



LANGUAGE VARIATION IN THE LINGUISTICS CLASSROOM: IMPROVING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES THROUGH TARGETED INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT. This study explores how explicit instruction on language variation influences university students' language attitudes. Teaching materials addressing language diversity were integrated into English linguistics courses across two degree programs at the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). A pre-post questionnaire design assessed attitudinal changes among students before and after the intervention. Results indicate a general improvement in students' perceptions of language variation following instruction, with positive shifts observed across all participant groups, regardless of their individual characteristics. However, no changes were detected in students' associations with specific languages or varieties, suggesting that the teaching units did not affect this particular dimension of language attitudes. These findings highlight the potential of targeted instruction to foster more inclusive language attitudes while also pointing to the limits of influence in certain sociolinguistic dimensions.

Keywords: language attitudes, language variation, ELT, sociolinguistics, university students, explicit instruction.

VARIACIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA EN EL AULA: FOMENTANDO ACTITUDES POSITIVAS DEL ESTUDIANTADO UNIVERSITARIO MEDIANTE UNA ENSEÑANZA DIRIGIDA

RESUMEN. Este estudio analiza cómo la enseñanza explícita sobre variación lingüística afecta a las actitudes lingüísticas de estudiantes universitarios. Para ello, se incorporaron materiales didácticos sobre diversidad lingüística en asignaturas de lingüística inglesa en dos grados de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM). Mediante cuestionarios aplicados antes y después de la intervención, se evaluaron los cambios en las actitudes del alumnado. Los resultados muestran una mejora general en la percepción sobre la variación lingüística tras la instrucción, con cambios positivos en todos los grupos de participantes, sin importar sus características individuales. No obstante, no se observaron cambios en las asociaciones de los estudiantes hacia lenguas o variedades específicas, lo que indica que las unidades didácticas no afectaron a este aspecto de sus actitudes. Estos hallazgos evidencian el potencial de la enseñanza dirigida para promover actitudes lingüísticas más inclusivas, aunque también señalan ciertas limitaciones en su alcance.

Palabras clave: actitudes lingüísticas, variación lingüística, enseñanza del inglés, sociolingüística, estudiantado universitario, enseñanza explícita.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language attitudes are deeply embedded in our social interactions, often remaining unnoticed unless they become explicit in public discourse, particularly when they are negative (Garrett 1-2). We consciously or unconsciously evaluate others based on their language use, with traits such as accents serving as cues for inferring, sometimes stereotyped, characteristics of other languages and their speakers. Kristiansen argues that these traits are experientially grounded cognitive construals stemming from social categorization and differentiation processes (76), which lead us to establish associations between specific linguistic features and speaker attributes, such as social class or geographical origin, largely through linguistic stereotypes and prejudices (81). These associations, known as language attitudes, may be either positive or negative, with the latter often leading to discrimination or stigmatization of certain groups (see e.g., Sancho-Pascual). They are, therefore, central to understanding how people perceive language variation and the speakers who produce it.

Research on language attitudes has long been central to sociolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, dating back to Labov's seminal study and the influential attitudinal studies of Lambert et al. and Zahn and Hopper. Yet, as Baker argues, language attitudes should not be studied in isolation, but rather in dialogue with social psychology, whose extensive literature on attitude theory offers valuable

insights into the formation and elicitation of language attitudes in real-world settings (8-9), including educational contexts.

Defining attitudes, however, can be complex due to their implicit and latent nature (Garrett et al. 2). Broadly understood, attitudes are learned predispositions to evaluate and respond to objects or phenomena in particular ways, reflecting positive or negative orientations (Allport 6; Ajzen 4; Sarnoff 279). In the linguistic domain, such predispositions translate into the evaluations people hold toward different languages, dialects, accents, and their speakers, ranging from highly favorable to strongly unfavorable, and are often expressed through judgments about correctness, worth, or aesthetic value (Trudgill 73). Within speech communities, these evaluations help explain how linguistic diversity is perceived and valued. In this paper, we adopt an integrative view of attitudes as learned and socially shaped predispositions to evaluate language varieties and their speakers.

Building on this understanding, many scholars conceptualize attitudes as multidimensional constructs comprising three interrelated components: *cognitive*, *affective*, and *behavioral*, corresponding respectively to beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies toward an attitude object (Baker 12-13; Garrett 23; Garrett et al. 3-4). Yet, as Garrett notes, these components may not always align, as their consistency often depends on the methodology used to elicit attitudinal data; evaluating each component independently can therefore yield valuable insights (24-25).

Understanding these components is particularly relevant in sociolinguistic research, where attitudes toward language variation reflect not only what speakers believe about language but also how they feel about and respond to different varieties. Language variation, however, is inherent in all languages (D'Arcy 64), and while linguists agree that all varieties are equally valid, societal perceptions often diverge from this view. In many contexts, standard forms are regarded as more correct or prestigious (Lawton and de Kleine 198; Siegel 157). Such perceptions are rooted in what Lippi-Green terms *the standard language ideology* (qtd. in Craft et al. 390), which, as Craft et al. argue, reinforces socially embedded hierarchies and marginalizes non-standard varieties and their speakers (393). Consequently, these ideologies shape the attitudes people hold toward different ways of speaking and commonly manifest as linguistic prejudice and biases, for instance, toward speakers of regional or minority varieties such as Galician, Basque, or Irish, whose non-standard forms are often stereotypically associated with a lack of education or rurality, leading to language-based discrimination in both social and institutional contexts.

Although such biases might be assumed to be less prevalent in academic settings, our classroom experience suggests that students often exhibit prejudices against non-standard and minority language varieties. Strikingly, students frequently express negative attitudes toward their own regional accents, regardless of their proximity to the standard, which can negatively affect their self-esteem, although in certain linguistic contexts, such as Basque, regional varieties may convey authenticity and

pride (Ciriza; Ortega et al.). Overall, empirical university-based studies confirm the prevalence of such negative attitudes, showing that foreign and non-standard accents are often evaluated less favorably than native or standard ones (see, e.g., Castro; Dalton-Puffer et al.). Moreover, language teaching materials, particularly those used in English language education, tend to prioritize standard varieties and marginalize variation, implicitly framing non-standard forms as erroneous or “ungrammatical” (Wolfram 36). This limited exposure to linguistic diversity reinforces negative attitudes toward non-standard varieties.

These patterns reflect a broader issue within institutional settings, where language is frequently overlooked in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Wolfram 37). Despite extensive research on language attitudes, their implications for higher education, particularly concerning non-standard and minority varieties, remain underexplored (but see, e.g., Bier and Lasagabaster; Jeoffrion et al.; Fischer and Lahmann; Lybaert et al.; Moriarty). This gap underscores the urgent need for targeted efforts to raise awareness and develop inclusive pedagogical curricula that actively promote linguistic diversity in university settings. Such efforts are critical, as language attitudes, though socially constructed, play a crucial role in shaping language behavior, identity, and even linguistic change (Trudgill 73).

Framed within a teaching innovation project conducted at the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), this study seeks to address this gap by examining the extent to which explicit instruction on language variation can positively shift university students’ language attitudes. Accordingly, teaching materials were designed and integrated into four English Linguistics courses within two degree programs: the Bachelor’s Degree in English Studies and the Bachelor’s Degree in Modern Languages and Literatures. The intervention involved pre- and post-questionnaires measuring students’ attitudes before and after exposure to the materials and included items on other languages and varieties, enabling the examination of both interlinguistic and intralinguistic attitudes and reflecting students’ multilingual repertoires. Although many of the issues discussed in this paper are relevant across languages and address linguistic diversity more broadly, English remained central to the present study, serving both as the object of instruction and as the medium for exploring linguistic diversity, given the language’s global reach, the coexistence of multiple native and non-native forms, the persistence of standard language ideology within English Language Teaching (ELT), as well as the fact that the participating degrees are English-taught and English-based.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the theoretical framework on which this study is anchored, focusing on linguistic diversity in education and, especially, ELT, along with details on the project and its teaching units. Section 3 describes the data and the methodological approach. Section 4 puts forward the results obtained and discusses their implications. Finally, Section 5 offers some concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current global status of English is the result of historical processes of expansion of the language, first through British colonialism and imperialism and later on through the political and economic dominance of the USA (Hickey 25-27; Schneider). This widespread diffusion has led to a high degree of language variation, with English now being spoken in diverse contexts by speakers from a multitude of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Hence, its global reach has significantly reshaped both who uses English and how it is used (Crystal, "Still one Language?" 36). Despite this diversity, standard varieties, typically modeled on British or American norms, continue to be privileged in domains such as education and the media where they are considered more proper and prestigious. Contrariwise, non-standard forms are often marginalized, reinforcing perceptions of linguistic hierarchy (Holliday).

2.1. Language diversity and language teaching: The case of English

Throughout its history, English has gone from being the state language of a few countries to becoming a global lingua franca. In recent decades, this shift has become even more pronounced, as non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers (Crystal, *Global Language* 130-131; Galloway and Rose x). In the late twentieth century it was already estimated that approximately 80% of interactions in English occurred between speakers of either Outer or Expanding Circle varieties (Prodromou),¹ which implies that English is increasingly shaped by individuals from a wide range of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Baratta 14). This demographic shift raises important questions about traditional models of ELT which often prioritize native-speaker norms. Despite efforts to incorporate a broader range of English varieties in the classroom, these native-speaker models remain dominant, at least in practice (Baratta 10), with most textbooks and teachers rarely focusing on Englishes other than standard forms of (commonly) American or British varieties or other Inner Circle varieties (cf. Syrbe and Rose; Kortmann 207 for examples of lack of diversity in English teaching material in Germany). However, many of these varieties are no longer representative of English; for instance, Received Pronunciation is still the standard variety in English teaching in most European countries even though only 3-6% of the population in the UK uses it (Syrbe and Rose 160).

Given the ongoing changes of English and the distribution of its speakers, it is unsurprising that research in the field has recently emphasized the need for more inclusive, pluralistic approaches to ELT (e.g., Baratta; Callies and Hehner), highlighting the importance of both teachers' and learners' understanding of the

¹ Kachru classifies English varieties into three concentric circles: (i) the Inner Circle, comprising norm-providing varieties in native-English countries (e.g., Australia); (ii) the Outer Circle, where English holds official functions in former colonies (e.g., Singapore); and (iii) the Expanding Circle, where English lacks historical roots but is widely taught and used for international communication (e.g., Japan).

inherent variation in English usage, rather than adhering to fixed, idealized norms. This movement is further supported by the fact that language learners of English today are increasingly likely to encounter multiple varieties of the language outside the classroom (Callies and Hehner; Syrbe and Rose), varieties which are either underrepresented or absent from traditional curricula. The gap between the English taught in the classroom and the English used in real-world interactions may also influence learners' attitudes toward unfamiliar varieties, potentially leading to issues of intelligibility, legitimacy, and bias (cf. Baratta 7; Friedrich 444). As Matsuda (438) succinctly states:

[A]n incomplete presentation of the English language may [...] lead to confusion or resistance when students are confronted with different types of English [...]. Students may be shocked by varieties of English that deviate from Inner Circle English, view them as deficient, [...] or grow disrespectful toward such varieties and users.

Consequently, there is a pressing need to reconceptualize ELT in ways that acknowledge the existing linguistic diversity of English and the complex, multilingual realities of its users at different components of language (e.g., vocabulary, spelling, grammar) while fostering awareness and acceptance of this linguistic pluralism (Hutz 25). This need is already evident in some of the emerging frameworks within language teaching, which are becoming increasingly popular in both Bachelor's and Master's degrees of language teaching (Schlüter 167). One case in point is Global Englishes Language Teaching (cf. for instance, Galloway and Rose 16), whose main concern is to develop teaching materials which serve to prepare learners to use English in global contexts, thus reflecting the "sociolinguistic reality of the 21st century" (Hutz 31).

Although these frameworks have already made important contributions to the changing landscape of ELT, several barriers still exist when it comes to implementing them in practice. A case in point is the *complexity issue* mentioned by Hutz (33). He points out that while including a wide range of regional varieties reflects the sociolinguistic reality of English, it can also create challenges in the classroom. Young learners in particular may find it difficult to process divergent pronunciation models or grammatical features simultaneously, and comprehension might be negatively affected when listening activities feature unfamiliar accents (Hutz 34). Another concern involves which Englishes to include since not all existing varieties can be represented, especially when it is not always clear which varieties specific learners will encounter in the future. Moreover, the aforementioned lack of materials adequately reflecting the existing pluricentricity of English, especially ELT textbooks, poses another challenge (Hutz 35-36), even more so in situations where concrete textbooks are imposed upon teachers by the educational authorities. Some difficulties are easier to overcome; for instance, other materials than textbooks, including authentic videos or corpus data (e.g., Schlüter), might expose students to lesser-known English varieties. Additionally, students can access such materials

outside the classroom, a circumstance that provides an excellent opportunity for them to introduce new language features for discussion in class.

Despite these difficulties, perhaps the most crucial step toward achieving more inclusivity in the classroom is to first make students conscious about the existing pluricentricity of English (Hutz 34). This is particularly important because, even though both the diversity of pluricentric languages and the equal worth of all varieties are already inherent to linguistics, these values are not yet as ingrained in ELT (Callies and Hehner 1). In fact, several studies demonstrate that a considerable number of learners of English cannot specify many English varieties beyond Inner Circle ones, particularly British and American English, let alone mention their specific characteristics (Friedrich; Matsuda; Almegren). In a comparative analysis of approximately 300 Argentinian and Brazilian adult learners of English, Friedrich found that, despite all participants agreeing on English being an international language, they only mentioned Inner Circle varieties when explicitly asked to name English dialects, thus showing a clear lack of awareness of the existing diversity of the language they were learning. Moreover, the subjects in her study believed that the desired outcome of their learning process was to speak English as a native speaker since their goal was to "travel, live or work in the United States or Britain" (442). Similarly, Matsuda, who examined Japanese secondary school English students' attitudes toward World Englishes, concluded that, although participants acknowledged being informed about the existence of different varieties, they knew little or nothing about their features and were not keen on acquiring Outer Circle varieties such as Singapore or Indian English (437). These findings, among others, demonstrate that learners of English from different countries and age groups tend to either lack knowledge about the pluricentricity of English or have rather negative perceptions about Outer Circle varieties, at least if compared to those deemed standard in ELT.

Interestingly, a few recent studies have provided evidence of the fact that including sociolinguistic topics in English-related subjects could help improve students' attitudes toward lesser-known varieties (Patria; Saito). By means of a questionnaire, Patria analyzed the attitudes toward World Englishes held by non-native English speakers studying various degrees at the University of Melbourne. The sample of the study consisted of two groups of students: (i) a group that had taken a sociolinguistics-related subject and (ii) a group that had no prior instruction in matters related to sociolinguistics. Results showed that, even though both groups still tended to favor Inner Circle varieties in ELT, the students who had taken a subject focusing on sociolinguistic issues displayed considerably more positive attitudes toward lesser-known varieties than those who had not. Such findings suggest that explicit instruction in World Englishes might help improve students' language attitudes. Nevertheless, research along these lines is still scarce and more studies are needed to reach a solid conclusion in this respect, especially to gain insights into how such sociolinguistics-related subjects should be structured. In particular, pre-/post-course comparisons could allow researchers to better comprehend how students' attitudes develop over time (Patria 302). In light of these

gaps, both empirical and pedagogical, our study aims to contribute to this emerging body of work by providing concrete evidence on how exposure to sociolinguistic diversity through explicit teaching can shape learner attitudes, thereby informing future curricular design.

This paper focuses on one of the objectives of a teaching innovation project conducted at the UCM during the 2024-2025 academic year. It examines the impact of the implementation of targeted instructional interventions within the university context. As previously noted, standard language varieties still dominate teaching materials, often marginalizing non-standard and minority forms. This project, described in Section 2.2., addresses the growing need for a more inclusive, less prescriptive approach to language variation in language education.

2.2. The Teaching Innovation Project

As mentioned in Section 1, although students in linguistics and philology programs might be expected to hold more inclusive views toward non-standard language varieties, such as regional dialects, sociolects, and non-native accents, our classroom experience and prior research suggest otherwise. For instance, Martín Tévar found that Spanish-accented English was rated poorly by Spanish participants, ranking just above Nigerian English. Similarly, Dalton-Puffer et al. reported consistently lower evaluations for non-native English accents among Austrian university students. These patterns largely stem from the pervasive, socially-embedded nature of language attitudes, shaped through socialization and lived experience (Kircher and Zipp 3). Furthermore, as noted earlier, university language teaching materials often neglect language variation, focusing almost exclusively on standard varieties (Wolfram 36). This fosters students' limited awareness of non-standard and less commonly taught varieties, thereby reinforcing existing prejudices.

The teaching innovation project carried out at the UCM thus aimed to raise awareness of language variation within the university community in order to combat negative attitudes toward non-standard varieties, particularly of Spanish and English, and, by extension, to help prevent the social discrimination frequently experienced by speakers of these varieties. While the project addressed linguistic diversity in general terms, its implementation within the English Linguistics courses relied on materials centered on the role of English. The aim was not to confine students' reflection to English varieties, but to use it as a pedagogical lens, both as the subject of instruction and as the language of classroom interaction, to explore broader issues of linguistic diversity and to foster positive attitudes toward variation across languages. Within this overarching aim, the project pursued several specific objectives, the following being of relevance for the purposes of this study:

- (i) to support the acquisition of knowledge about language variation and language attitudes through practical, collaborative activities;
- (ii) to promote respect for and tolerance of linguistic diversity;

- (iii) to assess whether the use of teaching materials designed to foster awareness of linguistic diversity and respect for difference contributes to the development of positive attitudes toward non-standard varieties.

The project was structured around two interrelated but independent lines of action. First, project members were organized into teams based on their expertise to develop a set of teaching units (TUs) focused on language variation and language attitudes, with the goal of promoting respect for diversity, tolerance, and the inclusion of speakers of non-standard varieties, primarily of English. Second, the project members worked collectively to organize a series of seminars addressing issues related to language variation, language attitudes, and inclusion.

This article focuses exclusively on the outcomes of the first line of action as implemented in English linguistics courses. In the initial phase, project members developed educational resources for university-level courses on language variation and language attitudes. These materials were structured into TUs, which were integrated into four English Linguistics courses across two degree programs: the Bachelor's Degree in English Studies and the Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages and Literatures. The content was tailored to the specific courses in which the materials were implemented. More specifically, the TUs followed a modular structure comprising interrelated yet relatively independent sections. This format allowed professors some degree of flexibility while maintaining a shared conceptual foundation, centered on key notions (e.g., *language*, *dialect*, and *variety*; *standard* versus *non-standard* varieties; *World Englishes*), ensuring coherence across courses and enabling comparative assessment of student responses.

In the second phase, following internal review, the TUs were implemented in the four undergraduate courses taught by project-affiliated faculty members:

- a) *English Semantics* (English Studies, Year 4, 1 group)
- b) *English Syntax* (Modern Languages and Literatures, Year 4, 1 group)
- c) *English Syntax* (English Studies, Year 2, 1 group)
- d) *Introduction to English Grammar* (English Studies, Year 2, 2 groups)

It is worth noting that these are not instrumental English courses, but courses on specific components of language, namely morphology, lexis/semantics, and syntax. The rationale for selecting these courses draws on prior research highlighting the importance of lexis and grammar in the study of language attitudes. Baratta argues that "a focus on lexis and grammar makes sense as it is precisely these two factors, grammar more so, that lead to the kinds of negativity that can mark attitudes toward World Englishes" (15). He further notes that, while accents may also elicit bias, grammatical and lexical deviations from Inner Circle norms are often more overtly stigmatized and are therefore perceived as more readily addressable (15). In this

context, incorporating a range of English varieties into classroom instruction positions grammar and lexis as critical entry points for addressing language attitudes in university educational settings.

All units followed a consistent underlying structure comprising two core components: a shared theoretical introductory part, and a more practical part tailored to each course, with an emphasis on one particular component of language (e.g., morphology, lexis/semantics, syntax).

The theoretical part introduced students to fundamental concepts of language variation. Specifically, students were introduced to key concepts related to language variation and its various dimensions. This was followed by an overview of World Englishes, addressing the historical spread of English, the resulting emergence of new varieties, and their different classifications. This section concluded with an examination of the components of language at which English varieties may differ, namely pronunciation, lexis, and grammar, thereby establishing a conceptual bridge to the course-specific materials on language variation presented in the second part of the TU.

The practical part began by demonstrating various methods for investigating language variation. Students learned to navigate a range of digital resources and tools for empirical analysis, including corpora and linguistic atlases, such as the *Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English* (eWAVE; Kortmann et al.) and the *Corpus of Global Web-Based English* (GloWbE; Davies). They subsequently applied these tools in collaborative activities to explore lexical and grammatical variation across World Englishes.

As an example, Table 1 presents a detailed account of the TU implemented in *English Semantics*.

To further illustrate the classroom activities and some of the materials used in *English Semantics*, Figure 1 below provides selected slides from the TU implemented in this course. These visuals complement the descriptions in Table 1 by offering concrete examples of the input provided to students and the tasks they were asked to complete.

Table 1. Structure of TU in English Semantics.

Course	Session (2 hours)	Objectives	Activities	Materials / Resources
English Semantics	1st	- Introduce the teaching innovation project - Familiarize students with the concept and dimensions of <i>language variation</i>, the notion of <i>World Englishes</i> (WEs) and the historical spread of English. - Encourage critical reflection on standard language ideology - Promote collaboration through in-class activities and group assignments.	- Lecture and discussion on <i>language, dialect, and variety</i>; analysis of <i>mutual intelligibility</i> and the language–dialect continuum. - Class discussion on WEs, different classifications of English varieties and theoretical models for the classification of WEs (e.g., McArthur's). - Classroom debate on linguistic correctness and prestige ('<i>Is one variant of English better than others?</i>' e.g., <i>British vs. American English</i>). - Presentation of practical tools used to explore variation within English (e.g., corpora, atlases). - Interactive tasks identifying patterns of lexical/semantic variation across English varieties, e.g., British vs. American English (<i>Practical Activity 1</i>). - Reading and inference exercise on selected passages to deduce the meanings and regional origins (varieties) of specific words (<i>Practical Activity 2</i>). - Demonstration of the online <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> (OED) as a key resource for investigating lexical and semantic differences across WEs. - Group project assignment: students were divided into groups, each assigned a specific English variety (e.g., Indian, Nigerian, South African, Jamaican, Philippine, Singapore, Malaysian, Hawaiian, New Zealand, or Manx English). Each group identified 5–10 variety-specific lexical items using the OED to prepare for a presentation in the following session.	- PowerPoint presentation. - YouTube Video used in debate: <i>David Crystal–Which English?</i> - Online tools: - <i>GloWbE Corpus</i>, - <i>eWAVE</i>, - <i>OED Online</i>. - Discussion prompts and activities prepared by instructor. - Presentation guidelines and selected reading excerpts as input materials for project preparation.
	2nd	- Deepen understanding of lexical and semantic differences across WEs (neologism/coinage, semantic shift, extension, transfer, borrowing, archaism). - Promote public speaking through group presentations. - Reinforce awareness of linguistic diversity and its implications for meaning and identity.	- Review of lexical and semantic change processes. - In-class group presentations (5' each) analyzing lexical/semantic features of each variety, providing definitions and contextual examples. - Peer discussion and key takeaways on language variation.	- PowerPoint presentation - Online tools: - <i>OED Online</i>. - Evaluation rubrics provided by instructor. - Students' presentations.

3.1. Participants

A total of 70 students from the four undergraduate courses mentioned in Section 2.2 filled out the questionnaire administered at the beginning of the semester, while 65 responses were obtained in the second round, at the end of the semester. Only 32 of these students indicated a personal code in both rounds (see Section 3.2), so we could only match the students' responses in the first and second rounds in these cases. The participants were distributed as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of participants in the two rounds of questionnaire completion according to the sociodemographic variables.

Variable	Participants		
	1st round	2nd round	Both rounds
Overall	70	65	32
Academic year			
2	35	39	16
> 2	35	26	16
Age			
18-20	30	31	16
21-23	27	21	9
> 23	13	13	7
Course			
Grammar	21	20	12
Semantics	22	16	11
Syntax	27	29	9
Gender			
Female	58	54	28
Male	7	9	4
Non-binary	5	2	0
Languages			
1-2	19	26	6
> 2	51	39	26
Place of origin			
Other	6	4	3
Spain	64	61	29
Political ideology			
Left	20	21	6
Centre-left	19	17	13
Centre	20	20	10
Centre-right	9	4	3
Right	2	3	0

3.2. Data collection instrument

The data for the present study was collected by means of a questionnaire administered to the students enrolled in the four undergraduate courses. The participants filled the questionnaire twice: once at the beginning of the semester and

once toward the end, after the implementation of TUs on language variation and diversity. The questionnaire was administered using Google Forms. Students were reminded that their participation was voluntary and that, if they decided to take part in the study, their participation would be anonymous.

The questionnaire comprised three separate segments (see Tables A1-A3 in the Appendix). First, participants were asked to show their degree of agreement with 22 statements reflecting positive (7) and negative (15) attitudes toward language variation and diversity. The 22 items included in the questionnaire were developed based on a synthesis of existing literature on language attitudes and were tailored to the specific sociolinguistic context under investigation. Reliability analysis demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85$ in both rounds), supporting the appropriateness of the selected items for the present study. The answers to the statements were recorded in a 4-point Likert-scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The decision to exclude a neutral midpoint was based on the need to encourage participants to express a directional attitude, avoiding central tendency bias and indecision. Previous research has shown that some participants use the neutral option to avoid committing to an answer, particularly when the items deal with socially sensitive issues (Kankaraš and Capecci; Kusmaryono et al.), as is the case here.

The second segment consisted in an association test between eight languages or varieties (Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Romanian, American Spanish, and Peninsular Spanish) and 32 adjectives reflecting the affective (22) and cognitive (10) components of language attitudes (cf. Section 1). The selection of the eight languages/varieties was theoretically grounded and aligned with the study's aim of exploring both interlinguistic and intralinguistic attitudes. English, French, and German were included as widely taught and high-prestige languages; Arabic and Romanian were selected for their sociocultural relevance and association with significant immigrant communities in Spain (Garnes-Tarazona; Gherghina; Rodríguez-Reche) and the inclusion of American and Peninsular Spanish allowed for an examination of regional variation within a single language. This design captures a broad spectrum of attitudes, from those shaped by prestige and institutional presence to those influenced by regional identity and sociopolitical factors. Participants were asked to indicate which adjectives they associated with each language/variety; for each language/variety, they could select as many adjectives as they needed.

In the third segment of the questionnaire, participants were presented with a series of questions about their gender, age, place of origin, the languages they spoke,² and their political ideology. In addition, they were asked about the course in which they were enrolled and their academic year.

² To allow for statistical analysis, the responses to the open-ended language question (see Table A3) were quantified into a single numerical variable representing the total number of languages each participant reported using or knowing. Without this transformation, the

Finally, at the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to write a personal code following the format: initial of first name + initial of first surname + month of birth (number) + day of birth (number). Provision of the personal code was optional. This code, however, was necessary for two main reasons: first, to identify a participant in case they decided to withdraw from the study, and second, to be able to match each participant's answers in the two rounds of questionnaire completion. The different segments of the questionnaires provided different types of data and were, therefore, analyzed using a variety of statistical techniques. These are discussed in Section 3.3.

3.3. Data analysis

As mentioned in Section 3.2, the questionnaires comprised three separate segments: Likert-scale items, an association test, and sociodemographic questions. In the first case, the negatively worded statements were first reverse coded so that they followed the same direction as the positively worded ones, and an overall mean was calculated. In addition, means were also computed for the different levels of the sociodemographic variables. The means were interpreted as follows: the higher the value, the more positive the participants' attitudes toward language variation and diversity.

To explore differences in the attitudes of different groups of participants, the means obtained in each round were compared across the levels of the sociodemographic variables using independent *t*-tests and Wilcoxon tests (Levshina 96-110) for binary variables (e.g., academic year) and independent one-way ANOVAs and Kruskal-Wallis tests (Levshina 177-181) for variables with three or more levels (e.g., political ideology). Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality (Levshina 56) were used to find out whether the samples were normally distributed and Fligner-Killeen tests (Levshina 177) were employed to examine whether the variances of the samples were equal (see Table A4 in the Appendix for the results of these diagnostic tests). To compare the means across rounds, we resorted to the reduced sample consisting only of the 32 participants who indicated their personal code (see last column in Table 2). In this case, as this data contains dependent observations, different statistical tests were used, namely, dependent *t*-tests (Levshina 112) to compare the overall means across rounds, given that the differences between paired values were normally distributed ($W = 0.97, p > 0.05$). To compare the means obtained in the first and second rounds across the levels of the sociodemographic variables, we used mixed-effects regression models, as the means were not normally distributed in the second round (first round: $W = 0.96, p > 0.05$; second round: $W = 0.91, p < 0.01$), which prevented us from resorting to repeated measures ANOVAs (Levshina 189-196).

variable could not have been included in the quantitative analysis, as the participants reported knowing/using many different languages, many of them known to/used by just one or two participants.

In the case of the association test, we first classified the adjectives into four categories, depending on the component of language attitudes they reflected and whether they were positive or negative, as displayed in Table 3. The adjectives related to the affective component express qualities linked to friendliness, warmth, politeness, and respect, among others. On the other hand, those representing the cognitive component express qualities connected to status, prestige, correctness, and clarity, among others.

Table 3. Classification of adjectives in the association test.

Affective negative	Affective positive	Cognitive negative	Cognitive positive
Annoying	Endearing	Forced (unnatural)	Clear
Arrogant	Friendly	Incorrect	Correct
Boring	Funny (positive)	Shameful (that causes shame)	Educated
Cold	Good-natured	Strange	Natural
Curt	Happy	Vulgar	Prestigious
Disrespectful	Humble		
Offensive	Kind		
Ridiculous	Pretty		
Rude	Respectful		
Snobbish	Sincere		
Ugly	Warm		

A frequency table was subsequently created for each questionnaire-completion round, showing how often participants associated the adjectives in each category with each language or variety (see Tables A5 and A6 in the Appendix). Finally, the frequency tables constituted the input for correspondence analysis, a dimensionality reduction technique for categorical data that can be used to represent correlations between categorical variables in a two-dimensional plot (Levshina ch. 19).

The analyses carried out provided a fine-grained and detailed picture of the language attitudes of Spanish undergraduate students enrolled in linguistics degrees. In addition, the pre-post test design allowed us to ascertain whether any improvements could be observed in these students' attitudes toward language variation and diversity after receiving explicit instruction on these topics. Section 4 presents and discusses the results of the analyses.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the findings of the study. Section 4.1 focuses on the results of the first segment of the questionnaires, namely, the Likert-scale items, as well as with any effects that the sociodemographic variables have on the participants' responses. Section 4.2, in turn, presents the results of the association tests and the

correspondence analyses. Finally, Section 4.3 discusses the implications of the findings.

4.1. Results: Likert-scale items and sociodemographic variables

Table 4 provides the means, overall and per level of each of the seven sociodemographic variables, obtained in the two questionnaire-completion rounds. The means represent the extent to which participants agreed with the statements reflecting attitudes toward language variation and diversity: the higher the mean, the more positive the attitudes of the participants.

Table 4. Overall means and means across sociodemographic variables in the two rounds of questionnaire completion.

Variable	Mean	
	1st round	2nd round
Overall	2.98	3.08
Academic year		
2	2.97	3.07
> 2	2.99	3.10
Age		
18-20	3.02	3.12
21-23	3.02	3.17
> 23	2.79	2.85
Gender		
Female	2.96	3.07
Male	2.91	3.02
Non-binary	3.30	3.75
Languages		
1-2	3.00	3.06
> 2	2.97	3.10
Course		
Grammar	2.90	3.12
Semantics	3.06	3.09
Syntax	2.97	3.05
Place of origin		
Other	3.07	2.83
Spain	2.97	3.10
Political ideology		
Left	3.27	3.38
Centre-left	3.00	3.09
Centre	2.86	2.95
Centre-right	2.62	2.80
Right	2.55	2.30

As can be seen in the first row, which presents the overall means, the participants' attitudes toward language variation and diversity improved from the first to the second round of questionnaire completion: the overall mean increases in round 2 with respect to round 1. This difference is statistically significant ($t = -2.55$, $df = 31$, $p < 0.05$, Cohen's $d = -0.34$).³

By closely examining the means across the different sociodemographic variables, we can observe the same tendency in almost all groups of participants, with very few exceptions. This means that the improvement of language attitudes is not restricted to certain groups of participants but occurs across the board. This is, in fact, confirmed by the statistical tests since there are no significant differences between the means obtained in the first and second rounds in any of the levels of the sociodemographic variables. Not all groups of participants, however, exhibit this improvement. First, the mean of participants of non-Spanish origin decreases from round 1 to round 2. Along similar lines, participants on the right end of the political spectrum do not display the aforementioned improvement concerning their language attitudes: again the mean decreases from the first to the second round. It is worth noting that in these two cases there was a low number of participants (cf. Table 2 in Section 3.1); therefore, the corresponding means might not be representative.

Despite the fact that almost no differences between participant groups emerged from the analysis regarding changes in their language attitudes from the first to the second round, if the results of each round are examined independently, participants do exhibit different attitudes toward language variation across some of the sociodemographic variables. This, in turn, indicates that some of the factors examined influence the attitudes of Spanish undergraduate students, in particular, age and political ideology. First, in the second round of questionnaire completion participants over 23 years old show more negative attitudes than younger participants ($F = 3.19$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.05$). The effect size, however, is fairly small ($\eta^2 = 0.09$). On the contrary, the effect size of the variable political ideology is strong, which exhibits statistically significant results in both rounds of questionnaires. Starting with the first round, there are differences between 'left' and 'center', 'center right', and 'right', on the one hand, and between 'center-left' and 'right', on the other ($\chi^2 = 22.56$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.27$). Something similar occurs in the second round, with significant differences emerging between 'left' and 'center', 'left' and 'right', 'center-left' and 'right', and 'center-right' and 'right' ($\chi^2 = 26.83$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.38$). Basically, in all the aforementioned cases, the more to the left the participants situate on the political spectrum, the more positive their attitudes toward linguistic diversity are.

³ As mentioned in Section 3.2, since some participants responded to both questionnaires and thus the data constitutes a case of dependent or paired observations, the test conducted to compare the means obtained in the two completion rounds was the dependent *t*-test, applied to the reduced dataset (32 participants, see Table 2 in Section 3.1). Therefore, the means differ slightly from those presented in Table 4 as follows: 1st round = 3.03; 2nd round = 3.16.

In sum, the first segment of the questionnaire indicates that there is an overall improvement in participants' attitudes toward language diversity after receiving explicit instruction in topics concerning language variation. Interestingly, this improvement is not restricted to certain groups of participants but occurs regardless of their specific characteristics. Section 4.2 considers the second segment of the questionnaires, namely, the association tests.

4.2. Results: Association tests

Figure 2 plots the two-dimensional graph resulting from the correspondence analysis of the results of the association test of round 1. The association between components and languages/varieties is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 905.76$, $df = 21$, $p < 0.001$). The first two dimensions of variation, plotted in Figure 2, explain 97.38% of the variance in the data, so they adequately represent the participants' associations (Table 5; see Tables A7 and A8 for the contributions of the components/languages to the first two dimensions): dimension 1 is largely defined by affective attitudes, while dimension 2 reflects cognitive attitudes.

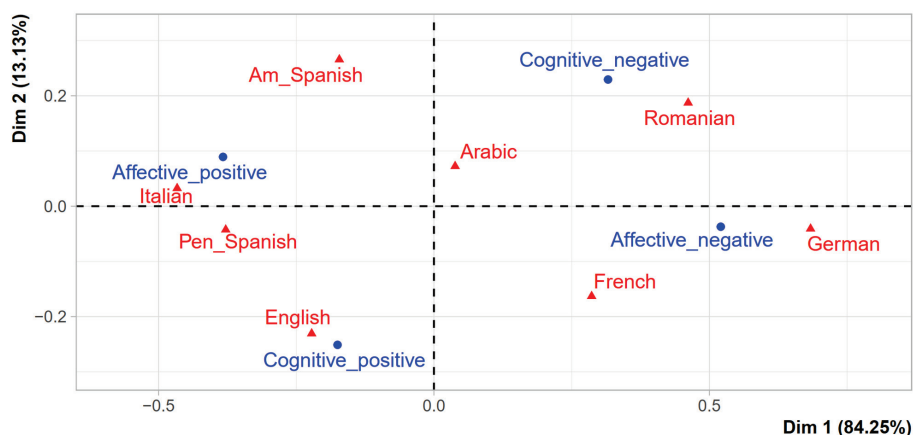


Figure 2. Correspondence biplot (1st questionnaire-completion round).

Table 5. Dimensions of variation and explained variance resulting from correspondence analysis (1st questionnaire-completion round).

Dimension	Explained variance (%)	Cumulative explained variance (%)
Dimension 1	84.25	84.25
Dimension 2	13.13	97.38
Dimension 3	2.62	100.00

Figure 2 can be divided into four quadrants, each containing a component of language attitudes (in blue) and two languages or varieties (in red) that the participants associated with this component. The top left quadrant includes positive adjectives connected to the affective component (Affective_positive; e.g., *sincere*). The two languages associated with this component are Italian and American Spanish, although the latter is also close to the cognitive negative component. In the bottom left quadrant, it can be observed that English is associated with positive adjectives reflecting the cognitive component of language attitudes. Peninsular Spanish is located in the same quadrant, but it is much closer to the affective positive component than to the cognitive positive category. The top right quadrant, in turn, represents the negative side of the cognitive component, and the two languages associated with it are Arabic and Romanian. Finally, the bottom right quadrant contains French and German, which are associated with negative adjectives related to the affective component of language attitudes (e.g., *arrogant*), particularly the latter. French is also close to the cognitive positive end of the vertical axis.

Figure 3 displays the plot resulting from the correspondence analysis of the results of the association test of round 2. Again, the association between categories and languages/varieties is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 777.89$, $df = 21$, $p < 0.001$), and the first two dimensions provide an adequate representation of the participants' associations in the second questionnaire, as they explain 96.70% of the variance in the data (Table 6; see Tables A9 and A10 in the Appendix for the contributions of the categories/languages to the first two dimensions). As in the first round, dimension 1 captures variation primarily among affective attitudes, while dimension 2 reflects cognitive attitudes.

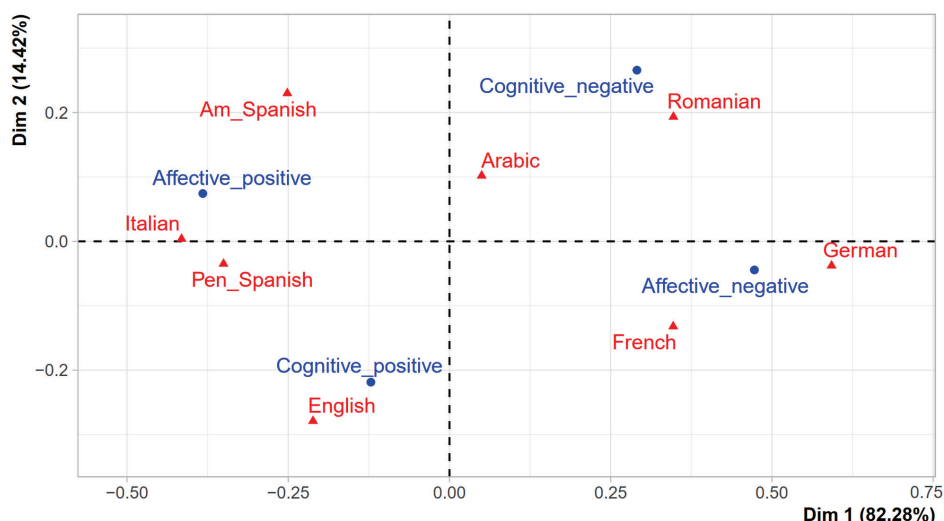


Figure 3. Correspondence biplot (2nd questionnaire-completion round).

Table 6. Dimensions of variation and explained variance resulting from correspondence analysis (2nd questionnaire-completion round).

Dimension	Explained variance (%)	Cumulative explained variance (%)
Dimension 1	82.28	82.28
Dimension 2	14.42	96.70
Dimension 3	3.30	100.00

Figure 3 shows exactly the same associations between languages/varieties and components of language attitudes as those reflected in Figure 2: Italian and American Spanish are associated with the affective positive component, with the latter also strongly connected to the cognitive negative category, English with the cognitive positive component, Peninsular Spanish with the affective and cognitive positive categories, Arabic and Romanian with the cognitive negative component, and French and German with the affective negative component, with the former also being associated in the vertical axis with the cognitive positive category. This distribution of languages/varieties and components, therefore, means that no changes were observed in the participants' associations from round 1 to round 2 and, in turn, that the TUs exerted no influence on this particular aspect of the language attitudes of our sample of Spanish undergraduate students. This and previous findings are discussed in Section 4.3.

4.3. Discussion

Considering the results presented in Section 4.1, the main finding of the present study is that explicit instruction in contents related to language variation and diversity seems to improve the attitudes of Spanish undergraduate students enrolled in linguistics degrees. This is in line with previous studies by researchers such as Fischer and Lahmann, who showed that teaching a course on linguistically responsive teaching, including, among others, contents linked to language variation and diversity, positively influenced pre-service teachers' beliefs about multilingualism. Moreover, with some exceptions, the improvement found in the present study occurs regardless of participants' specific characteristics (e.g., age or gender), as none of the sociodemographic variables examined had a significant effect on the direction or magnitude of the improvement. The observed exceptions, namely students of non-Spanish origin and those identifying as right-wing, are likely attributable to the limited number of participants in these sociodemographic groups. As such, these findings may not be entirely generalizable. It is worth noting, however, that, in the case of the variable political ideology, those participants identifying with the right end of the political spectrum exhibited more negative attitudes overall, and became even more negative in round 2, than their left-leaning counterparts. This aligns with previous research suggesting that right-wing individuals tend to be more resistant to change and diversity, including linguistic diversity. For example, Erdocia provides evidence of far-right politicians in Spain and France opposing gender-neutral language, while Snell (544-545) notes resistance

to the use of non-standard English varieties in education among conservative groups in the UK. This suggests that the pattern observed in our sample is consistent with broader tendencies documented in both sociolinguistic and political research. The lack of improvement in the attitudes of right-leaning participants is an important finding of the study, as it seems to point to explicit instruction not being an adequate way of improving the attitudes of students who may be less sensitive to issues pertaining to variation and diversity, potentially requiring a different teaching approach. Conversely, participants who may already be more sensitive to diversity (e.g., left-wing students) seem to benefit more from such instruction. One possible pedagogical avenue could involve complementing explicit instruction with more experiential and indirect methods, such as engaging students with narratives or media representations, which have been shown to improve intergroup attitudes by fostering empathy and identification while reducing defensiveness (Murrar and Brauer; Ol'hová et al.). Similarly, approaches that increase familiarity and exposure to diverse varieties, such as contact with speakers or imitation tasks, have been found to reduce negative accent bias and enhance perceptions of social attractiveness (Adank et al.; Cheng et al.).

Despite the fact that the sociodemographic variables examined did not seem to modulate the magnitude of the improvement in participants' attitudes, age, and political ideology did have an influence when the questionnaires were considered independently. In particular, older students and right-leaning students displayed more negative attitudes than younger and left-wing students, respectively. The fact that older participants exhibited more negative attitudes may have to do with education having concerned itself progressively more with issues related to equality and diversity, both in terms of contents and teaching approaches (cf. Smith, among others). This aligns with previous studies on diversity and inclusion in general, including racial and sexual orientation, which provide evidence of post-millennials being more prone to accept diversity, both in educational and professional settings, especially if compared to Generation Y (e.g., Fry and Parker; Adelman et al.). Participants over 23 in our study averaged 28 years old, with several over 30, thus being born before the turn of the millennium. Similarly, the more negative attitudes toward language diversity shown by right-wing participants may be connected to the fact that respect for diversity has traditionally been a key principle of the political left.

With respect to the results of the second segment of the questionnaires, that is, the association tests, the main finding is that explicit instruction in language variation and diversity does not influence students' stereotypical associations with specific languages. This is observed in Figures 2 and 3 (see Section 4.2), in which no changes in the associations of participants between components of language attitudes and languages/varieties are evident from the first to the second completion round. A possible explanation may be that the TUs implemented in the different courses dealt exclusively with English, as the courses themselves focused on this language. The results of the association test of round 2 may have been different had the TUs adopted a cross-linguistic perspective, especially if they had included contents related to any of the other languages in the association tests (e.g., Arabic or French).

Despite the lack of changes from round 1 to round 2 in the participants' stereotypical associations toward certain languages, the association tests did uncover interesting correlations. First, Italian, Peninsular Spanish, and, to a certain extent, American Spanish were associated with positive adjectives reflecting the affective component of language attitudes, that is, with issues of group belonging and qualities connected with warmth, friendliness, or agreeableness. This is not surprising, given that Peninsular Spanish is the mother tongue of the great majority of our participants, thus in all likelihood representing attitudes of identity and group-belonging. Moreover, Italian and, certainly, American Spanish are typologically close to Peninsular Spanish, as all three belong to the Romance family of languages and given that American and Peninsular Spanish are mutually intelligible despite differences existing regarding vocabulary and phonetic features, among others. In addition, the corresponding speech communities are also felt to be culturally closer to Spain than those of other European countries: (i) Italy and Spain share Mediterranean and southern European historical and cultural ties and (ii) Spanish-speaking communities in Central and South America maintain linguistic, historical, and media connections with Spain. In the case of Spain and Central and South America, ties have probably been further strengthened by patterns of migration: in the mid-twentieth century, many Spaniards settled in countries such as Argentina and Venezuela, among others. It is thus likely that geographical closeness, especially in the case of Italy, and the circulation of language, culture, and people across Spain and Latin America contribute to participants' sense of familiarity and affinity with these speech communities, thereby associating them with positive adjectives, especially those reflecting the affective component of language attitudes.

Second, English and, to a certain extent, French and Peninsular Spanish were associated with positive adjectives reflecting the cognitive component of language attitudes, that is, with prestige or status. This is hardly surprising considering the sample of students analyzed in this study: most participants were of Spanish origin and had lived in Spain for most of their lives, and all participants were enrolled in degrees centered on English or in which English had a prominent role. The prestige and status associated with Peninsular Spanish as the local standard and with English as a global language and the language of instruction can be explained in these terms. In addition, French is a widely spoken language across the world, figuring prominently in areas such as diplomacy, international law, and the arts (Wright 134-154). It has also been and is still taught as an elective subject in the Spanish education system in high school, where it was once the primary foreign language, thus playing a more important role in Spanish society than other languages included in the questionnaire.

Third, American Spanish, Arabic, and Romanian were associated with negative adjectives reflecting the cognitive component of language attitudes, that is, with a lack of prestige, status, or education. Again, this is not a surprising finding, as these three languages/varieties are spoken by sizable immigrant groups in Spain who have

often been subject to stigmatization.⁴ Recent research shows, for instance, that Romanian migrants commonly report experiencing discrimination in European member states such as Italy and Spain, especially those who have a higher degree of attachment to their ethnic group (Gherghina 897), while both Moroccan and other Maghrebi communities are recurrent targets of prejudices and bias, both in media portrayals and Islamophobic discourses (see, e.g., Garnes-Tarazona; Rodríguez-Reche 5-6). More generally, official data published by both the Spanish Government and *OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights* (ODIHR) provides further evidence by claiming that racist and xenophobic hate crimes, often directed at immigrant groups, remain a persistent problem in Spain, surpassing anti-LGBTI and gender-based hate crimes (Ministerio de Igualdad 22, 29-33; ODIHR 3).

Finally, French and, particularly, German were associated with negative adjectives reflecting the affective component of language attitudes, that is, with lack of belonging, arrogance, or coldness. French and, especially, German are the languages of communities that are felt to be culturally more distant from Spain. In addition, citizens from central and northern European countries are traditionally considered cold and arrogant. In fact, the associations reported by the group of participants of the present study seem to mirror broader European perceptions, being in line with findings of an existing survey from 2013 carried out by the Pew Research Global Attitudes Project. In that survey, Germany and France were ranked first and second, respectively, in terms of perceived arrogance by respondents from other EU countries, including Spain. Furthermore, Germans were also considered the least compassionate in six of the eight surveyed countries, Spanish respondents among them, followed by Britain, another northern European country (Pew Research Center). Taken together, these results indicate that the participants' attitudes toward both languages resonate with long-standing cultural stereotypes of northern and central European nations.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The main aim of the present paper was to ascertain whether explicit instruction in language variation and diversity can help improve undergraduate students' language attitudes. To this purpose, a series of TUs dealing with such contents were

⁴ According to data from the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* ("Continuous Population Statistics"), in the first quarter of 2025 five Latin American countries figured among the ten main nationalities of immigrants to Spain: Colombia (43,400), Venezuela (30,500), Peru (18,800), Honduras (7,300), and Argentina (7,300). In addition, Morocco and Algeria, two Arabic-speaking countries, also figured among the ten main nationalities of immigrants to Spain, with 25,900 and 5,900 arrivals in this period, respectively. In terms of residents, Romanians continue to constitute one of the largest immigrant groups, with over 500,000 people currently living in Spain. Although the number has decreased since its peak after Romania joined the European Union in January 2007, they remain the fourth largest foreign nationality, following Morocco (over 1 million), Colombia (over 800,000), and Venezuela (almost 600,000).

designed and implemented in four undergraduate courses taught at the UCM in the field of language and linguistics. The students' attitudes were measured both before and after the implementation of said TUs in the classroom by means of a questionnaire containing Likert-scale items and an association test. Even though the study builds on previous research in the field, the approach adopted is different because the participants are not taking instrumental English courses, but linguistics courses on specific components of language, in this case morphology, lexis/semantics, and syntax. This has allowed us to focus the designed TUs on specific types of variation and compare the results across courses. The findings show that explicit instruction in language variation and diversity is indeed beneficial for undergraduate students. The picture, however, is far from straightforward, as explicit instruction may not be equally helpful for all types of students, since differences are found across age groups and political ideologies. Nevertheless, these differences should be further explored as the current data set contains a low number of participants in some age groups and political ideologies, which limits the generalizability of the findings.

Possible avenues for future research include expanding the range of participants, for instance, by incorporating students enrolled in degrees from other fields (e.g., Economics, Commerce, Tourism) and in courses on other components of language, especially phonetics and phonology, since language variation at this level is particularly noticeable. Moreover, it would also be interesting to complement the answers extracted from the questionnaire with more detailed, qualitative analyses by adopting, for instance, follow-up interviews, either in small focus groups or individually, with participants who did not exhibit an improvement in their attitudes toward language variation after explicit instruction. Future research could also investigate whether the implicit and experiential methods proposed in Section 4.3 indeed enhance the impact of explicit instruction in language variation among more ideologically resistant individuals. Finally, we should not forget that the teaching-learning process involves not only students, but also teachers and professors, and if the latter do not exhibit positive attitudes toward language variation and diversity, students will probably not benefit from explicit instruction in such topics. Consequently, it is also important to measure the language attitudes of instructors and examine if they also benefit from implementing materials of this kind (see, e.g., Bier and Lasagabaster; Fischer and Lahmann). These and other lines of inquiry will help obtain a fuller understanding of language attitudes and their role in higher education.

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APPENDIX

Table A1. First segment of questionnaires administered to participants (Likert-scale items).

Indicate how much you agree with the following statements (1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree):					
Statement	1	2	3	4	
All languages are equally useful.					
Spanish is the only language in Spain; the rest are dialects.					
I believe that I speak with an accent.					
I like that there exist different accents of my language.					
People from Madrid do not have an accent.					
Speaking with an accent makes communication more difficult.					
People without formal education speak incorrectly.					
Social networks and the Internet are deteriorating language.					
Young people speak in a vulgar way.					
I think that it is positive that Catalanian, Galician and Basque can now be used in the Spanish Parliament.					
Multilingualism makes communication more difficult.					
Using foreign words deteriorates language.					
Each country should have only one language.					
I think that it is positive that there exist different languages in my country.					
I would like to learn other languages spoken in my country.					
I would like to have the same fluency when speaking Spanish and English.					
I believe that the existence of other languages in my community can impoverish my language.					
It is incorrect to say 'cocreta' and 'almóndiga' (in Spanish).					
It is incorrect to say 'la dije que llegaría tarde' (in Spanish).					
The following expression is incorrect: 'ain't nobody gonna pay for this.'					
The following expression is incorrect: 'I hurt meself.'					
It is more correct to say 'there are two men in the hall' than to say 'there's two men in the hall.'					

Table A2. Second segment of questionnaires administered to participants (association test).

Indicate which of the following adjectives you associate with each of the following languages (you can use each adjective for more than one language):							
Adjective	Arabic	English	French	German	Italian	Romanian	American Spanish Peninsular Spanish
Rude							
Correct							
Endearing							
Prestigious							
Vulgar							
Warm							
Respectful							
Offensive							
Pretty							
Ugly							
Incorrect							
Kind							
Happy							
Arrogant							
Snobbish							
Curt							
Clear							
Sincere							
Disrespectful							
Educated							
Forced							
Annoying							
Funny							
Ridiculous							
Friendly							
Boring							
Cold							
Good-natured							
Strange							
Humble							
Shameful							
Natural							

Table A3. Third segment of questionnaires administered to participants (sociodemographic questionnaire).

Course	a) English Semantics b) English Syntax c) Introduction to English Grammar
Gender identity	a) Male b) Female c) Non-binary
Age (number)	
Academic year	a) 1st b) 2nd c) 3rd d) 4th
Place of origin (city, country)	
Languages you know/use	
What is your political ideology?	a) Left b) Centre-left c) Centre d) Centre-right e) Right
Personal code: first name initial + first surname initial + month of birth (number) + day of birth	

Table A4. Results of diagnostic tests; NAs indicate that one or more of the levels of the corresponding variable have two fewer cases to check for normality, so a non-parametric test is automatically employed.

Variable	Normality		Homocedasticity		Decision	
	1st round	2nd round	1st round	2nd round	1st round	2nd round
Academic year			$\chi^2 = 2.58$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 0.03$ $p > 0.05$	<i>t</i> -test	<i>t</i> -test
2	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$				
> 2	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$				
Age			$\chi^2 = 3.94$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 3.87$ $p > 0.05$	ANOVA	ANOVA
18-20	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$				
21-23	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$				
> 23	$W = 0.94$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.93$ $p > 0.05$				
Course			$\chi^2 = 0.78$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 2.47$ $p > 0.05$	ANOVA	ANOVA
Grammar	$W = 0.94$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.92$ $p > 0.05$				
Semantics	$W = 0.91$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.94$ $p > 0.05$				
Syntax	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$				
Gender			$\chi^2 = 1.92$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 0.84$ $p > 0.05$	Kruskal-Wallis	Kruskal-Wallis
Female	NA	NA				
Male	NA	NA				
Non-binary	NA	NA				
Languages			$\chi^2 = 1.25$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 1.02$ $p > 0.05$	Wilcoxon	<i>t</i> -test
1-2	$W = 0.87$ $p < 0.05$	$W = 0.97$ $p > 0.05$				
> 2	$W = 0.94$ $p < 0.01$	$W = 0.94$ $p > 0.05$				
Place of origin			$\chi^2 = 0.10$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 0.14$ $p > 0.05$	Wilcoxon	<i>t</i> -test
Other	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.96$ $p > 0.05$				
Spain	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.95$ $p > 0.05$				
P. ideology			$\chi^2 = 3.45$ $p > 0.05$	$\chi^2 = 5.28$ $p > 0.05$	Kruskal-Wallis	Kruskal-Wallis
Left	NA	NA				
Centre-left	NA	NA				
Centre	NA	NA				
Centre-right	NA	NA				
Right	NA	NA				

Table A5. Frequency table of categories and languages/varieties (1st questionnaire-completion round).

Category	American Spanish	Arabic	English	French	German	Italian	Peninsular Spanish	Romanian
Affective negative	130	139	117	268	357	73	128	191
Affective positive	335	194	248	165	83	341	474	108
Cognitive negative	102	91	52	73	115	34	72	104
Cognitive positive	87	108	206	151	98	130	239	53

Table A6. Frequency table of categories and languages/varieties (2nd questionnaire-completion round).

Category	American Spanish	Arabic	English	French	German	Italian	Peninsular Spanish	Romanian
Affective negative	104	143	108	258	345	78	144	178
Affective positive	310	189	208	131	100	304	449	121
Cognitive negative	92	99	37	84	110	42	67	116
Cognitive positive	100	117	200	151	115	137	226	80

Table A7. Contributions of categories to the first two dimensions of the correspondence analysis (1st questionnaire-completion round).

Category	Contribution to dimension 1 (%)	Contribution to dimension 2 (%)
Affective negative	49.84	1.63
Affective positive	37.44	13.05
Cognitive negative	8.41	28.46
Cognitive positive	4.31	56.86

Table A8. Contributions of languages/varieties to the first two dimensions of the correspondence analysis (1st questionnaire-completion round).

Language/variety	Contribution to dimension 1 (%)	Contribution to dimension 2 (%)
American Spanish	2.53	38.81
Arabic	0.10	2.35
English	4.02	27.88
French	7.05	14.68
German	40.00	0.92
Italian	16.47	0.51
Peninsular Spanish	17.10	1.39
Romanian	12.73	13.46

Table A9. Contributions of categories to the first two dimensions of the correspondence analysis (2nd questionnaire-completion round).

Category	Contribution to dimension 1 (%)	Contribution to dimension 2 (%)
Affective negative	47.44	2.39
Affective positive	41.41	8.91
Cognitive negative	8.54	40.73
Cognitive positive	2.61	47.97

Table A10. Contributions of languages/varieties to the first two dimensions of the correspondence analysis (2nd questionnaire-completion round).

Language/variety	Contribution to dimension 1 (%)	Contribution to dimension 2 (%)
American Spanish	5.98	28.54
Arabic	0.21	5.07
English	3.87	38.37
French	11.74	9.71
German	36.75	0.85
Italian	15.13	0.01
Peninsular Spanish	16.99	0.96
Romanian	9.33	16.49