We present preliminary results from ongoing research that examines the role of primary school supervisors in the negotiation of a standard language regime in Chile during the nation-state building process (1850-1880). Primary school supervisors were hired from teacher-training schools by the Chilean Department of Education to supervise pedagogic practices throughout the country and send reports back to the state government. In historical sociolinguistics, school inspection reports have been analyzed as crucial historical-sociolinguistic sources to better understand the implementation of official language-in-education policy, mostly in European contexts (Langer, 2011; Rutten y Schoemaker, 2017; Rutten, 2019). Theoretically, the implementation process has been addressed by interrogating to what extent primary school supervisors comply with superimposed norms and whether they reproduce or not standard language ideologies (Milroy 2001). This presentation contributes to the current discussion by analyzing the inspection reports published between 1852 and 1858 in the Monitor de Escuelas Primarias, an educational journal edited by the Chilean Department of Education not studied from a historical sociolinguistic perspective. We propose an interdisciplinary dialogue with a glottopolitical perspective to argue that the metalinguistic practices of primary school supervisors are crucial for examining the limitations, tensions and conflicts that emerge in the process of official language implementation (cf. Del Valle, 2020). Therefore, we understand implementation not as an imposition that should be measured but as an ideological process that involves the participation of multiple actors and agencies. To demonstrate this, we analyze the inspection reports using discourse analysis techniques (van Dijk, 1998; Wodak y Meyer, 2003). We focus on metadiscourse about the methods used in language education and the actions proposed and/or taken by the primary school inspectors (see example). This research advances knowledge in the field by examining new sources of data. Moreover, it highlights the metadiscursive practices of concrete agents involved in processes of implementation that have not been studied yet, to assess the concrete role of the educational system in the construction and reproduction of a standard language culture in Chile.
In one of the schools that appeared to be conducted by a competent person, telling by its classroom decency, the comfort of its furniture and writing tools, and the students' attendance, [the supervisor] asked the instructor what topic he was teaching. “I teach,” he answered, “following Fr. Sarmiento’s methodology: I have one student in arithmetic and four in basic math.” One student, out of the many who read, presented his assignments from an arithmetic text. While reading the digit numbers, [the supervisor] interrupted him every time he said “two₀, three₀, six₀, two₀, three₀, six₀”, so the student replied that he was just repeating the way his teacher had taught him. Rapidly, the student passed the issue on to his teacher, who after thinking for a while, said that if the numbers were not “two₀, three₀, six₀”, then they should be “second, third and sixth.” Finally, the supervisor cleared away the doubt, clearly pronouncing the final (s) in these numbers. The lesson surprised the teacher, who then said: “Students, this gentleman comes from the government to correct your language deficiencies, listen so you can learn and understand”. The words and appeals of the teacher were just as I write them; but if the students heard them I cannot say, since they could not even hear themselves, much less the teacher, who had gone hoarse telling them to be quiet, without success.

References:
Traducción de Tomás Fernández Aúz y Beatriz Eguibar.