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## ARTICLE

# The Contribution of Maltese Ethnic Associations and Clubs in Australia Towards the Community and Preservation of Maltese Language and Culture

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the role of the Maltese ethnic associations and clubs in Australia and their impact on the Maltese community. The study delves deeply into the contribution that such associations and clubs have given to the community in matters of language and culture. Since the flow of migration from Malta to Australia has practically stopped, the Maltese-Australian community is becoming smaller. As a result, the first generation of immigrants who were constrained to leave the island in search of a brighter future following World War II spoke the Maltese language and appreciated the culture that they were raised in. The second generation, which was born in Australia, typically understands the language but does not have the opportunity or desire to speak it outside the family, but at the same time has kept the culture alive. Raised in a cosmopolitan nation, the third generation typically does not speak Maltese but keeps remnants of the Maltese culture alive. Data from interviews conducted in Melbourne and Sydney serve as the foundation for this investigation. It is clear that many Maltese-Australians still have a strong sense of Maltese culture despite the fact that the Maltese community is ageing. Also, the dominance of the English language and the distance from Malta do not bode well for the Maltese language's and culture's future survival.

**Keywords:** Language Retention; Language Shift; Migration; Culture; Ethnic Associations; Maltese Australians

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# 1. Introduction

Since Malta is a tiny Mediterranean nation with few resources, many Maltese have left the country throughout its history in search of a better life abroad. While Australia, the United States, and Canada were the most sought destinations in the past century, some Maltese had previously relocated to Northern Africa. Migration has mostly ceased since the nation gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1964<sup>[1]</sup>. This is because increased investment led to better employment prospects, ensuring the Maltese thrive in their nation. Australia, on the other hand, is a nation that has promoted and developed as a result of international migration. The nation is now developed, rich, and enjoys a high standard of living. At first, Australia promoted immigrants from the United Kingdom but after the Second World War it opened its doors to migrants from other nations. Initially the migrants hailed from various European countries, and later many more Asians, Africans and other races were welcomed into Australia to settle, work, and prosper<sup>[2]</sup>.

In 1838 Antonio Azzopardi became the first Maltese to immigrate to Australia<sup>[3]</sup>. Although there was an initial wave of migration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily of men, the mass exodus from Malta began after the end of World War II and lasted for some more years after Malta gained its independence in 1964. The Maltese were among the migrants who left their country in search of better employment prospects, which Cohen (1997) refers to as a labour diaspora<sup>[4]</sup>. This was brought on by the island's challenging economic conditions, which prompted many Maltese to depart in search of more financial stability.

According to the 2021 Australian Census<sup>[5]</sup>, 198,989 individuals of Maltese heritage reside in Australia, primarily in Victoria and New South Wales, mainly in the cities of Melbourne and Sydney. Other sizeable communities live in Adelaide and Brisbane. Three-fourths of the 35,413 Maltese Australians who were born in Malta are older than 65. Over the past 50 years, there has been a steady decline in the number of new migrants from Malta. Better economic opportunities were brought about by Malta's independence and years later by Malta's accession to the European Union. The Maltese people now have more possibilities across Europe because of Malta's 2004 EU membership

and due to Malta's close proximity to the continent, it is quite convenient to live and work in another EU nation.

Malta has been officially bilingual since 1934; however, Maltese is the country's national language. The Republic of Malta has two official languages: Maltese and English. The Maltese language dates back more than a thousand years to the Arab Period (870–1091)<sup>[6]</sup>. It is a hybrid language of Semitic heritage<sup>[7,8]</sup>. Several words of Sicilian, Latin, and subsequently Italian provenance were incorporated into the vernacular as the Normans and other European powers arrived, starting the process of linguistic enrichment. This tendency occurred particularly under the Sovereign Order of the Knights of St. John's rule (1530–1798), when the Romance languages spoken by the Knights and the labourers that they imported to the island had an impact on the language.

The Maltese language was thereafter influenced by English during the British colonial era (1800–1964) (Aquilina 1988). The English language continues to have some influence on the Maltese in the present day, primarily because of the English language's global dominance and the island's bilingual status. Maltese is the only Semitic language in Europe, but it is written in the Roman alphabet. Maltese became officially acknowledged as one of the European Union languages on the country's membership in 2004.

The Maltese community in Australia has integrated nicely. While most of the population speaks English well, the Maltese language is nonetheless spoken by most of those born in Malta, and by some of the second-generation. This clearly promotes strong ethnic ties. Maltese is spoken at home by around 27,000 people according to the Australian Census of 2021.

A society's common way of life is generally referred to as its culture. Norms, practices, language, values, and beliefs are all components of culture<sup>[9]</sup>. The cultural fabric of Malta is deeply intertwined with Roman Catholicism, the predominant faith among the population, which is also entrenched in the Constitution of the country. For many years, religion played a crucial part in the everyday life of the Maltese people. Other cultural aspects such as food and folklore are very similar to Italian cultural norms and many festivities such as Christmas, Carnival and Easter have their roots in Catholic religious celebrations. Baldas-

sar (2005) also mentions the Catholic Church in relation to the Italian community in Australia and states that it is perhaps the most effective organisation in uniting Italians from different geographic backgrounds <sup>[10]</sup>.

It is widely acknowledged that when migrants live in a nation where their primary language differs from their own, it might be challenging for them to retain their mother tongue <sup>[11]</sup>. Although English is not recognised as Australia's official language, it is the "de facto" national language, an international language that is associated with status and economic power. As a result, a language of vast superiority is always battling the indigenous populations' language and the community languages of the numerous ethnicities, particularly the smaller groups. The English language's pressure can be pervasive and frequently menacing. On the other hand, while language maintenance in some communities is difficult, other cultural practices are better retained. So, according to Cauchi (2016) while the Maltese in Australia will soon be losing their language, as soon as the first generation disappears <sup>[12]</sup>, other aspects of culture will be maintained for generations to come. Borg (2005) stresses that the daily life events of second-generation immigrants are rooted in both the traditional culture of origin and the host culture <sup>[13]</sup>.

### 1.1. Language Maintenance and Shift

Interaction between "two linguistically different groups" is a prerequisite for every study on language shift and maintenance <sup>[11]</sup>. The consistent use of a community language in one or more language practice domains is known as language maintenance. Conversely, language shift occurs when a language gradually gives way to another in all spheres of usage <sup>[14]</sup>.

The status of English as an international language has grown ominously. Sciriha (1990) conducted research amongst the Maltese-Canadian community and discovered that the majority of parents would rather have their children speak English than Maltese, to the point that some of them believe that knowing Maltese is detrimental for English competence. Borland (2005) conducted research on Maltese as a community language in Australia and discovered that children of Maltese migrants typically do not continue speaking Maltese at home as frequently as it seems to be the case with other ethnic communities <sup>[15]</sup>.

Azzopardi (2014) made a similar remark in Australia, arguing that the Maltese language in Australia is currently in danger of going extinct because the first-generation Maltese migrants longed for their offspring to be fluent in English <sup>[16]</sup>. According to Pauwels (2016), it is important to distinguish between migrants who were raised in their home country and those who were raised in the host nation when examining language maintenance.

As subjects of a British colony, many Maltese migrants had a seeming closeness with the Anglo-Australian cultural ambience <sup>[17]</sup>. Clyne (1991) contends that when most of the Maltese migrants moved to Australia, there was a diglossic relationship between Maltese and English in Malta <sup>[18]</sup>. Maltese was the mother tongue of most, while English was the formal language. Consequently, many migrants were knowledgeable of the English language. According to Frendo (2020, p. 29), the Maltese diaspora is 'more readily assimilative and assimilationist' due to Malta's long history of foreign dominations and powers. Besides, since mass migration occurred before the country's independence, most of the Maltese migrants were highly influenced by their education during colonial times.

Other Southern European communities who also settled in Australia, such as the Greeks and the Italians, have managed to preserve their language better than the Maltese. Borland (2005, pp. 112–113) claims that even Malta, the native language has survived many years of colonial power during which 'it served as a marker of ethnic group membership and identity but has been constrained to the 'low' domains of the home and village life' <sup>[15]</sup>. Klein (2005) shares the same notion that both the Maltese national identity and the Maltese language were weak at the time of mass migration due to the country's long history of foreign occupation <sup>[19]</sup>. Shields (2005) also contends that lack of national pride was the effect of such a colonial mentality <sup>[20]</sup>.

Tamis (2010) contends that there are several factors conducive to the maintenance of Greek in Australia <sup>[21]</sup>. One reason is the fact that Greek is more different from English than Latin and Germanic languages, and thus it is more difficult for the Greeks to pick up English. Besides, the Greeks are more family and community-oriented than other ethnic groups of European origin, and this protects the community to a certain extent. Furthermore, the Greek culture is different from Anglo-Australian and thus the

Greek community is somewhat segregated.

Furlan & Faggion (2016) expose the fact that Italian migrants in Australia who were more religious were happier since they often attended religious services that supported the building of social networks and consequently facilitated their social integration<sup>[22]</sup>. Italian migrants benefitted socially and economically as a result of their participation in religious organizations. The Italian culture persisted throughout the years also because of the various cultural national and regional clubs and associations that were set up across Australia.

## 1.2. Language Domains

A very complex type of evidence based on regular language use is required for the research of language shift and retention<sup>[23]</sup>. The term “domains” is typically used to describe language use contexts<sup>[14]</sup>. Schmidt-Rohr, who picked out nine realms of language use, is cited by Fishman (1964) in his research on language use<sup>[23]</sup>. The primary pillars for language maintenance, according to research studies include religion, ethnic schools, ethnic associations, family, neighbours, and friends, as well as media and broadcasting<sup>[14,24,25]</sup>. Pauwels (2016) explains that other domains such as secular social settings like associations, clubs and societies are often included in research on migrant settings because of their possible relevance in the study of language shift and language retention.

## 1.3. Maltese Associations and Clubs in Australia

The Maltese diaspora in Australia is supported by a wide variety of clubs and associations. The bulk of Maltese migrants live in Victoria and New South Wales, where hence the majority of these are based. The Melita Social Club (NSW), established in 1922, was most likely the first Maltese club in Australia, according to Agius (2001)<sup>[3]</sup>. Social clubs, band clubs, sports clubs, religious groups, village clubs, art clubs, senior citizen clubs, folk singing clubs, literature clubs, and many more are among the many different types of clubs. Thus, the Maltese culture is rooted in most of these organizations that strive to keep a strong connection to Maltese heritage and tradition. The Maltese community congregates and engages in interactions here.

According to Shields (2005), most Maltese migrants have a decent social life and spend much of their time interacting with others<sup>[20]</sup>. These clubs and affiliations are often places where friendships are built or sustained.

In Melbourne alone, there are fifteen clubs that have connections to Gozo, the sister island, according to Xerri (2005)<sup>[26]</sup>. Azzopardi (2014) accords that these clubs and associations helped the Maltese migrants in Australia who were feeling lonely and isolated at the time of their migration to the new country<sup>[16]</sup>. Nostalgia of course is a primary factor that led to the foundation of most of the clubs. There is a wide spectrum of clubs and associations pertaining to other ethnic groups as well, including the Italian community (Baldassar 2005). According to Ben-Moshe, Pyke, and Andreevski (2012), 56% of the Macedonian diaspora is active in a Macedonian organisation in Australia<sup>[27]</sup>. The Croatian community is no exception<sup>[28]</sup>. Language maintenance is higher among those who frequent social clubs and groups, according to Martin’s (1996) study on language use among the Spanish-speaking community. According to Pauwels (2016), members of the first-generation typically attend community organisations and associations and make “greater use of the heritage language”<sup>[14]</sup>. For amusement and socialising, on the other hand, the younger generations favour alternative locations.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The study, “The Survival of the Maltese Language in Australia,” was carried out in Sydney and Melbourne. These two state capital cities were chosen because most of the Maltese diaspora lives there. Over the course of three weeks, twenty-eight adult participants who had previously consented in writing to engage in this study were questioned. Fifteen interviews were conducted in Melbourne, while thirteen interviews were held in Sydney. The interviewees were asked ten questions each and the face-to-face interviews were primarily conducted at their residences as part of the inquiry. Voice recordings of the interviewees were made. A few interviews were held at the educational institutions where Maltese is taught and learnt, and at some of the clubs that the participants attend. On average the interviews took around an hour. The University of Malta Research Ethics Committee (UREC) waived the need for a formal adjudication of the request to perform the study

because none of the subjects were considered vulnerable. Prior to the field inquiry and throughout the actual research, it was ensured that every one of the guiding principles put forward by the UREC was rigorously followed. Most of the participants consented to the publication of their names, while others preferred anonymity which was off course respected. The participants were asked for their authorization to be quoted, so that the findings would be substantiated and corroborated <sup>[29]</sup>.

To properly replicate the makeup of the ethnic community, it was thought to be crucial that there be the same number of male and female interviewees. Fourteen first-generation Maltese-Australians, seven second-generation Maltese-Australians, and seven third-generation Maltese-Australians were interviewed by the researcher. After that, all the interviews were coded for analysis. To “name units of data” is the goal of coding <sup>[30]</sup>. The continual comparative technique was used since this study was founded on the Grounded Theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) <sup>[31]</sup>. The three phases of coding used throughout the qualitative data analysis were open coding, at the initial stage, followed by axial coding and finally selective coding <sup>[32]</sup>.

In addition to conducting interviews, the researcher observed a group of Maltese-Australians as part of further qualitative study. Observations included a church that serves the Maltese population, a number of families, Maltese clubs, associations and organisations, and Maltese language schools. The researcher acted as an “*observer as participant*” throughout the observation sessions and in this way the efficacy of these sessions was further ensured <sup>[33]</sup>. For example, the researcher went to a Maltese folk-singing club in St. Albans, Melbourne, to observe members of the club interacting and enjoying their time. Many Maltese adults, both male and female, between the ages of 45 and about 90, were found to use the Maltese vernacular and occasionally code-switch. On the other hand, the researcher could observe the consumption of Maltese food and drinks, as well as the playing and singing of traditional folk music.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Although the participants were simply asked about the Maltese language’s usage and continued existence in

Australia, several of them shared their opinions concerning Maltese culture. This is likely because Maltese culture is enduring despite the language being less significant to the second and third generations of Maltese-Australians.

According to one first-generation participant, schools provide those raised in Australia the Australian culture, but on the other hand transmission of Maltese culture happens at home or places that the Maltese community frequents. Such places include the various clubs and associations which cater for a wide spectrum of tastes, hobbies, and interests. However, he maintains that “the culture will endure, at least momentarily, for a few years. It will not cease”. Another migrant argues that “it is nice if we maintain the Maltese culture alive”, but pessimistically he laments that the younger generation does not find the culture appealing since it is trapped at the time when most of the migrants moved to Australia. It seems that there was no evolution in the way that the Maltese-Australian community celebrates the culture and consequently the younger generations feel alienated.

This pessimism is shared by another interviewee who confesses that “on SBS I am producing a programme on SBS Radio about what I like. For example, music ... we cannot keep playing ‘Taxi Mary’ of years ago” (‘Taxi Mary’ being a renowned Maltese folk song). According to him, the Maltese community thinking about Maltese culture has not changed but is encapsulated in the time of their migration. There is nothing that allures the younger generations to join the institutions that celebrate Maltese culture, not because the younger generations wish to renounce their culture and origins, but because of the way it is presented to them, and the way the associations are run.

While the language will not persist, another participant is certain that “Malta’s heritage and culture will endure”. According to yet another respondent, “Maltese as a language gives the people of Maltese origin cultural identity.” It is not, however, the sole way that the Maltese people can be identified. He asserts that “food is a very powerful aspect of cultural heritage.” Maltese cuisine, such as *ross il-forn* (baked rice), *stuffat tal-fenek* (rabbit stew) and *qara’ bagħli mimli* (stuffed marrows), is prepared and consumed by second and third generations. A female participant in the study is ecstatic about the establishment of a Maltese restaurant in Melbourne linked to a sports club and



believes that “there is like a comeback.” The researcher agrees with her after visiting such a restaurant. A Maltese feeling has lain anchored in the heart of Melbourne.

According to a male first-generation citizen, while the language and culture are closely related, third-generation children are more drawn to the culture and customs, including food, than to the language. For example, Maltese dancing, another facet of Maltese culture, has been taught to Maltese-Australian children and adults in one club by a participant of this study who has also lived in Malta for a while.

At least in theory, the majority of Maltese Australians identify as Roman Catholics (Shields, 2005). Since several organizations have a sort of religious attachment, testament to the strong bearing of Roman Catholicism in the lives of many Maltese, mass in the Maltese vernacular is celebrated before some of the events that are regularly organized, including dinner-dances and feasts. These feasts are an imitation of the feasts of the towns and villages patron saints that are organized regularly in Malta. These feasts, which are modelled after the village feasts in Malta, are usually organised by the clubs, and not directly by the Church. Frendo (2020, p. 258), therefore, describes these feasts as ‘unreal’. Azzopardi (2014) asserts that traditional feasts do not appeal to the younger generations. In fact, several feasts have been permanently cancelled, and others are no longer much popular. Although many people attend these feasts, Frendo (2020) claims that just a small portion of the Maltese population enjoys them.

The Maltese diaspora in Australia has a strong sense of community, according to several of the interviewees. Everyone agrees that the first generation participates in many Maltese community clubs and associations. One female participant says that this sense of community is still strong, notwithstanding the fact that those who were born and raised in Malta are getting old and eventually perishing. Despite the Maltese community’s ageing, there is still a sense of belonging, and another male participant claims that the Maltese language and the common base cultures are still alive. In fact, one participant who moved to Australia rather recently observes that there is still a strong sense of community. However, even though she and her husband were born in Malta and moved to Australia after marriage, she is not a member of any Maltese clubs and

associations. She argues that while the Maltese identity is given by language, there are other factors as well, such family, cuisine, and customs that mould the Maltese distinctiveness.

Paradoxically, the Maltese community’s organizations were created to aid in the integration of the Maltese diaspora in Australia. According to one interviewee the constitution of most clubs and associations is based on assisting the Maltese in integrating into Australian society. Their goal upon their foundation was to help the Maltese in assimilating into Australian society. However, these venues serve as places where the Maltese diaspora can feel connected to Malta. Nonetheless, the preservation of the Maltese language in Australia is greatly aided by these same clubs. This is because persons who join these groups frequently speak Maltese. At the same time, code-switching and code-mixing is rampant. This is because, after so many years away from Malta and in constant contact with the English language, it is very natural that migrants switch between one language and the other. One of the participants in the study notes that the clubs’ leaflets have become bilingual for two main reasons. The clubs and associations try to allure the younger generations who usually cannot read Maltese, and also because some of the members of the ‘Maltese’ clubs are not of Maltese origin and joined these circles because of their friendship or connections to Maltese members.

Another participant reminisces that “we speak Maltese, and we talk a lot about the old times in Malta, while eating some Maltese goodies”. And yet another participant claims that he feels like being in Malta, when visiting one of his favourite clubs. It feels like home away from home. For instance, you get the impression that you are in Malta while you are at the folk singing club. Nevertheless, and rather unfortunate, it is rather clear that these clubs have failed to draw in the younger generations. As one second-generation participant explains, the clubs are primarily meant for a different age group, and they are usually open during the day when most second-generation migrants are working.

What it means to be Maltese is viewed differently by the different generations of Maltese Australians. The first generation has many memories of their childhood in Malta. They continue to adhere to Maltese customs and culture

out of nostalgia for their own land. As a result, a large portion of the elderly population participates actively in various Maltese clubs and associations. On the other contrary, as they are fully integrated Australians, the second and third generations do not frequent or belong to these clubs and do not see the need to join. In fact, interviewees pertaining to the third-generation have commented that they feel out of place in most of the clubs. This is because they grew up in a multicultural society, and while they appreciate the need of the older generations to keep the connection with anything Maltese, they like a “different kind of clubbing”. The fact that most of the third-generation does not speak Maltese does not help. Immersing oneself in an environment where most attendees speak Maltese is not the best option for going out and enjoying oneself. At the same time, staying away from the places where Maltese is spoken often, results in language shift. This is a catch twenty-two situation. Thereby, most of the organizations will cease to exist when the elderly pass away. Rhetorically, one of the participants in this study asks where the young Maltese community leaders are. This is a direct criticism to the Maltese-Australian community. This is because the leaders of the Maltese community in Australia have been there for more than forty years and have never given up their position in favour of a younger person who is more energetic and has more contemporary views. Thereby, there is no regeneration of the Maltese community.

Another interviewee draws comparisons between the Maltese community's circumstances and those of the Greek and Italian ethnic populations in Australia. He claims that the Greek immigrants realised how crucial their language was to maintain their culture when they first arrived in the continent. Thus, Greek schools and Greek language programs were established, and Greek youngsters attended Saturday schools to acquire the language. The Italians followed suit. Both the Greek language and the Italian language are not necessarily in Australia, but nevertheless the two communities strived to keep both languages alive. Many Italians and Greeks can communicate in their own dialect, even though they do not visit Italy or Greece annually. Both Italian and Greek immigrants understand that language is culture. Similarly, the Maltese language is also not very important in Australia. But the fact that most of the Maltese shifted away from the language shows the

marked differences in the attitudes, perceptions and values of the Maltese community as compared to other migrant groups. The language provides the younger generations with an opportunity to connect with the culture. Unfortunately, many missed this opportunity because the Maltese community did not have a high opinion of the Maltese language at a time when assimilation was encouraged. The Maltese immigrants carried with them the widespread belief that the Maltese language was not good. This is a result of the colonial mindset and inferiority complex that were common in Malta at the time when they left the country. Luckily, most of the migrants were not as dismissive about the culture as they were about the language.

The fact that while Maltese language maintenance amongst the Australian diaspora is problematic, while other cultural elements such as Maltese food and feasts are still popular, could be related to the notion of ‘symbolic ethnicity’, a term coined by Gans (1979) to describe the outward ethnic revival of various ethnic identities in America <sup>[34]</sup>. Gans contends that this revival revealed an increased consideration of ethnic identity and very evident characteristics of ethnicity, concurrently with a deterioration of other aspects of ethnicity. This is especially evident in the younger generations whose connection to the country of origin is minimal. Thus, symbolic ethnicity will eventually lead to a disinterest from ethnic social organizations. Alexiou (1993) argues that symbolic ethnicity does not affect people's lives because it is not essential to them and is somewhat an issue of personal preference <sup>[35]</sup>.

On the other hand, back in 2001, a study by Waitt, Galea & Rawstorne concluded that there was no indication of symbolic identifiers being given more weight by the second-generation cohort of Maltese-Australians in Sydney <sup>[36]</sup>. The viewpoints about symbolic identity were practically the same across the different generations and by location of residence. Many years later, attitudes amongst the community might have changed.

Nowadays, Australia is a multicultural society and there is space for everyone. Therefore, there is a sense of optimism rekindling within the Maltese community. This is because while the younger generations attend school and learn about Australian culture, it is also crucial to understand their grandparents' origins. As one interviewee put it, “we have to keep the Maltese language and culture present

here because Australia is multicultural.” At the end of the day the Australian identity is a blend of cultures from all over the world, and thus the Maltese culture should and is accepted as well. Contemporary Australian society encourages all migrant groups to accept, celebrate, and share their language, culture, and heritage.

## 4. Conclusions

The Maltese diaspora in Australia is gradually giving up the Maltese language and switching to English as their primary means of communication. While delving into the role played by the various Maltese clubs and associations in preserving Maltese culture and language, we can conclude that some families experienced this language shift within a single generation, whereas others experienced it within two generations. The researcher can see that the younger generations refuse to speak Maltese, but most are still keen on maintaining the customs.

The language is obviously in crisis. Since there isn’t much new blood in the community, most of the post-World War II migrants will perish within the next few years, which is likely to be the end of the Maltese language in Australia. However, a number of other cultural elements continue to flourish in the family sphere. The majority of Maltese Australians are doing well, and the diaspora has assimilated into Australia quite successfully. To draw in younger members, the community must re-evaluate the importance of the various clubs and associations and implement an action plan. These clubs will have to disband in the upcoming years if they do not gear for the future when the first-generation of Maltese migrants would be gone. This would be very unfortunate. These clubs and groups have a rich history and a close bond with Malta and thus their importance should not be disregarded.

Thereby, before it becomes too late, these organizations need to put forward concrete strategies for their survival. Unless they look forward and adapt to the needs and desires of the new generations, these clubs and associations would cease to exist in the next few years. Thus, cultural events should be modernized and include not only Maltese traditional folklore, but also elements of contemporary Maltese music and way of life. Further to this, better use of modern digital platforms for Maltese language teaching, and also for the dissemination of Maltese culture

could help in keeping the connection with Malta alive.

The Maltese language in Australia has the worst prospects because it is fighting a losing battle against English’s domination, but the efforts to preserve the language should go on. Culture and accumulated wisdom will always suffer when a language dies, and the loss of linguistic diversity should not be undervalued. The loss of the culture would inevitably imply that the migrants’ ties to their home country would be permanently severed.

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## Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Institutional Review Board (or Ethics Committee) of the University of Malta (2017).

## Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study

## Data Availability Statement

<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/95951> link to ‘The Survival of Maltese in Australia’.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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