

## Trends of Diminutive Relexification in Neapolitan: A Lexicographic Analysis with Comparisons to Spanish and Italian

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*This study marks the third phase of a larger project on diminutive relexification across the Romance languages and provides a quantitative lexicographic analysis of diminutives that have relexified in the history of Neapolitan. When compared to previous results for Spanish and Italian, namely, Phases I and II of the larger study, data suggest that Neapolitan has favored relexification with the -(e)llo suffix, in both Latin and modern periods, and although much like Italian and Spanish that have relexified with modern non-L-form reflexes such as -ino/-ín and -etto/-ito, it is unlike Italian in that Neapolitan has favored -(e)llo over -ino, making -etto slightly more common than -ino. The paper concludes that Neapolitan, like its Spanish and Italian counterparts, also supports the early Pan-Romance Diminutive Diasystem as asserted previously by the authors (2021). The theory suggests that the same array of both L-form and non-L-form diminutive endings have served for purposes of diminutivization Romance-wide, but each language differs in accordance with the degree of contact between each region and the center of the Empire during the Latin era, as well as any ensuing contact among each other during the post-Latin period. Such was the four-hundred-year Spanish rule and occupation over the Kingdom of Naples, and the influence Spanish exerted on the Neapolitan lexicon during this period.*

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### Introduction

This paper marks the third phase of a large-scale collaborative effort that examines the different ways diminutivized words relexify and are recycled as new words across the different Romance languages. An example of this process that readers will be familiar with is the Spanish word *tortilla* ‘tortilla’ which was originally formed from the simple combination of a root word *torta* ‘cake’ and a diminutive suffix *-illa* ‘little,’ and although its meaning would have originally meant nothing other than the sum of its parts, that is, ‘little cake,’ it has instead evolved over time to mean a more specialized food item. Although English too has historically created new words through diminutivization (e.g., the word *knuckle* was once a diminutive of the word *knee*), it has not done so to the same considerable extent that the Romance languages have and continue to do so. Since these root

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and suffix combinations change their meaning over time, they earn their own separate entries in the dictionary, and therefore, they are easy to track and study. It is precisely because this process is so unique and productive among the Romance languages that the authors have undertaken this large-scale dictionary study to determine the extent to which this process has occurred for each of the Romance languages. Work conducted on the two initial phases of the project (Phase I: Spanish and Phase II: Italian) is now complete and accounts for two published scholarly papers (Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo 2016, 2021), respectively. As our research on Spanish and Italian suggests, the process appears to manifest itself among each language in different ways, and so this paper, which represents Phase III of the project, explores this same process for Neapolitan and compares the new data with that previously reported for Spanish and Italian.

The work my collaborator and I have thus far conducted on relexified diminutives is unique since most of the research done on diminutive endings up to now has focused not on their role in the creation of new words, but rather on what we call their *ad hoc* or simple usage, that is, an initial stage where diminutive suffixes simply combine with root words to enhance the meaning of a word only slightly; such enhancements include notions of smallness (e.g., Italian *casetta* or Spanish *casita* ‘little house’), endearment (e.g., Italian *nonnina* or Spanish *abuelita* ‘grandma’), or politeness (e.g., Italian *grossetto* or Spanish *gordito* ‘chubby’) (Rohlf 1969, Maiden 1995). Aside from the work the authors have done for Spanish and Italian, scarce attention has been paid to this process whereby diminutives are responsible for the creation of new words in other languages. As such, this paper embraces this task of exploring other languages by providing a comprehensive, quantitative and historical classification of relexified diminutives for Neapolitan that will shed light on the diminutive relexification process in that language, as well as its more general implications for the Romance languages. In addition to filling the apparent gap in studies of this type, this project also provides results that can then be compared with those of our previous Spanish and Italian studies for a better understanding of the nuances behind how all three languages have evolved in terms of relexification. Lastly, the larger project demonstrates how and why dictionaries, arguably the best concrete representations of our mental lexicons, can and should be used as reliable corpora for projects that analyze forms which bridge morphology and the lexicon.

### **The Choice of Neapolitan for Linguistic Analysis**

Neapolitan is a second Romance language that is spoken today alongside Italian in the south of Italy. The reason for diglossia in this region is that up until the late nineteenth century, Italy was not a single nation-state, but rather a large territory consisting of a patchwork of separate kingdoms, the largest being the Kingdom of Naples in the south, where not Italian, but Neapolitan was the language that had developed from Latin and was spoken there exclusively. This all changed in 1861 when the north, being a powerful epicenter of arts and letters and of industrial, financial and political sophistication, would unite the disparate Italian

kingdoms into a single “Kingdom of Italy,” and impose its own language, i.e., Italian, as the new nation’s official language. This politico-cultural shift would have disastrous effects on the future of Neapolitan, which until that time was spoken as a first language by a far greater number of speakers than Tuscan or any other language spoken on the Italian peninsula, and which by this time had already started to develop its own rich literary and cultural tradition. It did not take long before Neapolitan and the other minority languages of the peninsula would be demoted to dialect status, regardless of whether they were intelligible or not to speakers of Italian in the north or had been classified before that time by these same speakers as entirely different languages.

One might argue that this overall devaluation of Neapolitan has contributed furthermore to its eventual relative insignificance in the field of linguistics, where it continues to be excluded among any of the major comparative studies of the Romance languages, all of which settle on Italian as a single most representative language of Italy and ignore completely Neapolitan’s rich linguistic history as well as its one-time greater prominence on the Italian peninsula. Recent examples of this exclusionary tendency are: 1) *Ethnologue’s* (Simons and Fennig 2017) popular lexical similarity studies, 2) comparative grammars like Petrunin (2018), Rudder (2012), and others, all being cases in which Neapolitan has been overlooked among the Romance languages being showcased, or 3) the absence of a reputable Neapolitan reverse dictionary that alphabetizes words from right to left according to their endings, a critical tool for linguists like the authors who study morphology and the lexicon. All too many cases like these have led the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in its *Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger* to declare Neapolitan as one of the European languages currently at risk of extinction, despite it being the second most spoken language in Italy (Moseley 2010).

One final, and no less important motivation for the choice of Neapolitan as the third language of this comprehensive multilingual analysis of diminutive relexification in Romance is not only the significance it bears alongside Italian for the obvious historical reasons cited above, but in addition, its ties to Spanish for over 400 years during the occupation and rule of the Spanish over the Kingdom of Naples, specifically, 1443 through 1860 CE, a stretch of time coinciding with a period that Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) refer to as a so-called diminutive “renaissance” observed for diminutivization for both Spanish and Italian.<sup>1</sup> A

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas (2009) specifies three sub-periods comprising Spanish domination over the Kingdom of Naples, a) the Crown of Aragon (1443-1502); b) the Viceroyalty (1502-1702); and c) the House of Bourbon (1734-1860). According to Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021), beginning around the fifteenth century, the repertoire of diminutive forms appears to have expanded significantly for both Spanish and Italian, including primarily such new suffixes as *-ín*, *-ico*, or *-ito* in Spanish and *-ino*, *-etto* and *-uccio* in Italian. For this reason, Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) have dubbed this period a diminutive “renaissance”. The new suffixes, although they too drew upon original Latin suffixes (*-INU*, *-ITTU*, *-ICCU* and *-UCEU*), were not actually employed in Latin as diminutives originally, but were gradually adopted as diminutives during this period. Eventually, certain ones among the new variety, like *-ito* for Spanish and both *-ino* and *-etto* for Italian would replace older Latin *ad hoc*

quantitative lexical analysis by Thomas (2009), which like this study was also based on Altamura (1956), documents 400 hispanicisms borrowed into Neapolitan during this time and so it makes sense that relexified diminutives possessing their own entries in modern dictionaries, might also be affected in some way by Spanish domination in the area. And so, this study sets out to determine what influence Spanish might have had on Neapolitan in the use of diminutives and their subsequent relexification.

## Methodology

### *Project Design*

In order to remain consistent with the overall goals of the larger project, all work conducted on the Neapolitan component employed the same methodology that was used for the previously completed Spanish and Italian components, specified at greater length in both Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2016) and (2021) and summarized here with the following steps for the sake of brevity:

- Step I: Search and identification of potential forms in Neapolitan dictionaries<sup>2</sup>
- Step II: Data retrieval, entry, sorting and removal of non-diminutive forms
- Step III: Further disambiguation of data according to diminutive category
- Step IV: Data analysis, interpretation and comparison to previous results (in this case, those for Spanish and Italian)

### *Identification of Diminutive Forms*

The following diminutive suffixes in Neapolitan are similar to those of Italian as were specified in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021): *-etto/a*, *-ino/a*, *-olo/a*, *-otto/a*, *-ulo/a*, *-(V)ccio/a* and *-(V)cchio/a*, where (V) represents any of the five vowels (e.g., *-acc(h)io/a*, *-icc(h)io/a*, etc.). The difference between the two languages lies in the modern masculine reflexes of the Classical Latin *-ELLU* suffix, where, unlike the single Italian form *-ello*, two possibilities exist in Neapolitan, these being either *-illo* or *-iello* (represented throughout this paper by the single form *-i(e)llo*). The difference of this form between the two languages is the result of metaphony which occurs in Neapolitan, a vowel-raising process

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diminutive suffixes, primarily *-illo* or *-ello*, as the new preferred forms for simple or *ad hoc* diminutivization in those languages.

<sup>2</sup>Because a reverse dictionary that alphabetizes words from right to left according to their endings has never been published for Neapolitan, data collection required greater effort than that which was required for work on Spanish and Italian. In order to obtain the data needed for this project, the Neapolitan dictionaries and glossaries that were selected had to be scanned utilizing OCR optical character recognition software, further enabling the search for entries in the scanned document of all words with endings that are homophonous with diminutive forms. Once isolated these forms could then be analyzed.

resulting from the coexistence with other high vowels in the word. The feminine counterpart of *-i(e)llo* is typically the single form *-ella*, just as it appears in Italian. However, variation in this form does appear in a limited number of words that were borrowed from Spanish, where the ending *-illa* is transliterated as *-iglia* in Neapolitan in an effort to preserve the palatal liquid of Spanish, as opposed to a geminate alveolar liquid that would result if the Spanish spelling were retained. All variations indicated here were searched and analyzed as part of this study.

#### *Sources of Project Data*

After careful consideration of possible data sources, it was decided that the following five lexical sources, consisting of dictionaries, glossaries and one doctoral dissertation, should all be consulted for the project in an effort to provide the broadest coverage possible of likely items. The *Dizionario dialettale napoletano* (Altamura 1956) was chosen as this project's principal corpus because of its comparably abundant number of entries as well as its previous authoritative use among the canon of existing Neapolitan dictionaries, including the previously mentioned lexicographic work of Thomas (2009). Two additional dictionaries, *Dizionario napoletano* (Amato and Pardo 2019) and *Dizionario napoletano semantico-etimologico* (Iandolo 2009) were employed as more recent sources to supplement information provided by Altamura with any lexemes not found in Altamura. Additionally, though not a dictionary *per se*, a fourth resource, the *Vocabolario etimológico odierno napoletano-italiano* (Bello 2015), which like Amato & Pardo and Iandolo, also served to supplement Altamura with more current vocabulary. Finally, a fifth resource also consulted for its etymological information was the doctoral dissertation by Vinciguerra (2011) on the topic of Emmanuele Rocco's *Vocabolario del dialetto napoletano*.

An important fact to mention here is that, unlike Spanish and Italian dictionaries, such as those that were used for the first two phases of the larger project, Neapolitan dictionaries are usually never monolingual, but rather bilingual in the sense they are written for an audience of Italian speakers, some of whom may speak Neapolitan, but most of whom are not speakers of the language. In other words, unlike standard monolingual usage dictionaries for other languages like Spanish and Italian that provide definitions and all other lexical data for entries in those languages, Neapolitan dictionaries, including those of this study, typically provide this information for their entries in Italian, and not Neapolitan. In this way they are more like the types of bilingual dictionaries produced for and utilized by language students. This topic of dictionary type will be important to revisit and address later in this paper when we discuss how this may impact some of the outcomes of this study in terms of their comparability to those of the first two phases of Spanish and Italian.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>There are several reasons why Neapolitan dictionaries are designed this way. As explained earlier in this paper, Neapolitan is considered a dialect, and therefore subordinate to Italian in the hierarchy of languages spoken in the Italian peninsula. In fact, it is common for most dialect dictionaries of the peninsula (such is also the case for those of Romanesco or Sicilian) to be produced this way because

### Previous Work on Latin and Romance Relexification

Research on diminutive suffixation in the Romance languages has been approached from varying viewpoints, including a more traditional functional/semantic approach, morphopragmatic analysis, diachronic studies based on corpus data, as well as generative theory. Work such as that of Rohlfs (1969) or Maiden (1995) for Italian and Pharies (2002) and González Ollé (1962) for Spanish focused on categorizations at the level of the word, typical of structural analysis of the time, yielding traditional categorizations of smallness, endearment, or political correctness/politeness. Dressler and Barbaresi (1994) would expand the analysis of these suffixes beyond the level of the word with their theory of morphopragmatics, namely, an account of diminutive use that incorporates the role of context in addition to the meaning of the word itself. Dressler and Barbaresi studied such contexts as playfulness, pet-centered situations, emotion, sympathy and empathy, sarcasm, downgrading of illocutionary strength, euphemism and understatement.

In the course of this work, certain observations were made about *ad hoc* diminutive suffixation, particularly in regard to the suffix *-ino/a* in Italian. Napoli and Reynolds (1994) asserted that *-ino/a* is a much more productive suffix than *-etto/a*, and that *-ino/a* appears to have a default value as opposed to *-etto/a* in terms of its freedom of distribution, number of neologisms, and frequency of use. Dressler and Barbaresi also observed that *-ino/a* allows recursiveness and is the diminutive which is most preferred by children. Moreover, Dardano (1978) observed that *-ino/a* conveys more affection than do the other suffixes.

Other work by Butler (1971) has had less to do with the functional/ semantic use of diminutives like those previously mentioned and more with their historical origins or development. Mayerthaler (1981) suggests that *-ino/a* was the most adopted during Italian medieval times because of the sound-iconic vowel [i], and in that sense it is more natural as compared to others. Also worth noting is the work by Rainer (1994) on *-etto/a*, Weidhase (1967) on reflexes of Latin -(C)ULU/A, as well as Meyer-Lubke (1895), Leumann (1977), Kühner and Holzweissig (1912), Väänänen (1967), and Ettinger (1980) on reflexes of -ELLU/A. Moreover, Rohlfs (1969), though now dated, also serves as an excellent review of dialectal usage of the different forms throughout the Italian peninsula, including the use of *-uzzo/a* as an alternate to *-uccio/a*.

The aforementioned studies have made valuable contributions to the overall knowledge base of the usage and history of diminutives in Spanish and Italian. What seemed to be missing among this earlier research were quantitative, dictionary-based studies with regard to the phenomenon of relexification of these forms. With the advent and greater availability of reverse dictionaries that isolate

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they all view Italian as the “base” language, and so from an end-user perspective this is the most practical format for dictionaries of dialectal languages like Neapolitan. Some individuals who use or purchase these dictionaries may indeed be speakers of the dialect, but the truth is that most will minimally be speakers of Italian. If these dictionaries were entirely monolingual in the dialect, they would be less useful, and hence, less marketable, because of the low rate of intelligibility by monolingual speakers of Italian, as reported by Simons and Fennig (2017).

words by their endings, many of which are now electronic and searchable, and by virtue of the fact that relexified diminutive words are entirely new lexemes that over time have acquired their own dictionary entries, the moment seemed propitious for the authors to undertake first our analysis of Spanish (Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo 2016) and subsequently Italian (same authors 2021) toward a project whose overall goal is to determine and compare the entirety of relexified diminutives across the Romance languages.<sup>4</sup>

*Results of Phases I and II: Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2016 and 2021)*<sup>5</sup>

As explained in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2016), the process of relexification of diminutives was one that was inherited from a process already robust in Latin as can be seen in such everyday common Latin words as PUER ‘boy’ and the diminutivized variant PUELLA ‘girl.’ As illustrated in Ryan and Parra Guinaldo (2021), many words that would eventually evolve into Spanish and Italian with endings that are homophonous with modern diminutive Spanish and Italian endings, did not diminutivize in the modern languages. Rather, they underwent both processes of diminutivization and relexification during the Latin era itself. An example is the word CASTELLU, a word that began as a simple diminutive combination of CASTRU ‘camp’ plus the diminutive suffix -ELLU ‘little,’ but relexified to its new meaning as ‘castle’ during the Latin era, before subsequently evolving into the daughter languages as *castillo* in Spanish, *castello* in Italian, and *castiello* in Neapolitan. The following summarizes Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo’s (2016, 2021) findings for diminutive relexification in Spanish and Italian during both Latin and post Latin periods. Moreover, these findings provide the baseline against which we will compare results of the present study of Neapolitan.

Relexification of L-form Diminutives During the Latin Era<sup>6</sup>

According to the comparative data in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021), both Spanish and Italian were observed to have shared a similar early historical trajectory in terms of relexified L-form diminutives they would have inherited from Latin, namely reflexes of the standard -(C)ULU/A, -(C)ELLU/A and -EOLU)/A diminutive system. Figure 1 (repeated here from Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo 2021)

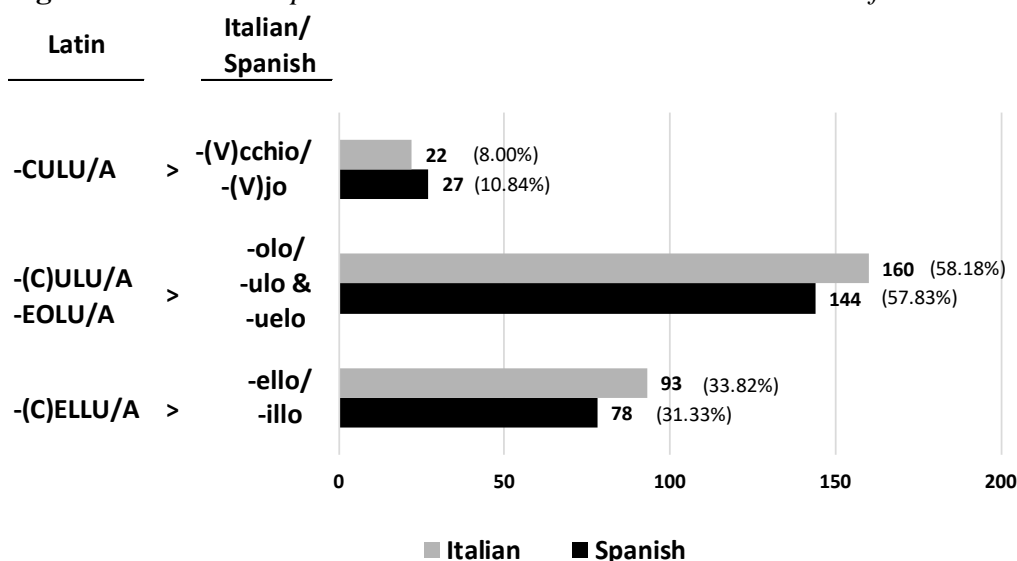
<sup>4</sup>Although Gaeta and Ricca (2003) have conducted some lexicographic work on frequency and productivity in Italian derivation, they did not include diminutive forms in their analysis. Also, more recently, Thomas (2009), like this study utilized Altamura (1956) to determine the totality of words identified as Hispanisms in Neapolitan, but his study does not broach the topic of diminutives.

<sup>5</sup>Since Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) encompasses previous work conducted and reported for Spanish in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2016) in the form of comparisons found between trends in Italian and Spanish relexification, this paper reports primarily the comparative results of the 2021 article here.

<sup>6</sup>All diminutivizing suffixes during the Latin era possessed an -L- in their forms and yet, through certain natural phonological processes as syncope, palatalization, etc., some modern Spanish and Italian reflexes of words that were inherited from original Latin-era relexified diminutives have over time lost the lateral, particularly those developing from the -CULU/A suffix (e.g., OCULU > *occhio* (It)/*ojo* (Sp) ‘eye’).

compares the percentage distribution of how such words were relexified during the Latin period.

**Figure 1.** Italian and Spanish Words that were Diminutives but Relexified in Latin



Source: Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021)

As previously reported in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) and repeated here as Figure 1, according to the *Dizionario Garzanti* (2018) for Italian and the *DRAE* (2016)<sup>7</sup> for Spanish, the total number of words that were originally diminutive forms but were relexified during the Latin period was 275 for Italian and 249 for Spanish, respectively. It makes perfect sense that these totals are not equal given the large distance between Tuscany (upon which standard Italian is based) and the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the unlikelihood that the same relexified words would persist into both languages at the same rate over two millennia. However, what is in fact surprising about these data, as Figure 1 further illustrates, is the striking similarity in percentage distribution of these endings between both languages. For Latin words ending in -(C)ULU/A, evolving into -(V)cchio or -(V)jo, both languages relexified between 31 and 34%. For those ending in -(C)ULU/A or -EOLU/A, evolving into -olo or -ulo and -uelo, both languages relexified at a rate of around 58%. Words ending in -ELLU/A, evolving into -ello/-illo, relexified between 8 and 11%. This similarity in rates between the two languages in terms of words that had relexified during the Latin era makes sense if one considers the notion that such words would have been common to both regions at an earlier point of the Empire.

#### Relexification of L-form and Non-L-form Diminutives in the Post Latin or Modern Era

As Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) point out, diminutivization and relexification were not only popular processes during the Latin period, as the data

<sup>7</sup>Diccionario de la Real Academia Española.



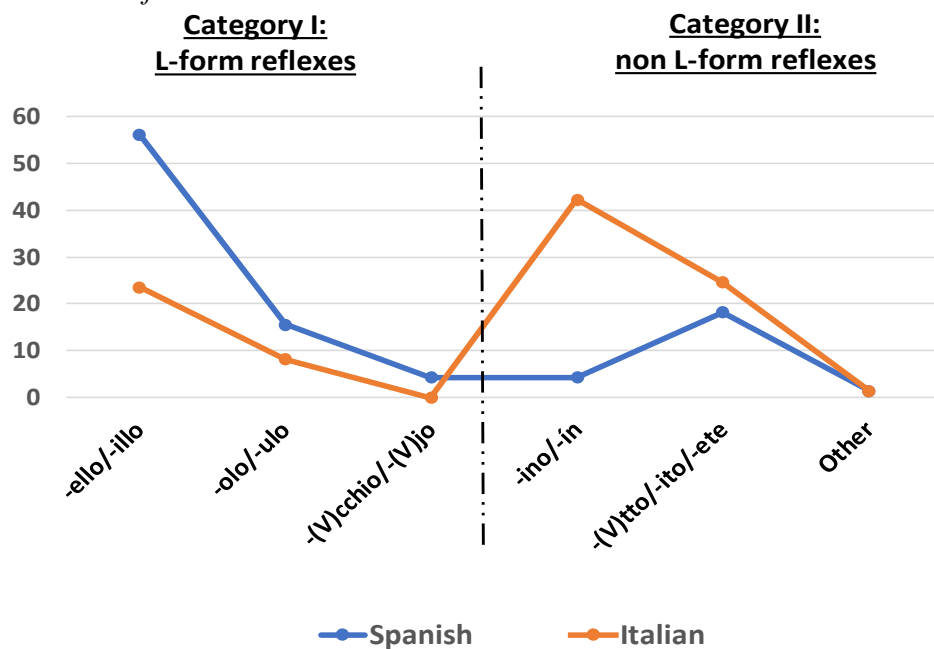
of the previous section show, but as this section will also show, these processes would continue into the modern period in Italian and Spanish as well, and with even greater force, leading to what the authors have called a type of “diminutive renaissance.” This happened in two ways, the first of which was to continue employing reflexes of the former Latin L-form endings, namely, *-ello* (It)/*-illo* (Sp), which replaced *-ELLU*, *-(V)cchio* (It)/*-(V)jo* (Sp), which replaced *-(C)ULU*, and *-iolo* (It)/*-uelo* (Sp), which replaced *-EOLU*. The second way, which was an innovation in the modern era, was the extension of diminutive function to other suffixes, also of Latin origin, but which had possessed neither a diminutive meaning nor an *-L-* in their Latin form. These endings consisted primarily of: 1) *-ino* (It)/*-ín* (Sp), both originating in the Latin categorial (and limited hypocoristic) suffix *-INU*; 2) *-(V)tto* (It)/*-ito* and *-ete* (Sp), originating in the Latin hypocoristic suffix *-ITTU*, and 3) a small variety of others, such as *-(V)ccio* (It), originating in Latin adjectival suffix *-UCEU* or *-ico* (Sp), originating in Latin, also hypocoristic *-ICCU*.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 2 groups the Spanish and Italian data of Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) according to both options mentioned above. Appearing to the left of the dotted line in the figure are the modern reflexes of Latin era L-form diminutive suffixes that continued to be used for diminutivization and subsequently, relexification. Appearing to the right of the dotted line in the figure are the modern reflexes of Latin NON-L form diminutive forms that began to supplement those of the first category, for purposes of diminutivization and relexification, such as *-ino/a*, *-etto/a*, etc.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Both the *Dizionario Garzanti* (2018) and the *DRAE* (2016) dictionaries specify that forms in this category resulted from the process of diminutivization and relexification of not Latin, but rather, Italian or Spanish word roots.

<sup>9</sup>The purpose of Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) was not to specify precisely when *ad hoc* diminutive words in Spanish or Italian relexified within the language. Although both the *Garzanti* and *DRAE* dictionaries do specify older forms among some of their entries (e.g., *castella* ‘castles’ as a former feminine plural form of *castello* ‘castle’), such information is not consistently provided and neither dictionary specifies such information for diminutives in a regular fashion.

**Figure 2.** Percentage Frequency of Italian and Spanish Diminutive Words that were relexified in the Post Latin Era

	Spanish		Italian	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Category I: L-forms:</b>				
<i>-(i)ello/-illo</i>	469	56.17%	132	23.53%
<i>-olo/-ulo</i>	130	15.57%	46	8.20%
<i>-(V)cchio/-(V)jo</i>	36	4.31%	0	0.00%
<b>Total L-forms:</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>76.05%</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>31.73%</b>
<b>Category II: non-L-forms:</b>				
<i>-ino/-ín</i>	36	4.31%	237	42.25%
<i>-(V)tto/-ito/-ete</i>	152	18.20%	138	24.60%
<i>Other (-(V)ccio/-ico)</i>	12	1.00%	8	1.00%
<b>Total non-L-forms:</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>23.51%</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>67.84%</b>
<b>Grand total L-forms and non-L-forms:</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: De Agostini Scuola S.p.A. - Garzanti Linguistica (2018) and Real Academia Española (2016)

Because of the two different options available to both languages for diminutivization and relexification in the post Latin era, Figure 2 suggests a more complicated array and distribution among diminutive suffixes during the post Latin period. Unlike the case of Latin-era relexification of diminutives that showed strikingly similar patterns for Italian and Spanish in terms of both forms and frequencies, comparisons of Italian and Spanish relexification data for the post Latin period shows quite a different scenario for the following two options.

*Option 1: Continued Use of Latin-era Diminutive Suffixes in Modern Reflex Form*

Focusing on the left-hand side of the dotted line in Figure 2, one sees that both Spanish and Italian continued to relexify words beyond the Latin period using reflexes of the Latin diminutive suffixes; however, according to the chart, Spanish continued to use these beyond the Latin period in a much more overwhelming fashion (total n = 635) than Italian (total n = 178), making up a total of 76.5% of all relexified diminutives in Spanish, as compared to 31.73% of all relexified words in Italian. Spanish *-illo/a* and Italian *-ello/a* reflexes of Latin (C)ELLU/A were the most relexified of the Latin L-form diminutives, in part due to the long period of time during which *-ELLU/A* was preferred as both *ad hoc* and relexified suffix, stretching all throughout later Latin and into Romance. A particularly interesting observation here is that Spanish continued to relexify with *-illo/a* (n = 469), a full 56.17% of all post Latin era relexified diminutives in Spanish, to a much greater extent than Italian would (n = 132) with *-ello/a*, a mere 23.53% of all post Latin era relexified diminutives for that language. The larger extent to which Spanish relexified using *-illo/a* than did Italian is supported by both Pharies (2002) and González Ollé (1962) who asserted that it would not be until the fifteenth century when *-ito/a* began ousting *-illo/a* as an *ad hoc* diminutive in Spanish, much in the same way *-ELLU/A* replaced *-V-(C)ULU/A* in post Classical Latin.

One finds a similar pattern in distribution when one compares the relexification of words ending in *-olo* (It) and *-ulo/-uelo* (Sp), for which Spanish (n = 130) again outpaces Italian (n = 46) as with the Italian non-diminutivized form *avi* ‘grandparents’ versus Spanish diminutivized form *abuelos* ‘grandparents.’ Finally, only Spanish has continued to relexify with the *-(V)jo/a* suffix, during the post Latin era, albeit to a small extent (n = 36), while no words ending in its *-(V)cchio/a* Italian counterpart relexified during this time.

*Option 2: New Use of Latin Era Non-L-form (Non-diminutive) Suffixes in Modern Reflex Form*

The fact that Italian did not relexify to the same extent as Spanish in drawing upon reflexes of Latin L-form diminutive suffixes does not mean that it did not relexify in its own right. Instead, according to Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021), Italian would depend to a much greater extent (total n = 383) on the innovative use of reflexes of Latin era non-diminutive suffixes, making up a total of 68.27% of all post-Latin era relexified diminutives in the language, as compared to Spanish (n = 200) for which only 23.95% of all relexified words are based on these newly employed suffixes.

Another way in which Italian’s system diverged from that of Spanish in the post Latin era was that *-etto/a* (the reflex of Spanish *-ito/a*, both from *-ITTU/A*) is only one of two productive endings used for *ad hoc* diminutivization, with Italian speakers also using *-ino/a*, the reflex of *-INU/A*. Moreover, although *-ino/a* and *-etto/a* are found in many cases to be interchangeable, *-ino/a* would eventually become what some have observed to be a primary *ad hoc* form over *-etto/a* in terms of achieving default status and greater overall productivity (Napoli and

Reynolds 1994) or being the suffix that allows recursiveness and is most preferred by children (Dressler and Barbaresi 1994). In similar fashion, the data of Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo's (2021) study also indicated the prominence of *-ino/a* over *-etto/a* in terms of historically relexified forms. This correlation between *ad hoc* and relexified forms would stand to reason from a historical point of view in that only an *ad hoc* form with preferred status, such as that which *-ino/a* is suggested to have had, would have been able to generate the sheer quantity of relexified forms necessary (42.25% of all historically relexified diminutives according to Figure 2) in order to achieve the substantial lead of 17.65% that it has attained over its *-etto/a* competitor (24.60% of all historically relexified diminutives according to the same figure). Another observable difference between the two languages is that both *-etto/a* and *-ino/a* already appear to have been relexifying to a much larger degree in Italian to the point of exceeding those of the *-(C)ELLU/A* type, while Spanish *-ito/a* has relexified so only minimally.

Unlike Spanish, Italian appears to not have incorporated *-ICCU/A* as part of its diminutive repertoire, lending support to the theories of either Celtic or African origins of this suffix (González Ollé 1962). Italian has also undergone a similar replacement of *-ELLU/A* with new primary *ad hoc* forms. Yet another modern Italian diminutive form that is not very productive is the suffix *-uccio/a*. According to Rohlfs (1969), this form originates in the Latin adjectival suffix *-UCEU/A* more or less meaning 'made from'. According to Pharies (2002) the reflex *-uzo/a* does not exist in modern Spanish except in a few rare cases, and in some dialects such as Aragonese. According to their data, Ryan and Parra Guinaldo (2021) found that Spanish and Italian shared a strikingly similar trajectory between both languages in terms of the distribution of words that had been relexified using the three L-form diminutive suffixes. Figure 1 (reprinted earlier in this paper) shows this distribution.

## Results and Discussion

### *Frequency Distribution of Diminutive Forms*

This section of the paper presents the Neapolitan data of this study and considers the extent to which trends of *ad hoc* and relexified diminutive forms in the data align more with previous findings for Spanish (2016) and Italian (2021). Consider Table 1 which shows the frequency breakdown of all 1,372 Neapolitan words that were identified as having their origins in diminutive forms of either the *ad hoc* (simple) or relexified variety, based on definitional and etymological information retrieved in the lexical sources of this study:

**Table 1.** Overall Distribution of Ad Hoc (Simple) and Relexified Diminutives in Neapolitan

	<u>-i(e)llo/-ella</u>		<u>-olo/a</u>		<u>-(V)cchio/a</u>		<u>-ino/a</u>		<u>-(V)tto/a</u>		<u>Other</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
<b>A. Simple (<i>ad hoc</i>)</b>	<b>396</b>	76.01%	<b>19</b>	3.65%	<b>0</b>	0.00%	<b>44</b>	8.45%	<b>58</b>	11.13%	<b>4</b>	0.77%	<b>521</b>	100.00%
<b>B. Relexified (by source):</b>														
i. Latin (inherited)	73	41.01%	69	38.76%	36	20.22%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	<b>178</b>	100.00%
ii. Neapolitan	372	59.81%	75	12.06%	<b>0</b>	0.00%	68	10.93%	89	14.31%	18	2.89%	<b>622</b>	100.00%
iii. Other (borrowed)														
a. Spanish	32	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	<b>32</b>	100.00%
b. French, etc.	<u>9</u>	<u>47.37%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>52.63%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>	<b>19</b>	100.00%
<b>subtotal relexified</b>	<b><u>486</u></b>	<b><u>57.11%</u></b>	<b><u>144</u></b>	<b><u>16.92%</u></b>	<b><u>36</u></b>	<b><u>4.23%</u></b>	<b><u>68</u></b>	<b><u>7.99%</u></b>	<b><u>99</u></b>	<b><u>11.63%</u></b>	<b><u>18</u></b>	<b><u>2.12%</u></b>	<b><u>851</u></b>	100.00%
<b>Combined totals</b>	<b>882</b>	64.29%	<b>163</b>	11.88%	<b>36</b>	2.62%	<b>112</b>	8.16%	<b>157</b>	11.44%	<b>22</b>	1.60%	<b>1,372</b>	100.00%

Table 1 shows that the Neapolitan dictionaries of this study identify a total of 1,372 diminutive forms, 521 of which are of the simple or *ad hoc* nature, and 851 of the relexified type. The table also shows that words that end in *-i(e)llo/-ella* far outnumber words formed with all other diminutive suffixes (76.01% of all *ad hoc* diminutives and 57.11% of all those that have been relexified). The following two sections address in more detail the study's results as they pertain to *ad hoc* and relexified diminutives in Neapolitan.

#### A. Frequencies and Distribution of Neapolitan Ad Hoc Diminutives

Table 1 shows that a full 76.01% of all *ad hoc* diminutives end in the suffix *-i(e)llo/-ella*, as compared to all other endings, which altogether total 23.99% in frequency, and appeared in the data in the following order, from highest to lowest: 1) *-(V)tto/a* (11.13%), 2) *-ino/a* (8.45%), 3) *-olo/a* (3.65%), and 4) other endings (0.77%). No cases of *-(V)cchio/a* were found among Neapolitan suffixes used for *ad hoc* diminutivization. As suggested by Pharies (2002) and as will be seen in the historical analysis later in this paper, the predominance of *-i(e)llo/-ella* in the dictionary data over all other *ad hoc* suffixes is due to the preference of the *-ELLU/A ad hoc* suffix in Latin times and its continuation into both early and modern Neapolitan.<sup>10</sup>

Neapolitan is a special case in that, unlike its sisters Spanish and Italian, it never underwent the same process of replacement and continued to employ the reflexes of *-ELLU/A*, i.e., *-i(e)llo/ -ella*, and its allomorph *-EOLU/A*, i.e., *-iolo/a* instead of the many other suffixes which came into later use by the other two languages. By way of comparison, (1) (a) through (c) illustrate the different uses of *ad hoc* diminutives to express the same three notions in all three languages.

<u>Neapolitan</u>	<u>Italian</u> <sup>11</sup>	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
(1) (a) <i>vasillo</i>	<i>bacino</i>	<i>besito</i>	'little kiss'
(b) <i>vucchella</i>	<i>bocchina</i>	<i>boquita</i>	'little mouth'
(c) <i>piccerillo</i>	<i>piccino</i>	<i>pequeñito</i>	'little one'

Examples (1) (a) through (c) show that Neapolitan prefers the *-i(e)llo/a* suffix for purposes of simple or *ad hoc* diminutivization, while Italian prefers *-ino/a* and Spanish *-ito/a*. What this suggests for Neapolitan is that even though, like both Spanish and Italian, it too would expand its repertoire to include other suffixes, it did not innovate to the same extent as Spanish and Italian for purposes of *ad hoc* diminutivization. Rather, it continued to employ the *-i(e)llo* reflex of *-ELLU* as its primary *ad hoc* diminutive suffix.

<sup>10</sup>This resembles more the situation of *ad hoc* diminutives in Spanish than in Italian, as pointed out in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021). In Italian, the suffixes *-etto/a* and *-ino/a* were together the two most used suffixes for purposes of *ad hoc* diminutivization in modern Italian, confirming Rohlf's (1969) anecdotal observations of this phenomenon. In Italian, unlike Spanish and Neapolitan, *-ello/a* is the third most used suffix.

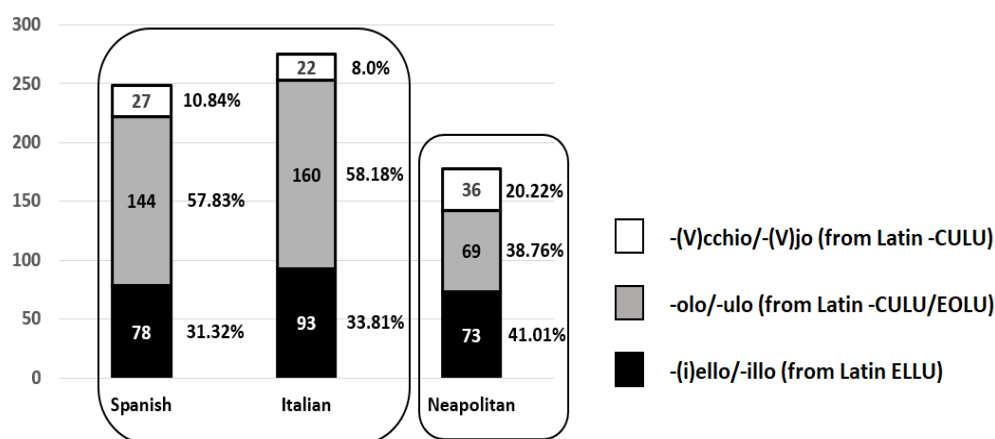
<sup>11</sup>As observed in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021), although *-ino* is presented here as the most predominant *ad hoc* suffix in Italian, *-etto* is the second most used.

## B. Frequencies and Distribution of Neapolitan Relexified Diminutives

### Neapolitan Diminutives Relexified During the Latin Era

Recall from Figure 1 that our previous studies of Spanish and Italian (Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo 2016, 2021) exhibited strikingly similar distributions in the relexification of the three L-form diminutive suffixes during the Latin era. Consider now Figure 3 that compares the similarities in distribution of Spanish and Italian with what, according to the lexicographic sources of this study, appears to be a very different alignment of L-form diminutives that were relexified during the Latin era for Neapolitan.

**Figure 3.** Frequency Distribution of Words in Spanish, Italian and Neapolitan that Relexified During the Latin Era



Source: De Agostini Scuola S.p.A. - Garzanti Linguistica (2018), Real Academia Española (2016), Altamura (1956) and others

Figure 3 shows that Spanish and Italian bear striking similarities (hence, the reason for their having been grouped together on the left of the figure) in the percentage distribution of the three L-form diminutives that relexified during the Latin era and evolved into modern reflexes of these languages. In addition to what appears to be this parallel distribution, one can also observe that all three types are spread across a wide range, the highest being *-olo/-ulo* at 57.83% (Sp) and 58.18% (It), *-(i)ello/-illo* as an intermediate type at 31.32% (Sp) and 33.81% (It), and *-(V)cchio/-(V)jo* the lowest of all three at 10.84% (Sp) and 8% (It).

The distribution of Neapolitan's data, on the other hand, looks very different from that of Spanish and Italian and for that reason it is isolated as its own category and appears on its own to the far right of Figure 3. Not only does Neapolitan exhibit a much different distribution than the other two languages, but the reader will notice that the spread among the suffixes is not as wide as that which was observed for Spanish and Italian. More specifically, whereas both Italian and Spanish were found to inherit the *-olo/-ulo* suffix to a strikingly similar higher degree (in excess of 57%), according to the data of this study, this same suffix appears to have been inherited, at least on initial observation, to a much more moderate degree of 38.8% in Neapolitan. In contrast, according to the data, the *-(i)ello/-illo* suffix was inherited to a lesser extent in both Spanish and Italian

(31.3% and 33.8% respectively) than it was in Neapolitan (41.1%). In all three languages, the *-(V)cchio* *-(V)jo* suffix was found to be inherited the least. Implications for the divergence observed for Neapolitan from the trend shared by Spanish and Italian, particularly the comparably larger percentage distribution of *-i(e)llo/-illo* will be considered with the data presented for the post Latin era in the following section.

Before drawing any conclusions about what the foregoing percentages might mean in terms of language comparisons, consider another important difference we observe in Figure 3 that sets Neapolitan apart from Spanish and Italian as a single group, namely, its significantly lower number of tokens found (178) as compared to those found for Spanish (249) and Italian (275). As argued previously in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo 2021, the small difference in the total number of tokens between Spanish and Italian (i.e., 26), seemed reasonable, even with a strikingly similar distribution in suffix type, given that each would adopt already relexified Latin forms in ways that were particular to their own language, precisely because of the large geographical distance between the regions where the two languages developed. One illustration of this difference is the comparison of the words used for ‘grandparents’ in each language. The word in Spanish for ‘grandparents’ is *abuelos* which was a relexification of the base word AVUS plus the *-IOLo* diminutive suffix. By contrast, the Italian word *avi* is used (though less common than *nonni*) for the same purpose. Historically, unlike *abuelos* in Spanish, *avi* is not the result of a diminutive combination. The point is that even with such individual differences between Spanish and Italian, the overall distribution of suffixes still turns out to be strikingly similar between both languages.

If this is true for Spanish and Italian, then it would have seemed reasonable for Neapolitan to follow a similar pattern, and if not, we should explore reasons why the Neapolitan pattern is so different from the pattern found for Spanish and Italian. What the authors propose as the reason for similarity in data between Spanish and Italian and the difference found for Neapolitan may have less to do with the nature of Neapolitan as a language, and more to do with the nature of existing Neapolitan dictionaries. As stated earlier, Neapolitan dictionaries are typically produced for an Italian-speaking audience, and therefore, they may as a result limit words to those that are formally different from their Italian counterparts. To illustrate this idea, consider Table 2 that shows examples of modern Neapolitan words that prominently appear as their own entries in Altamura’s dictionary (1956), all of which are inherited from diminutive words that relexified from L-form suffixes during the Latin period.



**Table 2.** Examples of Modern Neapolitan Words from Altamura (1956) Inherited from Latin Relexified (L form) Diminutives with Comparisons to Italian

<u>Latin form</u>	<u>Neapolitan reflex</u>	<u>Previously relexified Latin form</u>	<u>Neapolitan form</u>	<u>Italian form</u>
A. -(C)ULU/A	1) -(V)cchio/a:	AURICULA > 'ear'	<i>recchia</i>	<i>orecchia</i>
		PEDICULU > 'louse'	<i>peducchio</i>	<i>pidocchio</i>
	2) -(C)chio/a:	CARBONCULU > 'coal'	<i>cravunchio</i>	<i>carbonchio</i>
	3) -(C)olo/a:	PERGOLU > 'throne', GLANDULA > 'gland'	<i>piercolo</i> <i>gliannola</i>	<i>pergola</i> <i>glandola</i>
	4) -(C)ulo/a:	CAPITULU > 'chapter'	<i>capitulo</i>	<i>capitolo</i>
B. -(C)ELLU/A	1) -iello/a;	CASTELLU > 'castle'	<i>castiello</i>	<i>castello</i>
	2) -(c)iello/a	VERMICELLU > 'small'	<i>vermicello</i>	<i>vermicello</i>
C. -EOLU/A	1) -uolo/a	LINTEOLU > 'sheet'	<i>lenzulo</i>	<i>lenzuolo</i>

Source: Altamura (1956)

All nine examples in Table 2 are Neapolitan words whose Italian counterparts are different in form in some way. Take for example the first two words appearing on the list, *recchia* 'ear' and *peducchio* 'louse.' It stands to reason that these words, much like the others on the list, because they deviate in form from the Italian standard *orecchio* and *pidocchio*, are included in the dictionary. In contrast, words like *figliolo* 'young boy' or *figliola* 'young girl,' both also originating in former L-form diminutive words that relexified during the Latin era (i.e., FILIOLU or FILIOLA) although they exist in Neapolitan as well, were not found as main entries in the Neapolitan dictionaries of this study.

To further test and confirm this hypothesis that bilingual Neapolitan dictionaries only include those words that are different in form from their Italian counterparts, we took the following 10 very basic, non-diminutive words that either share an identical form in Italian or only differ by a single letter or more to determine whether, or how if at all, these were represented in Altamura (1956). Table 3 shows the results of this brief inquiry.

**Table 3.** Examples of Appearance (or not) in Altamura (1956) of Common Neapolitan Words Whose Spelling is Identical or Differs with Italian by One or More Letters

<u>Italian form</u>	<u>Neapolitan form</u>	<u>English gloss</u>	<u>Same word in both languages</u>		<u>Appears in dictionary</u>	
			<u>yes</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>yes</u>	<u>no</u>
1) <i>casa</i>	<i>casa</i>	'house'	x			x
2) <i>cane</i>	<i>cane</i>	'dog'	x			x
3) <i>facile</i>	<i>facile</i>	'easy'	x			x
4) <i>zio</i>	<i>zio</i>	'uncle'	x			x
5) <i>prezzo</i>	<i>prezzo</i>	'price'	x			x
6) <i>tavola</i>	<i>tavula</i>	'table'		x	x	
7) <i>braccio</i>	<i>vraccio</i>	'arm'		x	x	
8) <i>camicia</i>	<i>cammisa</i>	'shirt'		x	x	
9) <i>finestra</i>	<i>fenesta</i>	'window'		x	x	
10) <i>mano</i>	<i>mana/</i> <i>mano</i>	'hand'		x	x	

Source: Altamura (1956).

As the data in Table 3 clearly confirm, Altamura (1956) only lists as main entries those words that are different from their Italian counterpart. As examples 1) through 5) of the figure attest, words like *casa* ‘house,’ *cane* ‘dog,’ or *zio* ‘uncle’ do not appear as entries in the dictionary even though these are Neapolitan, as they are Italian, words. It is only examples 6) through 10) that words like *tavula* ‘table,’ *vraccio* ‘arm,’ or *fenesta* ‘window’ do in fact appear in the dictionary because they differ in either one or more letters in spelling from their Italian equivalents. In the case of 10) *mana/mano* ‘hand,’ the authors believe that this entry was deemed obligatory because of the existence of the option *mana* whose spelling is different from Italian *mano*, albeit by a single letter. This seems to explain the reason for the large difference in distribution of Neapolitan L-form diminutives that relexified during the Latin era as compared to that of Spanish and Italian which may be due more to the fact that the Neapolitan dictionaries do not include them because of their resemblance to Italian, and therefore for Italian readers, this would be redundant. Also, when comparing the list of Neapolitan L-word suffixes to those in Italian, particularly those ending in *-olo* or *-ola*, it appears that a great majority of these words are cultisms, though not entirely (such as our previous examples of *figliolo* or *figliola*).

#### *Diminutives Relexified in Neapolitan during the Post Latin Era*

As stated previously, diminutivization and subsequent relexification did not end with the Latin era with words that have been inherited from that time, but rather, these processes have extended in substantial ways into the Romance languages today. As was observed for both Spanish and Italian in the first two phases of the overall study, these processes likewise extended into Neapolitan with both L-form and non-L-form suffixes. This section of the paper explores Neapolitan words that relexified from both types in the post Latin period. Consider Table 4 that shows an overall snapshot of these forms with examples.

**Table 4.** Examples of Words that Relexified from Diminutives in the Post Latin Era with both L-form and non-L-form Suffixes

		<u>Source of relexification</u>			
	<i>Latin form</i>	<i>Original use</i>	<i>Neapolitan reflex</i>	<i>Neapolitan</i>	<i>Borrowed</i>
Category I: Latin L-forms	A. -(C)ULU/A	(diminutive)	-(c)olo/a:	<i>passaricolo</i> 'young sparrow'	
	B. -(C)ELLU/A	(diminutive)	1) -iello/a	<i>pagnutiello</i> 'block of dough'	<i>casetiello</i> 'traditional Easter bread' from Spanish <i>quesadilla</i> 'culinary dish made with flour tortillas')
			2) -illo/a	<i>vasillo</i> 'little kiss'	
			3) -iglia		<i>mantechiglia</i> 'pomade' from Spanish <i>mantequilla</i> 'butter'
C. -EOLU/A	(diminutive)	-iolo/a	<i>carrucchio</i> 'skateboard'		
Category II: Latin non L-forms	A. -INU/A	(non-diminutive--categorical--adjectival suffix) (e.g., <i>DIVINA</i> 'of or relating to a god') as well as some limited evidence as an anthroponymous suffix (e.g., <i>MODESTINA</i> , anthroponym of the female name <i>MODESTA</i> )	-ino/a:	<i>festino</i> 'party'; or <i>mappina</i> 'dish cloth'	
	B. -ITTU/A	(non-diminutive--anthroponymous suffix) (e.g., <i>BONITU</i> anthroponym of the male name <i>BONU</i> or <i>JULITTA</i> anthroponym of the female name <i>JULIA</i> )	1) -etto/a:	<i>bastunetto</i> 'small tube made of terracotta' or <i>facetta</i> 'said of an imprudent person'	<i>curzetto</i> from Old French <i>corset</i> 'corset'
			2) -otto/a:	<i>pasticcio</i> 'type of pastry'	
C. -UCEU/A	(non diminutive--adjectival suffix) (e.g., <i>PANNUCEU</i> 'ragged')	1) -uccio/a 2) -uzzo/a:	<i>caffetuccio</i> 'small café' <i>aucelluzzo</i> 'little bird'		

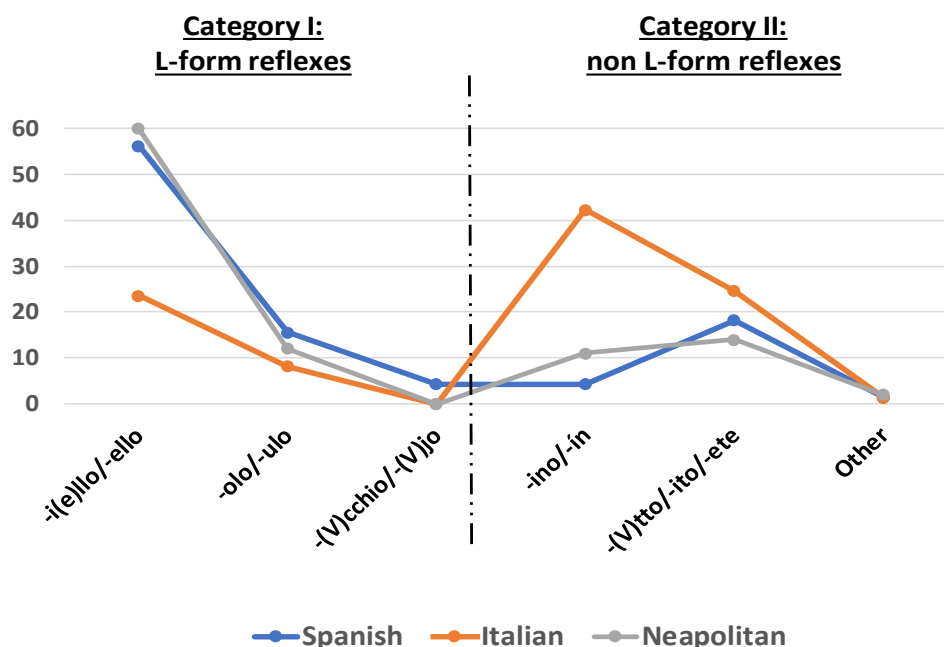
Source: Altamura (1956)

Just as was observed by Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) for Italian, Table 4 provides for Neapolitan examples of the same dual categorization of modern-day diminutive forms, namely: Category I, consisting of words that were relexified based on Neapolitan reflexes of continued Latin diminutive (L-form) suffixes; and Category II, consisting of words that are based on Neapolitan reflexes of Latin non-diminutive (non-L-form) suffixes. Examples under Category I such as *passaricolo* 'young sparrow,' *pagnutiello* 'block of dough,' or *carrucchio* 'skateboard' are similar in form to those that were relexified during the Latin era, the only difference being that the words of Table 4 did not relexify as Latin words, but rather relexified during the modern era. As Table 4 also indicates, other words of Category I were borrowed from Spanish during the 400-year period of Spanish rule. Notice that, according to Altamura (1956), some words were adopted to fit the Neapolitan formula (e.g., Neapolitan *casetiello* 'Easter bread' from Spanish *quesadilla* 'culinary dish'), while others were adopted more directly by means of transliteration (e.g., Neapolitan *mantechiglia* 'pomade' from Spanish *mantequilla* 'butter'). Examples from Category II demonstrate the wide variety of suffixes

adopted in the post-Latin era such as *-ino*, *-(V)tto* and *-uccio/-uzzo*, with some borrowings from Old French as well, as in *curzetto* ‘corset.’

Having reviewed some examples of both types of words (L-form and non-L-form) that have relexified in the post Latin era, let us now consider Figure 4 which compares the percentage distribution of Neapolitan forms (gray line) to that of Spanish (blue line) and Italian (orange line) in the post Latin era:

**Figure 4.** Percentage Frequency Distribution of Words in Spanish, Italian and Neapolitan that Relexified in the Post Latin Era



	Spanish		Italian		Neapolitan	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Category I: L-forms:</b>						
1) <i>-(i)ello/-illo</i>	469	56.17%	132	23.53%	372	59.81%
2) <i>-olo/-ulo</i>	130	15.57%	46	8.20%	75	12.06%
3) <i>-(V)ccio/-(V)jo</i>	36	4.31%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
<b>Total L-forms:</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>76.05%</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>31.73%</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>71.86%</b>
<b>Category II: non-L-forms:</b>						
4) <i>-ino/-in</i>	36	4.31%	237	42.25%	68	10.93%
5) <i>-(V)tto/-ito/-ete</i>	152	18.20%	138	24.60%	89	14.31%
6) <i>Other (-(V)ccio/-ico)</i>	12	1.00%	8	1.00%	18	2.89%
<b>Total non-L-forms:</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>23.51%</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>67.84%</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>28.14%</b>
<b>Grand total L- forms and non-L forms:</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Altamura (1956)

The reader will recall from Figure 2 of this paper that Spanish and Italian differed quite significantly in terms of their percentage distributions of L-form and non-L-form relexified diminutives in the post-Latin era. According to the data presented in Figure 4, which expands Figure 2 to now include Neapolitan data of this study with the addition of the gray line, we see how Neapolitan bears more of

a resemblance to Spanish than it does to Italian in terms of its distribution of both diminutive types in the post Latin era. According to the figure, Neapolitan, like Spanish is observed to prefer relexification using L-forms in a much more overwhelming fashion than non-L-forms. Neapolitan prefers L-forms overall at a rate 71.86%, while Spanish does only slightly more so at a rate of 76.05%. In sharp contrast, as we found in our previous study, Italian relexifies with L-forms at a significantly much lower rate of 31.73%. The figure also shows that these higher percentages for both Spanish and Neapolitan are primarily due to the strong preference for the *-i(e)llo/-illo* suffix with rates of 56.17% for Spanish and 59.81% for Neapolitan. Meanwhile, Italian was found to relexify with *-ello* at a rate of only 23.53% among all diminutive suffixes.

Moving to the right of the dotted line in Figure 4, we see how the three languages compare in terms of their respective distributions of non-L-form suffixes. It is here where we clearly observe the propensity for Italian to relexify with non-L-form suffixes, preferring these at an overall rate 67.84% among all diminutive suffixes. The suffix with the largest representation was *-ino/-ín* at 42.25%, followed by *-(V)tto* at 24.60%, and it is not until third place do we find *-i(e)llo/-illo* at a close 23.53%. The figure shows that Neapolitan uses non-L-form suffixes for relexification only slightly more frequently (at a rate of 28.14%) than does Spanish (at 23.51%), but both are similar in that they occur comparably less frequently than Italian (at 67.84%).

## Conclusions

As Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo observed in their previous studies for Spanish and Italian, data of this third phase as presented in this paper likewise illustrate that Neapolitan has its own unique history with regards to the relexification of diminutivized forms, exhibiting a unique pattern during the Latin era, and another that appears very much like Spanish and unlike Italian in the post Latin period. It was observed here that Neapolitan, like Spanish has had an overwhelming preference for *-i(e)llo* for both *ad hoc* and relexified varieties in both Latin and post-Latin eras, but unlike Spanish which has replaced this with *-ito* as its primary *ad hoc* diminutivizer, Neapolitan continues to this day to prefer *-i(e)llo* as a primary means for *ad hoc* diminutivization. This section of the paper suggests what factors, both external and internal, might have contributed to these particular characteristics of Neapolitan diminutivization and subsequent relexification.

### *External Factors*

One might expect diminutivization in Neapolitan to resemble Italian more than Spanish during both the Latin era or post Latin periods, precisely because of the historical geographical proximity of the regions where Neapolitan and Italian (or Tuscan) have developed. After, all, both developed on the Italian peninsula, and one might reasonably expect aerial factors to produce similar behavior between the two languages. One must remember, however, that throughout the history of

these languages as they were forming, they were not united under the same political power, but rather existed as two separate kingdoms where each language developed along its own trajectory, and even during the early post Latin period when diminutives began to expand to other non-L-form suffixes, the Kingdom of Naples was under Spanish rule for 400 years. As pointed out in Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2016) for Spanish, *-illo* was the predominant diminutivizing suffix in Spanish during this time and so its influence might have been felt in Naples under Spanish occupation. Spanish occupation was limited to the south and so this influence would have never reached Tuscany.

If Spanish influence has had anything to do with the preference for *-i(e)llo* as the predominant *ad hoc* diminutive suffix, then another question arises as to why Neapolitan would continue to prefer this suffix for *ad hoc* diminutivization, while Spanish has instead since replaced it with *-ito*. One possibility for this divergence is that Spanish occupation and influence of the region might have lasted only long enough for *-i(e)llo* to be reinforced, but by the time *-ito* was gaining ground in the Iberian Peninsula as a new form, *-i(e)llo* had already become sufficiently embedded in Italy's south and continued its popularity even until today.<sup>12</sup>

### *Internal Factors*

One of the reasons that has been proposed in the literature on Italian for the eventual adoption of *-ino* over both *-etto* and *-ello* as *ad hoc* diminutivizing suffixes is the preference for the iconic front high vowel sound [i] to convey the notion of diminutivization (Mayerthaler 1981).<sup>13</sup> Unlike Spanish and Neapolitan, where the middle vowel of *-ELLU* has either raised to [i] or diphthongized to [ie], Italian has instead maintained the middle vowel. And so, if the assertion of the front high vowel is true, it makes perfect sense that *-ino* would take priority over both *-etto* and *-ello* in Italian. What we propose here as an “internal” reason that Neapolitan has not eventually adopted *-ino* like Italian is that it could continue to convey diminutivization with the high vowel or glide in *-i(e)llo* and therefore, does not fill the space otherwise occupied by *-ino* in Italian. The net effect on the system is that *-ino* is relegated not to second place, as one would expect, but to third place, with *-(V)tto* instead taking the second place position. The high front vowel theory also rings true for diminutives in Spanish in the sense that it would eventually replace *-ELLU* with *-ito* as a preferred suffix.

### *Viability of Assertions for Post Latin Era Relexification in Neapolitan*

Before concluding this paper, it would seem appropriate to make a comment about the viability of post Latin era results in terms of comparability among the

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<sup>12</sup>The data show that *-etto* is albeit narrowly the second most used *ad hoc* diminutive suffix in Neapolitan. It could be that the replacement of *-illo* by *-ito* in Spanish has also influenced occupation by *-etto* in second place over *-ino*.

<sup>13</sup>We see a similar phenomenon in English with such expressions as *teeny weeny*, *cutie*, *chubby*, etc., as well as in hypocoristic use, such as, *Sammy*, *Billy*, *Cathy*, etc.

three languages. After all, we suggested in our discussion of Latin era results the tendency for Neapolitan dictionaries to exclude words that Neapolitan shared with Italian and so there might be a concern that this same scenario would also play out for post Latin era results. However, after careful consideration, the authors of this paper feel that this is less of an issue for post Latin era relexification. As we saw in Table 1, usage of the *-i(e)llo* suffix was quite high (i.e., 59.81%) not only for relexified diminutives, but even more astoundingly for the simple or *ad hoc* variety (76.01%). Examples (1) (a) through (c) of this paper further corroborated this fact showing that *-i(e)llo* is in fact the modern go-to suffix for simple diminutivization, just as *-ino* is for Italian and *-ito* is for Spanish. It stands to reason that if *-i(e)llo* is the predominant *ad hoc* suffix of choice, that its sheer number as compared to the others will in turn produce more of the relexified variety. Another indication for the viability of post Latin era results of this study is the fact that the Latin era results were of much smaller number, totalling a mere 178 tokens (according to Table 1), while results for the post-Latin period totaled 622. We must remind ourselves that the two periods in question produced two very different word types. Latin era relexified words were those that have been inherited from Latin, and so these were words that have simply evolved into the modern era. Conversely, post Latin era words were relexified much later when the diminutive “renaissance” would provide a panoply of suffixes available for diminutivization and therefore would provide the divergence that we see among the three languages of this study.

#### *Further Support for the Pan-Romance Diminutive Diasystem*

To conclude, we propose that Neapolitan, like its Spanish and Italian counterparts, also appears to support the notion of an early Pan-Romance diminutive diasystem as proposed previously by Ryan and Parra-Guinaldo (2021) for these other languages. The theory of a Pan Romance originally proposed by Wright (2002) suggests that early Romance was actually quite uniform in the sense that all Roman colonies drew upon the same repertoire of possibilities of expression, hence a “Pan Romance” approach, and would only eventually adopt the variation specific to that locality. Our theory of a Pan Romance diminutive diasystem draws on this same notion and proposes that the same array of both L-form and non-L-form diminutive endings have served for purposes of diminutivization Romance-wide, but the nature and degree of contact between each of the regions and the center of the Empire during the Latin era, as well as any ensuing contact among each other during the post-Latin period, are both necessary factors to be considered in any attempt to explain variations in the resulting distributions of the suffixes among these languages. Such evidence in the case of Neapolitan would be the four-hundred-year Spanish rule and occupation of the region where Neapolitan is spoken, and the influence Spanish exerted on the Neapolitan lexicon during this period. This historical relationship helps explain the striking similarities found to exist between Neapolitan and Spanish, and not Italian, in the percentage distribution of forms relexified during the modern era. This also helps explain the greater degree of resultant borrowing into Neapolitan

of several Spanish words of diminutive origin that had already relexified in Spanish, such as *mantechiglia* ‘pomade,’ and which are not found to the same degree in Italian.

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