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CADÈMIA SICILIANA

Present

Sicilian

Part 1

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Introduction

Sicilian is a Italo-Dalmatian Language of the Italic (Romance) branch of Indo-European. It is spoken by between 4.7 million and 10 million speakers. Accurate numbers are difficult to acquire. The language range encompasses a group of mutual intelligible varieties present in Sicily, Calabria and Puglia. A large diaspora community of speakers also exists in the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Germany and the UK.

Family

Being an Italo-Dalmatian Romance language means that it is related to Italian, Neapolitan, and Corsican. As well as being slightly less related to Spanish, Portuguese, French and the Gallo-Italic languages.

Sicilian is unusual in its family as its origins are not with the Latin Roman Empire but rather with the 11th century Norman Conquest of Sicily, and the subsequent Latinisation of the island.

This means the language contains substantial lexicon from Siculo-Arabic and Medieval Sicilian Greek as well as Northern Italic languages. Being an Indo European language means it is also related to the Germanic, Slavic and Celtic languages.

Grammar

Sicilian is an inflected language like most of the Indo European languages. The verbs are potentially marked for tense, aspect, mood, person, and number. Sicilian also has grammatical gender (with 2 genders). There however are many misunderstanding about Sicilian grammar. For example, Sicilian does not have a simple future tense, but does have a variety of ways of expressing the future. Another example would be although the language is primarily SVO, it does occasionally use SOV.

Phonology

Sicilian does not have a standardised phonology, and across its range a very large inventory of phonemes can be found. Sicilian is particularly well known for its inventory of retroflex sounds, as well as the Sicilian vowel system.

Grammatical Gender

Sicilian is an Indo European language and like almost all Indo European languages, it has grammatical gender. There are 2 genders in Sicilian, masculine, and feminine. It must be learned for the most part, but there are some patterns that make it easier to learn

Pronouns

Nominative (subject)

I - iu	We - nuatri
You (singular) - tu	You (plural) - vuatri
He - iđđu, she - iđđa	They - iđđi

Phrases

Bonjornu - Good morning

Bonasira - Good evening

Ciau - Hello

Comu sí? - How are you?

Bonu, grazzî - Fine, thank you

Comu ti chiami? - What is your name?

Mi chiamu ____ - My name is ____

Sè/Sí - Yes

No - No

Nun parru sicilianu - I can't speak Sicilian

Nun capisciu - I don't understand

Cc'è quarcunu cca ca parra sicilianu? - Is there someone here who speaks Sicilian?

Di unni s'è? - Where are you from?

Sugnu di ____ - I am from ____

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This PDF is a product of Rolf Weimar and Cadèmia Siciliana

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