

Language didactics meets variation linguistics. Case studies in Italian and English as L2.



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Teaching a foreign language without taking into account its sociolinguistic dimension is a bit like teaching how to swim without stepping into the water. Considering that variation is an essential and physiological aspect of any living language, it should be included in any syllabus aiming at providing learners with the tools to effectively use the language in the real world. Nonetheless it cannot be denied that variation is hard to contain and to master, and even harder to teach. During the talk, which focuses on English and Italian, a model will be illustrated to introduce sociolinguistic variation in the foreign language class.

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Matteo Santipolo (Rovigo, Italy, 1971) is full professor of Educational Linguistics at the Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies at the University of Padua (Italy). He graduated with high distinction in Foreign Languages and Literatures at the Ca' Foscari University in Venice with a sociophonetic dissertation on London's dialect. His main research interests revolve around foreign language education (in particular Italian, English and Spanish as second/foreign languages), the teaching of the sociolinguistic aspects of foreign languages, sociolinguistics and language policies and, recently, the relation between Folk Linguistics and language teaching. In this latter area he is currently coordinating an International research group. He is responsible for the Erasmus Exchange Programme with about twenty Universities. Since 1999 he has been collaborating with the ITALS Laboratory at Ca' Foscari as trainer of teachers of Italian as a foreign language both in Italy and abroad. He is Scientific Director of the journal RILA (Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata). In 2014 he became a member of the Scientific Committee of the "Dante Alighieri" Society in Rome, founded in 1889, which coordinates some 500 schools of Italian for foreigners around the world. Since 2015 he has been a member of the Board of Directors of DILLE (Italian Association of Educational Linguistics and Language Teaching Education) and vice-president since 2018. He is also Secretary-General of FIPLV Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes/International Federation of Language Teacher Associations. He is the author of more than 130 publications (edited volumes, essays, articles and reviews).