyse the results of the dubbing workshop. The results indicate that children enjoyed doing this activity with older people (83.33%); they would like to do more activities with elders in the future (83.33%); half of the participant children considered that they had learned something from the older people (50%); they enjoyed doing activities in Forro (83.33%); half of them would like to do more activities in Creole languages (50%); and they would repeat the dubbing workshop in 2023 (66.66%).

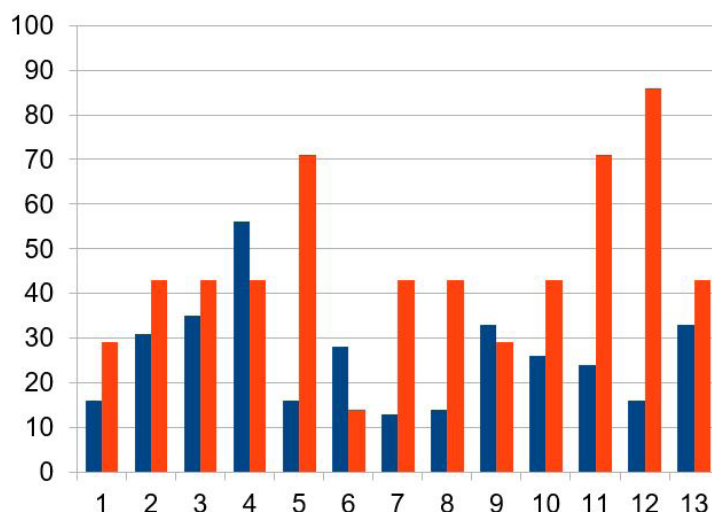
In terms of preferred languages, both for general use and for a hypothetical inclusion in schools, Forro was chosen by a 66.7% of participants. While in the previous survey it was the penultimate language chosen by the majority of children (Section 3.1), in the post-workshop survey it is the second most preferred language after Portuguese and the first among the Creole languages.

If we look at the set of questions which coincided with those on attitudes and beliefs from the first pre-workshop survey, we find that, in general, children have a more positive view of Forro and of speakers of Creole languages than in the pre-workshop survey, as we can graphically see in Figure 1 — the colour blue represents the pre-workshop survey results, the colour orange is for post-workshop results. The issues that stand out most are that they

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.telanon.info/cultura/2023/01/31/39776/o-nosso-crioulo-forro-cruza-a-fronteira-ate-espanha/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.telanon.info/suplemento/opiniao/2023/02/16/39894/o-sol-a-lua-e-o-principezinho-uma-peculiar-promocao-do-crioulo-forro-que-renova-o-debate-sobre-as-linguas-nativas/>

consider that people who speak Creole languages know the country's traditions and culture better, they would like more people to speak Creoles, they are better at making jokes and they have some advantages over people who only speak Portuguese. The Figure shows a range of numbers from 1 to 13, which correspond to the questions asked in both surveys on attitudes and beliefs, the equivalent of which can be found in Section 2.1.



**Figure 1.** Attitudes and beliefs

The two children who were initially reluctant to share activities with older people were very pleased with the activity and with interacting with older people in these subsequent surveys, giving very positive responses regarding this experience and the possibility of doing more recreational activities in Forro, so we hope that the workshop played some part in changing their perceptions of older people and Creole languages.

#### 4. Conclusions

From the surveys prior to the workshops, we observed a large number of “I don’t know” responses from the older people, which led us to think about the possible effects of the devaluation they suffer. Perhaps an approach to older people from the perspective of linguistic biography (Wolf-Farré, 2018), which implies that the interviewee speaks freely about their personal experience, could offer more complete information. Beyond this question, participants mostly believed that people who speak Creoles would like more people to speak them and that they have some advantage over monolingual speakers of Portuguese. From the first of these beliefs, and as it is precisely the older people who represent the majority of Forro speakers, we conclude that activities involving the transmission of Forro would improve their well-being. Coupling this conclusion with the belief that Creole speakers have some advantage, we understood that the greatest benefit for older Creole speakers would be derived from activities that, in addition to transmitting the language, provide an opportunity for them to share their knowledge with the rest of the community, as a way of showing and sharing these “advantages”, as happened in the dubbing workshop. In terms of leisure activities in Forro, the results from both the older people and the children allowed us to position dubbing as a promising possibility that would work in favour of Forro and the integration of older people, because it seems it would be well received as it can be part of a naturally enjoyable leisure activity.

Continuing with the results obtained from the children in the previous survey, we saw that the situations in which Forro is most and least used suggested that the old prejudice that Creole

languages are not to be used in high-register contexts is still prevalent today, and that Forro is clearly related to older people. It is evident that the language is being progressively lost with the new generations, especially if we compare the children's results with those obtained from the older people. And it shows that it is urgent for the relevant actors to take some kinds of measures if their intention is to preserve the linguistic heritage of STP. Furthermore, after the experience of the dubbing workshop in the Intergenerational Project, we consider it appropriate to include Creoles in cultural and sustainable development processes in a cross-cutting manner, due to the connection they have with older people and their undoubted cultural value, which can be extended to various fields such as the one proposed in this pilot project.

From the children's responses to the questions concerning attitudes and beliefs, we concluded that there is a lack of knowledge about Forro speakers, who are perhaps alien to them, given the number of "I don't know" responses we observed and, on the other hand, their view of Creole speakers — mainly older people — tends to be negative, from which we deduce that the old discrediting of these languages is still present today. However, children also think that it is important to read and write in Forro, which is surprising given the low popularity of Forro among young people, and we consider it encouraging in terms of the children's response to a hypothetical approach to Creoles in their reality.

Post-workshop surveys showed that dubbing had a high degree of satisfaction among the participant children and older people, who shared their own testimonies during personal communications. In the dubbing workshop, we can see the recommendations to palliate loneliness in older people applied (see Sections 1.2 and 3.2). Therefore, we reinforce the idea that dubbing deserves to be taken into account in intergenerational sustainable development projects, as it gives older people a higher status position and stimulates their social relationships with the rest of the participants through a fun activity.

However, this activity must be coherently accompanied by other activities that support the objective of integrating older people, as we have to be prepared for challenging attitudes from some participants as in the case of the children who refused to share activities with older people. This requires careful planning of different activities that can be representative for children and that pursue the same goal of raising awareness about ageing and the needs of older people, which implies having enough volunteer staff who are aware of this issue. This need to involve more staff is also justified by the time required for this activity, which is a heavy burden if it is led by an insufficient number of people, and this can weaken the quality of the process and affect the results. On the contrary, if there is a sufficient number of people in charge of the organisation and implementation, it can be carried out without requiring too great a sacrifice for the local volunteers, which increases the chances that the activity will be sustained over time. Another reason why we conclude that it is worth actively involving more volunteers from Santo Amaro to lead the activity is the need to raise awareness among the population about multilingualism and its benefits, the importance of language as part of culture and, of course, about ageing and the rights and needs of older people.

According to the experience of this first phase of the pilot project, the dubbing workshop is a positive way to initiate children into Forro, as it offers them a playful, dynamic way of learning and a very well-adapted goal for what they will need to learn in order to carry out the activity. In some cases, it has also provided an opportunity for the children to spend time with the older people in their family, on whom they relied to prepare their pronunciation in Forro, so that the project has also briefly influenced individual family relationships.

At the beginning of this workshop, almost none of the children wanted to dub in Forro, although they found the activity very attractive. The reasons for their complaints were that they could

not speak nor understand Forro and would not be able to. No rejection was detected beyond the simple fact of lack of knowledge, and they quickly and willingly adapted to the activity. At the same time, we had the case of a single child, usually quite shy and not very participative, who did speak Forro and this activity made them become the protagonist of the activities and a reference for their companions, exhibiting a better relationship with them and a special pleasure in participating in the workshop. This same joy was shared by the older people, who showed a great willingness and enthusiasm for activities to promote Forro. The dubbing workshop, as well as allowing interaction between children and older people, is quite positive for the older ones, since it is not very demanding as long as their interventions are not too long, and they are given a certain margin of freedom in their dubbing.

If we now look at the children's responses in the post-workshop surveys, we conclude that they can enjoy doing activities in Forro and with older people. Although the results are not comparable with those obtained in the pre-workshop survey, there is a contrast in the more positive view of Creoles and Creole speakers after the activities. We find particularly striking the beliefs that Creole speakers know the country's traditions and culture better, that they would like more people to speak Creoles, and that they have some kind of advantage over monolingual speakers of Portuguese. Finally, Forro climbs up the rankings as a preferred language to second place. As these results contrast with those obtained in the previous surveys, we consider that the dubbing workshop could have had some influence on them.

It may thus be concluded that well-designed and properly adapted dubbing workshops can be useful to changing attitudes and beliefs about Creole languages and their speakers. Therefore, dubbing can be regarded as a positive tool for working towards the integration of older people through activities that promote their socialisation and the transmission of their language.

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