

Arrègulas: Oral Poetry and Minority Language Standardisation*

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Abstract:

Arrègulas is a proposal for the standardisation of Campidanese Sardinian approved by the Province of Cagliari, in 2009. It began as a reaction to the promotion by the Autonomous Region of Sardinia of one Logudorese-based standard language (*Limba Sarda Comuna*) to be used across the whole of Sardinia. What is peculiar about *Arrègulas* is that it is modelled after the *koiné* language employed by *cantiadoris*, who are extemporaneous poets with a strong following in the Campidanese area. This *koiné* can be described as a form of Southern Campidanese deprived of its most marked features. The *Arrègulas* proposal gives this oral language a standard orthography with a comparatively straightforward phoneme-grapheme correspondence. All things considered, the standard has potential for a higher degree of acceptability with respect to *Limba Sarda Comuna* in the Campidanese area, both among proficient native speakers and among the many heritage speakers of Sardinian.

Keywords: *Arrègulas*, *minority language education*, *oral poetry*, *Sardinian*, *Standard Campidanese*

1. Introduction

A standardization effort of a minority language is met with all the obstacles and challenges intrinsic to standardization in itself, plus the extra difficulties that come with dealing with so vulnerable a thing as a minority language. In Europe, many if not most minority languages, in spite of enjoy-

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ing official protection, are currently regarded as endangered (Salminen 2007). With one possible exception (on Catalan, see Newman *et al.* 2008, among others), standardization attempts have not been especially successful and, in some cases, might even have proved detrimental (Lane 2011). In what follows, I will present an example of a standardization proposal for a minority language that shows some promise: the *Arrègulas* for Campidanese Sardinian. Regardless of the extent to which this standard language will manage to establish itself beyond the scope of its official uses, its development lends itself to a discussion of what makes a standard language acceptable and meaningful to its prospective users in a minority language community.

2. *Sardinian*

Sardinian is the development of Vulgar Latin as spoken on the island of Sardinia. It is an officially recognized minority language (Law 482/1999). It is often regarded as the most conservative Romance language. However, besides a number of archaic features (e.g., the absence of the palatalization of velar plosives before front vowels in central and northern areas), Sardinian also includes various innovative features (cf. Virdis 2013, among others). Two main dialectal groups can be identified: Logudorese – in the central and northern areas – and Campidanese – in the south. They both display a certain amount of internal variation. Between the two, a transitional area can be identified that displays features shared with both Logudorese and Campidanese, as well as original developments of its own (Blasco Ferrer 1988; Loporcaro 2009: 159; Pisano 2016; Lai, forthcoming).

Several historical changes contributed to the remarkable internal differentiation of Sardinian. The most important ones involve the vocalic and consonant systems. As for the vowel system, a remarkable difference is post-tonic vowels. In Campidanese, the final open-mid vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ were raised to the close vowels /i/ and /u/, respectively. This change is dated to the 11th Century and originated from Cagliari (Wagner 1941: 36-37; Loporcaro 2015: 56). This feature constitutes one of the main isoglosses that distinguish Campidanese from Logudorese (cf. Virdis 1988: 908; 2013: 165). We can observe a wide range of variation in the consonant systems: different cluster evolutions, metathesis, assimilations, deletion of liquids, insertion of epenthetic, paragogic and prosthetic vowels as well as syncope have all contributed to the internal differentiation of Sardinian since the Middle Ages. In addition to these historical developments, some active phonological rules distinguish dialects from one another (cf. Lai, forthcoming).

3. *Language planning in Sardinia*

In the 1990s and the 2000s, a vivacious debate unfolded in Sardinia about the role of Sardinian in society, in school, and in the regional administration.

In those years it was widely acknowledged, albeit belatedly, that Sardinian was an endangered language and that Sardinian young people were at best heritage speakers of the language, and their dominant language was Italian. Some linguists had already pointed out that the stable diglossic situation that involved Italian and Sardinian for a few decades had by then evolved into an unstable diglossia in which Sardinian would progressively lose ground in favour of Italian (Rindler Schjerve 1993: 272, 2017: 38).

A sharp interruption of parental transmission of Sardinian had occurred in the cities already in the 1960s, and in villages and rural communities starting in the 1980s (*ibidem*; Rindler Schjerve 2017: 38-41). Little did it help that Sardinian was recognized among the historical minority languages of Italy by the Italian Republic in 1999 (Law 482/1999 *Norme in materia di tutela delle minoranze linguistiche storiche* ‘Law for the safeguard of historical minority languages’),¹ after the Autonomous Region of Sardinia itself had approved a bill for the safeguard and promotion of the language (Regional Law 26/1997). Language shift progressed unabated, and finally UNESCO came to list Sardinian as “definitely endangered” (Salminen 2007: 239, 257; Moseley 2010).

The Autonomous Region chose to launch an ambitious programme of language planning for the adoption of Sardinian in the administration and the school system.² The first step was the development of one Logudorese-based standard for general adoption across the whole of Sardinia. In 2001 a regional committee presented a proposal, dubbed *Limba Sarda Unificada* ‘Unified Sardinian Language’.³ The *Limba Sarda Unificada* (hereafter, LSU) would be met with strong opposition both among the general public and among the academic community, not to mention many linguists specializing in Sardinian (cf. Tufi 2013: 150). The Region eventually dropped the proposal entirely. The most hotly contested aspect of the proposal was that it was exclusively based on Logudorese. Campidanese, the variety spoken in the south of the island (which is also the most populous area) was disregarded altogether. A few years later, in 2006, the Autonomous Region of Sardinia adopted a new standard, called *Limba Sarda Comuna* ‘Common Sardinian Language’, hereafter, LSC). Despite explicit reassurances that LSC was the result of careful mediation among the main Sardinian varieties (LSC 2006:

¹ The other historical minority languages of Italy were listed as Albanian, Catalan, Croatian, Franco-Provençal, French, Friulian, German, Greek, Ladin, Occitan and Slovenian (cf. Savoia 2001; Dell’Aquila and Iannàccaro 2004: 51-58).

² Sardinian literacy among native speakers can be assumed to be scarce at best. Literacy in Sardinian schools has traditionally been taught exclusively in Italian.

³ The regional committee included Eduardo Blasco Ferrer, Roberto Bolognesi, Diego Salvatore Corraïne, Ignazio Delogu, Antonietta Dettori, Giulio Paulis, Massimo Pittau, Tonino Rubattu, Leonardo Sole, Heinz Jürgen Wolf and Matteo Porru.

5-6, 13-14), it would soon become apparent that it was firmly grounded in Logudorese, with few marginal concessions to Campidanese (cf. Calaresu 2008; Blasco Ferrer 2011; Mastino *et al.* 2011; Lőrinczi 2013; Tufi 2013; Porcu 2014; Lai 2017, 2018a, 2018b).⁴

4. *Arrègulas: a Campidanese response*

The persistence of the regional administration in extending a Logudorese-based standard language to the Campidanese-speaking area not only alienated the general public but resulted in a clash in the administration itself. In 2010, in defiance of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia, the Province of Cagliari unanimously adopted a Campidanese-based standard for official purposes, informally named *Arrègulas* 'Rules' after the document that details it (cf. Resolution n. 17 by the Province of Cagliari, 17.03.2010). The full title is *Arrègulas po ortografia, fonètica, morfologia e fueddàriu de sa norma campidanese de sa lingua sarda | Regole per ortografia, fonetica, morfologia e vocabolario della norma campidanese della lingua sarda* 'Rules for the orthography, phonetics, morphology and vocabulary of the Campidanese standard for the Sardinian language'. The work was published in 2009 under the auspices of the Province of Cagliari. From then on, the standard was regularly used, among other things, in adult language courses aimed at heritage Sardinian speakers held in Cagliari by the non-governmental organization *Lingua Bia*.

Let us now look at the document itself. On the inside cover of the *Arrègulas*, the scientific committee is listed in full.⁵ Unlike the documentation for the two standard proposals by the Region of Sardinia, which was published exclusively in Italian, *Arrègulas* was published with a parallel Sardinian-Italian text. The opening page of *Arrègulas* is noteworthy for its reference to another variety, i.e., Logudorese. The authors write that their Campidanese standard is meant for official use by the Autonomous Region "beside the other variety of the Sardinian language, that is, Logudorese" (tr. mine), (*Arrègulas* 2009: 18; Marzo 2017: 58). They further clarify that by Logudorese they mean the Common Logudorese used by poets in the Logudorese speaking area. The authors of *Arrègulas*, thus, implicitly embrace the side of two standard Sardinian languages, which was vocally contested by supporters of LSC on political and ideological grounds (Corongiu 2013, among others). Section 1

⁴ The concessions were limited to admitting the use of Campidanese plural definite article *is* as an alternative to Logudorese *sos* and *sas*, and the adoption of Campidanese clitics *ddi*, *ddu*, *dda* as alternatives to Logudorese forms *li*, *lu*, *la* (cf. LSC 2006: 25, 28, 37ff).

⁵ Amos Cardia, Stefano Cherchi, Nicola Dessì, Massimo Madrigale, Michele Madrigale, Francesco Maxia, Ivo Murgia, Pietro Perra, Oreste Pili, Antonio Pistis, Antonella Rodi, Paola Sanna, Marco Sitzia. Eduardo Blasco Ferrer and Paolo Zedda are indicated as consultants.

of the document details the reasons behind the proposal of a Campidanese standard as an alternative to the official regional standard orthography. At the end of the section, the authors quote many samples of published poetry and prose in Campidanese in support of the claim that the existing literary tradition already shares a common core of standard features. Section 2 introduces Campidanese as such. The authors list both official documents in Medieval Campidanese and literary works (prose, poetry and theatre) published in Campidanese since the 16th century.⁶ The same section also mentions the tradition of extemporaneous oral poetry, still alive in the south of the island. As will be shown below, the language of these poets played a central role in the development of the standard described in the *Arrègulas*. A section is devoted to referencing works on Sardinian linguistics. Sections 3 to 5 present the orthographic norms. Sections 6 to 16 present the morphology and syntax of the standard variety and the developers present arguments in support of their choices. Among other things, the section includes a list of verbs (both regular and irregular), divided into three inflectional classes, on the model of traditional language grammars. Section 17 discusses neologisms.

5. Summary of Campidanese phonology

The *Arrègulas* standard is modeled after Southern Campidanese, with the important exception of a few phonological rules. This section presents the vowel and consonant inventories of Southern Campidanese, before moving to the actual *Arrègulas* proposal. What follows is reduced and adapted from Lai (forthcoming), to which I refer the reader for further details and a comparison with Logudorese.

5.1 Vowel system of Campidanese

Campidanese has a seven-vowel system, as depicted in Table (1) below:

Table 1. The seven-vowel system of Campidanese

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i		u
Close-mid	e		o
Open-mid	ɛ		ɔ
Open		a	

However, in word-final position only /i, a, u/ are found, because of a historical change (a final vowel raising) that affected mid vowels in that posi-

⁶ On orthographic conventions in Medieval Sardinian documents, see Viridis (2018).

tion. Final vowel raising together with metaphony contributed to differentiate the Campidanese vowel system from the Logudorese one. Campidanese Sardinian metaphony raised stressed open-mid vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ to close-mid vowels [e] and [o], respectively, when followed by the close vowels /i/ and /u/. Final vowel raising changed final open-mid vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ to close vowels [i] and [u], respectively.⁷ As a result, today a small number of minimal pairs exists opposing [ɛ] to [e] and [ɔ] to [o]: e.g. /oru/ (< ORU(M)) ‘edge, rim’ vs. /ɔru/ ‘gold’ (< It. *oro*), /beni/ (< vĒNI) ‘come_{2SG.IMP}’ vs. /bēni/ (< BĒNE) ‘well’, thus justifying the inclusion of both close-mid and open-mid vowels in the phonological inventory of Campidanese. By contrast, Logudorese has a five-vowel system (/i, ɛ, a, ɔ, u/), any of which can occur in word-final position.⁸

5.2 Consonant system of Southern Campidanese

Table 2 presents the consonant inventory of Southern Campidanese (adapted from Lai forthcoming).⁹ Note that the parentheses around some

⁷ I am adopting the view that both the final vowel raising and Campidanese metaphony are historical changes (Wagner 1941: §46; Viridis 1978: 24-27; 1988: 900-902; Blasco Ferrer 1984: 178; Loporcaro 2015: 56; Mensching and Remberger 2016: 272; Lai forthcoming). As a consequence, I claim that the instances of metaphony attested in Campidanese are lexicalized items, the output of a no longer active metaphony rule. By contrast, some generative linguists (e.g. Bolognesi 1998: 16-22; Frigeni 2003; Savoia 2015, 2016; Molinu 2017: 350-352) claim that both metaphony and the final vowel raising should be regarded as active synchronic processes, namely, a metaphony rule would apply before a vowel raising rule:

	‘edge’	‘gold’
Underlying forms	/ɔru/	/ɔrɔ/
1. Metaphony	oru	—
2. Final vowel raising	—	ɔru
Surface forms	[‘oru]	[‘ɔru]

For this reason, these authors maintain that a five-vowel system (i.e., /i ɛ a ɔ u/) is adequate for Campidanese. For discussion of these aspects, I refer the interested reader to Loporcaro (2015: 56; Lai forthcoming).

⁸ The Logudorese forms corresponding to the Campidanese words mentioned above are respectively: [‘oru] (< ORU(M)) ‘edge, rim’, [‘ɔrɔ] ‘gold’ (< It. *oro*), [‘beni] (< vĒNI) ‘come_{2SG.IMP}’, [‘bēni] (< BĒNE) ‘well’.

⁹ I departed from Lai (forthcoming) in the treatment of what the literature on Sardinian traditionally calls voiced fricatives, i.e., [β], [ð] and [ɣ]. Due to editorial policy, Lai (*ibidem*) classifies those sounds as spirant approximants and writes them as [β̥], [ð̥] and [ɣ̥], omitting them from the IPA chart. Here, it seemed easier to classify them as fricatives and include them in the respective slots of the chart.

segments are motivated by the fact that these segments are only observed in loanwords. Note that the consonant inventories of the most peripheral areas of the Campidanese domain (Sulcis, Ogliastra, Lower Barbagia) are partially different (Viridis 1978: 13-15; 2013).

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar
Plosive	p b			t d		ɖ		k g
Affricate				ts (dz)	tʃ dʒ			
Fricative	β	f (v)	ð	s	ʃ ʒ			ʎ
Nasal	m			n			(ɲ)	ŋ
Lateral				l				
Trill				r				
Approximant	(w)						j	

Table 2. Consonant inventory of Campidanese Sardinian

Campidanese has three voiceless plosives, i.e., /p, t, k/. In intervocalic position, across word boundaries, /p/, /t/, and /k/ in intervocalic position are realized as [β], [ð] and [ɣ], respectively (e.g., /ssa pala/ → [sa'βala] 'the shoulder'). However, in the south, intervocalic /t/ is realized not as [ð] but as an alveolar tap, e.g., /ssa taula/ → [sa'raula], 'board, plank'. The intervocalic voiced plosives /b, d, g/ are deleted across word boundaries, but only in some areas of the Campidanese domain, especially in Northern Campidanese (e.g., /ssu dinari/ → [sui'nari] 'the money'). In Southern Campidanese, this phonological rule does not apply (e.g., /ssu dinari/ → [su di'nari] 'the money') (Wagner 1941: 136; Viridis 1978: 45; Lai 2009, 2011). All these weakening processes are known in the literature as lenition processes.

The voiced retroflex plosive /d/ is present in all Sardinian varieties as the outcome of Latin geminate lateral. There are phonological reasons to believe that it always occurs as a geminate (cf. Lai 2015b).

In Southern Campidanese, the post-alveolar affricate /tʃ/ also undergoes lenition. Its lenited counterpart is [ʒ], while in Northern Campidanese it is [dʒ]. The phonological contest for this weakening rule is the same as the plosive case (intervocalic position across word boundaries). The alveolar affricate /ts/ is available in Southern Campidanese as the outcome of Vulgar Latin [kj] and [tj], e.g., [ˈprattsa] (< PLATĒA(M)) 'square' (Viridis 1978: 64).¹⁰ In South-

¹⁰ In Northern Campidanese, [kj] and [tj], evolved in the geminate /s/, e.g., [ˈprassa] (< PLATĒA(M)), while in the Southern-Western Campidanese (Sulcis area), the outcome is the affricate /tʃ/, e.g., [ˈpratʃa] (< PLATĒA(M); Viridis 1978: 64-65).

ern Campidanese, the voiced affricate /dʒ/ is found only in loanwords, e.g., [bid'dzarru] 'irritable_{M.SG}' (< It. *bizzarro*); (*ibidem*: 82).

The fricatives /f/ and /s/ respectively alternate with [v] and [z] in intervocalic position, e.g., /ssu fillu/ → [su'villu] 'the son', /ssu sali/ → [su'zali] 'the salt'. In final coda position, /s/ can be realized as [s], [r] or [ʃ], depending on the variety and the consonant that follows (Wagner 1941: 302-309). In some southern areas /s/ undergoes a complete assimilation to the following consonant, e.g. /is manus/ → [im'manuz(u)] 'the hands' (Wagner 1941: 302-304; Viridis 1978: 39). The voiceless postalveolar fricative /ʃ/ is a phoneme, resulting from the palatalization of Latin velar plosives before front vowels (e.g. [pʃi'ʃi] (< PISCE(M)) 'fish'); [ʃi'ðai] (< EXCITĀRE) 'wake somebody up_{INF}') (Wagner 1941: 286; Viridis 1978: 61, 73). /ʃ/ does not have lenited counterparts.

Both nasals /m/ and /n/ are phonemes. In some Southern Campidanese varieties we find an active phonological rule that applies to intervocalic /n/ (Viridis 1978: 53, 81): /n/ is deleted and the preceding vowel is nasalized, e.g. /kani/ → ['kāi] (< CANE(M)) 'dog', /luna/ → ['lūa] (< LUNA(M)) 'moon' (Wagner 1941: 109-113; Viridis 1978 [*ibidem*]: 41, 53; Bolognesi 1998: 26; Molinu 2003). In Campidanese few items are found including the palatal nasal /ɲ/, all of them are loanwords.

A phoneme that undergoes a series of different phonological rules depending on the variety is the lateral alveolar approximant /l/. In some varieties, intervocalic /l/ is deleted, while in others it is affected by various processes that changes it into [w], [β], [q̄w], [β̄], [ʔ], [L] or [Ø] (Wagner 1941: 200-212; Viridis 1978: 55-58; Contini 1987: 355-356; Molinu 2009; Lai forthcoming).

The alveolar trill occurs as a phoneme, as well as one of the possible realizations of /s/ in Northern Campidanese. It occurs both in coda and in intervocalic position. In some Southern varieties, /r/ is deleted in intervocalic position, e.g. /su frōri/ → [su'vrōi] 'the flower', (Wagner 1941: 214).

6. *The language of cantadoris*

Among other influences in the development of *Arrègulas*, the authors explicitly single out the tradition of improvised poetry tradition by *cantadoris* (lit. 'singers, bards'). In Sardinia, no less than four traditions are attested. The tradition practiced in the south of the island is called *mutetu* 'composition'. The main form is called *mutetu longu* 'long composition' or *cantada* 'cantata'. It is performed by two or more poets that compete against the backdrop of a two-voice male chorus. A typical performance can be up to three and a half hours long, during which the poets take turns in improvising *mutetus*. As a form, the *mutetu longu* is obtained by rearranging a stanza made out of two sections, very different in nature. A poet first improvises an opening section of varying length (typically, eight lines) on a range of traditional topics, then

concludes with a couplet that sets the theme of the whole competition. The poet then produces a series of eight or more quatrains in which lines from the opening section and from the couplet itself are rearranged both in terms of reciprocal order and word-order to ensure a certain rhyme scheme. The following poet's couplet will have to reprise the theme set by the first couplet, while his opening section will be improvised anew.¹¹ Here is one actual example of a complete *mutetu longu* by the poet Efis Loni, who improvised it in 1920, as (freely) translated and annotated by Zedda (2009: 18-19):¹²

Opening section:

Ses istraciau e sucidu
 Bivendi a sa spensierada
 No arreposas in nisciunu logu
 Sempiri brillu de a mengianu
 Una giorronada in su sartu
 Sciu ca no fais prusu
 Fatzat soli o siat proendi
 No portas butinus in peis

Quatrains:

Ses istraciau e sucidu
Seis in duus a manu pigada
Andendi in fatu a unu ogu lucidu
 Bivendi a sa spensierada

Bivendi a sa spensierada
Andendi in fatu a unu lucidu ogu
Seis in duus a manu pigada
 No arreposas in nisciunu logu

No arreposas in nisciunu logu
Seis in duus a pigada manu
Andendi in fatu a unu lucidu ogu
 Sempiri brillu de a mengianu

Opening section:

On the dirty ground you lie
 So far from the sacred steeple
 A decent bed you cannot find
 Sober days you've seen but few
 To idleness you took an oath
 Work to you is a stormy sea
 In all weather the world you face
 As a poor and shoeless man

Quatrains:

On the dirty ground you **lie**
*Oh well, I can see two **people***
*Who chase both behind a **fly***
 So far from the sacred **steeple**

So far from the sacred **steeple**
*Who chase both a fly **behind***
*Oh well, I can see two **people***
 A decent bed you cannot **find**

A decent bed you cannot **find**
*Well, I can see people **two***
*Who chase both a fly **behind***
 Sober days you've seen but **few**

¹¹ The information in this section is drawn from Zedda (2009), which interested readers are encouraged to consult for further details. For a corpus study of the language employed by *mutetu* poets, see Mereu (2014).

¹² On the formal properties of this poem, see also the discussion in Fabb (2015: 69).

Sempiri brillu de a mengianu
A un ogu lucidu andendi in fatu
Seis in duus a pigada manu
 Una giorronada in su sartu

Sober days you've seen but **few**
Who behind a fly chase both
Well, I can see people two
 To idleness you took an **oath**

Una giorronada in su sartu
A manu piada seis in duus
A un ogu lucidu andendi in fatu
 Sciu ca no fais prus

To idleness you took an **oath**
Well, two people I can see
Who behind a fly chase both
 Work to you is a stormy **sea**

Sciu ca no fais prus
In fatu a un ogu lucidu andendi
A manu pigada seis in duus
 Fatzat soli o siat proendi

Work to you is a stormy **sea**
Who behind a fly both chase
Well, two people I can see
 In all weather the world you **face**

Fatzat soli o siat proendi
In duus a manu pigada seis
In fatu a un ogu lucidu andendi
 No portas butinus in peis

In all weather the world you **face**
Well, two people see I can
Who behind a fly both chase
 As a poor and shoeless **man**

No portas butinus in peis
Andendi in fatu a un ogu lucidu
In duus a manu pigada seis
 Seis in duus a manu pigada

As a poor and shoeless **man**
Who chase both behind a fly
Well, two people see I can
 Oh well, I can see two people

For clarity, the lines obtained from the couplet are italicized, while the words in bold are meant to highlight the rhyme scheme.¹³

Linguistically, one interesting aspect of Sardinian improvised poetry is that it gave rise to a linguistic *koiné* of a kind. Poets hailing from different corners of the Campidanese area tend to compose in a variety that keeps away from the most marked features of the Campidanese domain (*Arrègulas* 2009; Mereu 2014), and follows rather closely the model of *Cagliaritano* (the Campidanese Sardinian spoken in the city of Cagliari) (Paulis 2001; Viridis 2013). As will be shown, poets developed a *de facto* standard, building on an etymologic criterion, which discards various innovations attested in many Campidanese varieties.

a. Conservation of /n/ in intervocalic position

The *cantadoris* always realize the intervocalic /n/ as [n]. Nowadays, as shown in Section 5, in many Southern Campidanese varieties a phonologi-

¹³ The scheme is the following. Opening section: ABCDEFGHA; Quatrains: ABAB, BCBC, CDCD, DEDE, EFEF, FGFG, GHGH, HAHB.

cal rule deletes intervocalic /n/ and nasalizes the preceding vowel. It is an active phonological process, as hinted by the fact that it regularly applies to loanwords (Viridis 1978: 53, 81). In South-Western Sardinia (Sulcis area), a different rule applies: intervocalic /n/ is realized as [ʔ] (Viridis 1978: 41; Molinu 2009). Neither rule is found in the *cantadoris koiné*: in Loni's *mutetu* quoted above one reads <manu> 'hand'.

b. Conservation of /l/ in intervocalic position

The *cantadoris* retain the lateral alveolar approximant /l/ in intervocalic position, unlike several Campidanese varieties (see Section 5 above).

c. Conservation of r+C clusters

Some southern varieties remove rhotics in coda position by completely assimilating them to the obstruent that follows: e.g., /mortu/ → [mottu]. These assimilations are rejected by the *cantadoris*.

d. Lack of metathesis

One clear example of *cantadoris*' preference for etymologic forms is the general lack of metathesis. Metathesis is one of the features most peculiar to Southern Campidanese varieties. Both liquids in plosive-liquid clusters and liquids in coda position were historically affected by some form of metathesis, even though a certain degree of variation is observed (Wagner 1941: 381-382; Viridis 1978: 76; 2013: 174; Bolognesi 1998: 419; Molinu 1998; 1999: 164-165; Cossu 2013: 120; Lai 2015a: 286-291).

e. Lack of tapping

In some Southern Campidanese varieties, there is a phonological rule that gives [r] as an allophone of /t/ in intervocalic position e.g. /ssa taula/ → [sa'raulə], 'board, plank' (Viridis 2013: 174; Lai forthcoming). However, this innovative rule is rejected by *cantadoris*.

f. Lack of alterations of pretonic vowels

In several Campidanese varieties, pretonic vowels were affected by an extravagant range of assimilation and dissimilation (see Wagner 1941: 34-38). The language of the *cantadoris* retains the etymologic vowels.

g. Presence of the prosthetic vowel /a/

Among the features of the language of *cantadoris*, *Arrègulas* (62) list the prosthetic vowel /a/. In Campidanese, words starting with a rhotic systematically developed prosthesis. In present day Campidanese, two outcomes of this diachronic insertion are observed. The more ancient one, already attested in Medieval Campidanese documents, is now attested only in Northern Campidanese, in which a range of prosthetic vowels (/a, ε, ə/) is observed before word-initial rhotics. In Southern Campidanese, a more recent and simpler outcome is observed: the prosthetic vowel is always /a/, e.g., Southern Camp. /arrəsa/ vs. Northern Camp. /ərrəsa/ (< ROSA(M)) (Wagner 1941: 95-101). *Cantadoris* choose the southern outcome over the northern one.

h. Sporadic attestation of prosthetic [i] before sC

Both *Arrègulas* and Mereu (2014: 44) claim that the poetry of the *cantadoris* includes sporadic attestation of a phonologically unmotivated prosthetic [i] before sC clusters (*ibidem*). I refer the reader to Mereu (2014) for a literature review on this topic and possible explanations of these exceptional cases of prosthesis. The phenomenon would call for a more in-depth examination of the *cantadoris* corpus. Campidanese has indeed a phonological rule that inserts a prosthetic [i], but in well-defined contexts: in both Southern Campidanese (cf. Bolognesi 1998: 158-171, 411) and Northern Campidanese (Lai 2015b), when a heterosyllabic cluster (an sC clusters or a word-initial geminate) is preceded by a consonant-final word, a prosthetic [i] surfaces at word boundaries, e.g., /is skovas/ → [izis'kovaz(a)] 'the broomsticks'. If sporadic [i] is indeed attested, that must be regarded as exceptional in that it sets the *koinè* apart from Campidanese varieties. It is worth pointing out, though, that (at least in Loni's *Mutetu* above) the only sC clusters that display prosthesis are those preceded by a consonant-final word, e.g., <ses istraciau>, while no prosthesis occurs before a vowel-final word, e.g., <sa spensierada>. The pattern is in keeping with the phonological rule mentioned in this section.

7. The orthographic design of *Arrègulas*

The authors of *Arrègulas* accommodate the previously listed features of the *cantadoris*' poetry in developing their Campidanese standard. As we will see, the etymologic criterion employed by the *cantadoris* is also favoured by the *Arrègulas*, and the result is a Southern Campidanese variety without the phonological rules mentioned in Section 6. *Arrègulas* implements its orthographic conventions by building on that reference variety, in part by following the lead of traditional Sardinian orthographies, and in part by borrowing from Italian orthography.

7.1 Vowels

As reported in Section 5.1, Campidanese has a seven-vowel system (i.e., /i, e, ε, a, ɔ, o, u/), but in word final position only /i, a, u/ can occur. By contrast, Logudorese shows a five-vowel system with the same five vowels that can appear in every position, including word-final position. This remarkable difference was disregarded in the development of the two Logudorese-based standards sponsored by the Sardinia Region. Both LSU and LSC allow for five word-final vowels, and expected Campidanese speaker to conform (cf. LSC 2006: 13; Lai 2017: 183). This would likely prove problematic for Campidanese speakers, because the relevant distinction is by now inaccessible to their phonological competence. A Campidanese speaker cannot be assumed to be aware of the fact that, for example, an item such as /kani/ should be written <cane> because its etymological form was /kane/. This difficulty is

avoided by *Arrègulas*, which inherits the Campidanese vowel system. The developers explicitly point out that in word-final position the only admissible vowels are /i, a, u/. On the other hand, they choose to follow LSC in not representing oppositions among mid vowels: /ɛ, e/ are to be written as <e> and /ɔ, o/ as <o>. This choice seems reasonable, since the functional load of these oppositions is very low to begin with. To sum up, *Arrègulas* orthography allows for the vowel graphemes <i, e, a, o, u>, on the condition that only <i, a, u> can occur in word-final position.

One aspect is worth mentioning that does not directly relate to the standard orthography, but to the phonological system of Campidanese: prosthetic vowels (cf. Arrègulas 2009: 88). *Arrègulas*, by following the language of *cantadoris* (see Section 6 above), has a prosthetic /a/ before /t/, but not the [i] prosthesis before sC. The choice seems wise, in that it is consistent with the phonology of Southern Campidanese. The two phenomena, however, are of entirely different natures. As already pointed out, the insertion of the prosthetic vowel /a/ was a diachronic process. As a result, the phonological form of words that started with /t/ in Latin must be assumed to include the prosthetic vowel in Campidanese. By contrast, the addition of [i] before heterosyllabic clusters (such as sC clusters) is governed by an active rule (cf. Lai 2015b and Section 6 above). This, it is worth emphasizing, is one of the foremost differences in the phonologies of Campidanese and Logudorese (cf. Lai forthcoming). Campidanese, unlike Logudorese, tolerates word-initial heterosyllabic clusters, both geminates and sC clusters. This means for instance that the phonological form of the word for 'school', is /iskɔla/ in Logudorese and /skɔla/ in Campidanese. Thus, the Logudorese-inspired prescription by LSC of a prosthetic vowel before sC cluster and no vowel before word-initial /t/ disregarded the phonology of Campidanese altogether.

7.2 Consonants

Arrègulas replicate the Italian orthographic conventions in representing various consonants. The digraphs <ch> and <gh> are respectively used for /k/ and /g/ before /i, e, ɛ/, while the graphemes <c> and <g> are used for the same phonemes before /a, ɔ, o, u/. As for the post-alveolar affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/: the digraphs <c> and <g> appear before /i, e, ɛ/ and the digraphs <ci> and <gi> before /a, ɔ, o, u/. Again, the phoneme /ʃ/ is represented by the digraph <sc> before /i, e, ɛ/ and by <sci> before /a, ɔ, o, u/ (Arrègulas 2009: 70). Italian is the dominant language in Sardinia and the language of literacy. On the one hand, an advantage of this choice is that it can help the transfer of literacy skills. On the other hand, there is an argument to be made that orthographic inconsistencies of a dominant language should be avoided in developing a new orthography (cf. Seifart 2006: 285).

Other conventions explicitly depart from Italian orthography. The alveolar affricate /tʃ/ is represented by the digraph <tz>, as in *tziu* /tʃiu/ ‘uncle’, as was the case in Campidanese writing traditions (Arrègulas 2009: 68). The same applies to the palato-alveolar fricative /ʒ/, which is absent from Northern Campidanese but it is a phoneme in the south (*ibidem*). This fricative is represented by the grapheme <x>, as in *àxina* /aʒina/ ‘grapes’. Note that both <tz> and <x> are so entrenched in the Campidanese tradition that they occur in several widespread Southern surnames, such as Atzori, Atzeni, Putzu, Maxia, Puxeddu.

The voiced alveolar affricate /dʒ/ is only found in Italian loanwords, written <z>. As a result, while Italian has one grapheme (i.e., <z>) for both the voiceless and voiced alveolar affricates, *Arrègulas* has one grapheme for each of the two phonemes (i.e., <tz> and <z>).

As for the nasal series, the bilabial /m/ is represented by <m> and the alveolar /n/ (like its velar counterpart [ŋ]) is always represented by <n>, e.g., /kɔŋka/, [kɔŋka], <conca> ‘head’. The lateral /l/ is written <l>. Remember that intervocalic /n/ and /l/ undergo a number of phonological rules but *Arrègulas* do not represent them in their orthographic conventions (cf. Section 5 above).

The alveolar trill is widespread in the Sardinian domain and is represented by <r>. In some areas another rhotic occurs, i.e., the alveolar tap [r̥] as an allophone of /t/ in intervocalic position: e.g., /ssa taula/ → [sa'raul̥a], ‘board, plank’. The result of this phonological rule is not represented by *Arrègulas* (again, cf. Section 5).

As mentioned above, some intervocalic plosives and fricatives (namely, /p, t, k, b, d, g, ʃ, f, s/) undergo lenition across word-boundaries. These phonological alternations are not represented in the orthography, e.g., /ssu fogu/ → [su vogu] ‘the fire’, is to be written <su fogu> (cf. Arrègulas 2009: 104). Analogously, the assimilation processes that affect final consonants such as /s/ and /t/ across word-boundaries are not taken into account by the orthographic conventions.

A peculiarity of *Arrègulas*, as well as of LSC (LSC 2006: 9; Lai 2017: 184), is the representation of phonetic geminates. Sardinian does not have length contrasts in stops (Lai 2015b, among others). This means that there are no minimal pairs with respect to consonant length in stops. Thus, intervocalic stops are always represented as simple consonants, even though they may be pronounced long, e.g., /mata/ ‘tree’ is pronounced either [matta] or [mata]. Its graphic form, though, is <mata> ‘tree’. The only exception is the voiced retroflex stop, which is represented with the doubled consonant <dd>, e.g., /pɛdd̥i/, [pɛdd̥i], <peddi> ‘skin’ (cf. Arrègulas 2009: 94). It is worth mentioning that in some traditional orthographies /dd̥/ is written <ddh>. Consonant length is distinctive only for laterals, rhotics and the alveolar nasal, e.g. [filu] ‘string’ vs. [fillu] ‘son’; [karu] ‘dear’, vs. [karru] ‘cart’; [manu] ‘hand’

vs. [mannu] 'big_{M.SG}' (from Virdis 1978: 90). These geminate consonants are represented by doubled consonants, i.e., <fillu>, <carru>, <mannu> as opposed to <filu>, <caru>, <manu> (*ibidem*: 93).

7.3 Accent, apostrophe and hyphen

Arrègulas uses the grave accent (`) on all vowels (i.e., <ì, è, à, ò, ù>) to mark lexical stress in oxytone (including stressed enclitics) and proparoxytone words, but not in the paroxytone ones (*ibidem*: 70). The acute accent (´) is used only "in homographs, lest there be any doubt as to the meaning of the word" (tr. mine), e.g., <òru> /oru/ 'gold' vs. <óru> /oru/ 'edge, rim'. As argued in Section 7.1, the functional load of these oppositions is very low, so this measure might be regarded as superfluous.

The apostrophe is used to contract both definite (*su, sa*) and indefinite articles (*unu, una*), e.g., <s'amigu> 'the friend', <un'amigu> 'a friend' (*ibidem*: 72, 106), as well as the proclitic pronouns *mi, ti, si* <m'iat donau> 's/he gave me'. It cannot be used in periphrastic tense forms, or with the proclitic pronouns *ddu, dda, ddi, ndi* or *nci*, (*ibidem*: 72).

The hyphen (-) is used to signal the boundary between members of a clitic cluster, e.g., <mi-ddu donas> 'give it to me', <boga-mi-nce-ddu> 'bring it out of there for me'. In enclitic clusters, the hyphen must also be used to separate the host verb from the first clitic (*ibidem*: 70, 120, 122). LSC uses the interpunct (·) for the same purposes, (LSC 2006: 9-10). The *Arrègulas* convention has the advantage of wider availability on computer keyboards and other input devices.

8. Concluding remarks

As a whole, *Arrègulas* can be regarded as an adequate standard language and writing system for the Campidanese speaking area. By looking at the programme introduced in Section 1 of *Arrègulas*, two potential advantages of the proposal become apparent. First, among other influences, *cantadoris'* poetry is an art form appreciated in wide sectors of the population in small towns and rural areas, where poets are active in community events such as wedding parties and religious festivals. This ensures a degree of prestige among Campidanese speakers that official Regional standards lacked altogether. Second, unlike other literary traditions, oral poetry is a living practice, strongly rooted in its reference community. The language variety employed by poets is familiar to the general Campidanese public, regardless of dialect boundaries. As a result, it might prove acceptable even to those Campidanese speakers whose native variety differs from the standard in some respects. More generally, though, if two standards are ever to be implemented, difficulties are to be expected with speakers in the transitional area between Logudorese

and Campidanese, where the dialectal fragmentation is stronger. Standards, then, would ultimately have to be regarded as general guidelines, allowing for a certain degree of flexibility.

Because of these strengths, the *Arrègulas* standard avoids one risk that would be intrinsic to any educational policy based on LSC or LSU: in the context of a standardization effort, new speakers of a minority language often end up being unable to connect and communicate with other speakers, as was reported, for example, for Breton (Hewitt 2017).¹⁴ This divide affects the minority community and excludes older speakers from the minority language's cultural and political scene. *Arrègulas*, by contrast, builds on pre-existing attitudes and practices that ensure mutual intelligibility and a good degree of acceptance in the Campidanese community.

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¹⁴ Neo- or new speakers of a minority language are defined as "individuals with little or no home or community exposure to a minority language but who instead acquire it through immersion or bilingual educational programs, revitalization projects or as adult language learners" (O'Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo 2015: 1).

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