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A matched-guise experiment on language attitudes towards the dialect of Trento

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A mia madre.

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Abstract

The present work contributes to the sociolinguistic understanding of language attitudes towards dialects in Italy. Following the technique developed by Lambert and his associates in 1960, a matched-guise experiment was conducted to investigate the attitudes of the Italian population with respect to the dialect of the city of Trento. A sample of 120 candidates was asked to rate twelve recordings, eight of which belonged to the same four speakers who performed both in Italian and in urban Trentino dialect. The speakers were formerly selected by means of a pre-survey according to their degree of Italian standardness and dialect nativeness. In the experiment participants evaluated the voices in terms of socioeconomic status, competence, and solidarity traits. It was predicted that dialect speakers would be generally rated less favourably if compared to Italian speakers, especially on status and competence attributes. Such attitude was expected to be shared to a greater extent among candidates from outside Trentino-Alto Adige than among those born and grown up in that region. Moreover, it was assumed that evaluations would be positive towards dialect guises on solidarity traits. Lastly, it was hypothesised that female speakers would be graded more negatively as compared to male guises in dialectal contexts, in particular as far as status and competence areas were concerned. A tendency to favour Italian guises emerged in status and competence traits, especially on the part of non-Trentino judges. The data showed that female speakers were favourably rated by Trentino participants in terms of social proximity when using dialect, whereas no significant differences appeared between male Italian and dialect guises. The evaluations given by respondents from outside Trentino-Alto Adige varied for each speaker, with the young male Italian guise being significantly favoured in almost all traits. Overall, correctness appeared to be associated to the Italian guise in all speakers, both on the part of Trentino and non-Trentino judges. It was concluded that the language attitudes that emerged from the experiment were favourable towards the national standard. Speakers of Trento dialect were held socially near solely by individuals sharing the same region of provenance. Competence and socioeconomic status were generally accorded to standard speakers, in that dialect appears to convey lower accuracy and proficiency levels to its users.

1. Introduction

The identification of the attitudes that people have towards a specific language, variety or dialect requires effort and research. A number of methodologies were developed over the last century in order to study language attitudes and one in particular proved to be effectively valid and advantageous. The matched-guise technique devised by Lambert and his colleagues in 1960 appeared to be a useful instrument researchers can make use of to further their knowledge on language attitudes. The approach consists in the analysis of participants' evaluations regarding a number of recordings in which subjects take on different linguistic guises. Respondents are not aware of the fact that they listen multiple times to the same person speaking different languages, varieties or dialects. They are asked to evaluate each voice on a series of traits related to personality, socioeconomic status and competence. The method allowed for the elicitation of conscious and unconscious attitudes participants have towards the language, variety or dialect under examination.

Since the sixties, the matched-guise technique has spread into the sociolinguistic field and research employing this approach has increased. The popularity of Lambert's methodology reached the Italian sociolinguistic panorama in the eighties with the work of Baroni (1983), which was focussed on language attitudes towards standard Italian, regional varieties and dialects in Milan, Bologna, Padova and Catania. Among the matched-guise experiments conducted in Italy are also those of Volkart-Rey (1990), Calamai and Ricci (2005), Di Ferrante (2007), Biliotti and Calami (2012), De Pascale et al. (2017), Licata (2019) and Mura (in press). These studies do not however cover the whole Italian sociolinguistic situation. On the contrary, they are concerned with specific and limited regional if not city areas. None of the above mentioned studies investigates the sociolinguistic situation in Trentino-Alto Adige. This Italian region is divided into two autonomous provinces, namely that of Bolzano and that of Trento, and both provinces have distinctly different linguistic profiles.

Against this background, I designed the present matched-guise experiment. The work aims at analysing language attitudes that participants from Trentino-Alto Adige and from outside the region have towards the dialect spoken in the city of Trento. The

research is limited to the urban dialect and contributes to the understanding of the Italian sociolinguistic situation.

Before describing the experiment itself, Chapter 2 is dedicated to the languages and dialects spoken within Trentino-Alto Adige. I firstly provide an historical overview of the multilingual and multidialectal context of the region (§2.1) and an analysis of the languages and dialects currently spoken in the Autonomous Province of Trento (§2.2). Lastly, I examine the main linguistic features of central urban Trentino, the dialect spoken in the city of Trento. Chapter 3 is concerned with a literature review on language attitudes and matched-guise experiments. I provide a definition of the notion of language attitudes and examine a number of methods employed to study them (§3.1). I analyse the technique devised by Lambert et al. (1960) by explaining how it works and how it can be designed, and I also examine a number of examples of matched-guise experiments (§3.2). In Chapter 4, I describe the design process of my experiment. I provide research aim and questions (§4.1), I analyse text, speaker and trait selection (§4.2), and I present information on data collection (§4.3). Chapter 5 deals with the results obtained from the experiment. I explain the data computations (§5.1), and analyse the evaluations on the dialect and the Italian guises along with the difference in ratings given by the two groups of judges (§5.2). Chapter 6 constitutes the discussion section, where I underline the major aspects emerged from the research (§6.1 and §6.2). I also acknowledge the limits of the matched-guise experimental design and I propose further research that can follow and extend the present work (§6.3). Lastly, I draw the conclusions of the present research and summarise the main aspects emerged from the experiment in Chapter 7.

2. Trentino-Alto Adige: languages and dialects spoken in the region

The present chapter provides an analysis of the dialects and languages spoken in Trentino-Alto Adige from an historical point of view explaining how contemporary local languages are the result of multiple population encounters (§2.1). A more detailed examination of the linguistic situation in the Autonomous Province of Trento follows the historical overview and describes the characteristics as well as the specific location of seven groups into which Trentino dialects are divided, and two Germanic minority languages spoken in the region, namely Cimbrian and Mòcheno (§2.2). Lastly, a linguistic analysis of urban central Trentino is reported with a special focus on the phonetic aspects that mostly characterise the dialect (§2.3).

2.1. Historical overview of the multilingual and multidialectal context of Trentino-Alto Adige

Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol is a region located in the north-eastern part of the Italian peninsula and along with Sardegna, Sicilia, Valle d'Aosta and Friuli Venezia Giulia, it has a special status of self-governance, as established by Art.116 of the Italian Constitution. However, what characterises and differentiates this region from the others is the fact that it is composed of the Autonomous Province of Trento and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, commonly referred to as Trentino and Alto Adige (Südtirol). Their acting power is more comparable to that of an actual region than to that of a province (Pizzorusso, 2001). Within the region, various languages are spoken, including Italian, dialects, Ladin as well as German and Germanic varieties, such as Cimbrian and Mòcheno. The present section aims at providing an overview of the main historical events that have led to the present multilingual and multidialectal state of the region.

From a linguistic point of view, northern Italy displays a prosperous dialectal variation notwithstanding the fact that its character is clearly predominantly Romance (Casalicchio and Cordin, 2020). As a whole, northern Italian dialects share a number of phonological features, such as the fact that geminated consonants tend to be shortened,

intervocalic voiceless consonants tend to be voiced (Marcato, 2002), and unstressed vowels occurring in final position display the tendency to be dropped, with the exception of the central [a] (Casalicchio and Cordin, 2020). The dialects of Northern Italy can be divided into two main groups, namely the Venetian or Venetan[1] and the Gallo-Italic, to which Piedmontese, Emilian, Romagnol, Ligurian and Lombard dialects belong (Masini, 2010; Marcato, 2002). In Trentino-Alto Adige it is possible to observe or, better, hear and recognise a combination of Venetan and Lombard dialects as well as Germanic influences in some specific village languages. This is due to the history of the entire region. Trentino is described by Casalicchio and Cordin (2020, p. 2) as a transition area, as a matter of fact the location of the territory has played a strategic key role from the Romanisation times to the present day, conveying the region its complex and multifaceted character, as suggested by Baggio (2015). The current situation is the result of the contact of various linguistically different population flows that have crossed the area.

As explained by Baggio (2015), current Trentino-Alto Adige was firstly occupied by populations coming from southern Italy during the Romanisation period. At the time, colonising flows reached the region both from Lombardia — firstly from the westernmost Milanese territories and later from the Brescian ones — and from the Venetan areas of Feltre, Vicenza and eventually Verona. When Caesar Augustus divided Roman Italy into regions, most of the area of present Trentino-Alto Adige was part of the *Regio X Venetia et Histria*, whose southern territories were divided into four *municipia*, namely those of Feltre, Verona, Brescia and Trento, formerly called Tridentum (Rebecchi et al., 2004). Such districts represented the first populations who arrived during the colonisation period and brought along their own languages, which spread and developed over the ages into the current linguistic varieties of the region. It was only after a few centuries that people from the north approached the lands of Trentino-Alto Adige, presumably escaping from the Germanic invasions occurring from the third to the fifth century (Baggio, 2015). Being these populations Gallic, they brought along the Gaulish language that is now present in modern Ladin and spoken in

[1] In order to avoid linguistic and geographical misunderstandings, the term ‘Venetan’ will be henceforth used to refer to dialects and territories of the entire region Veneto, whereas the term ‘Venetian’ will be used to indicate dialects and territories restricted to the province of Venice.

Val Badia, Val Gardena, Val di Fassa, and in some specific Venetan and Friulian towns.

The Early Middle Ages witnessed the arrival of a Germanic population flow that introduced in contemporary Alto-Adige several Bavarian dialects (Baggio, 2015). These languages caused the initial fracture between Trentino and Südtirol, in that since the eighth century Tyrolese languages spread enough to create perceptible linguistic diversities. Because of the German influence on the language spoken in Alto-Adige, Baggio rightly describes the territory as an area of romance origins which underwent a process of germanisation (2015, p. 26). Dissimilarities became also detectable in the organisation of state power when the dioceses of Trento and Bressanone were established in the twelfth century. Despite the growing cultural differences developed during the Renaissance period, the two principalities did not break the ties with each other, on the contrary Baggio (2015) asserts that dynastic bonds were preserved as well as the multilingual character of the territory.

In the fourteenth century the status of national Italian language was being assigned to the Florentine dialect, whereas the other languages spoken in the peninsula experienced a downgrading from the title of local languages to that of dialects (Dal Negro and Vietti, 2011; Morgana, 2010). It was not until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, that Italian with a Tuscan basis was actually used and shared by the majority of the Italian population and could be identified as the actual language of Italy. With the spread of nationalism throughout Europe, the idea of one national language as a means of state unification developed along with the establishment of national borders (Pizzorusso, 2001). The first European country that understood the power of a national language was France, which inherited the concept of linguistic unity from the Revolution (Di Ferrante, 2007). Contrary to France, other European states did not have a single predominant language spoken inside their territories but displayed a multifaceted linguistic picture. Switzerland, for instance, solved the multilingual challenge with the establishment of various languages as the official national ones, whereas Austria-Hungary officially recognised the inviolable character of the languages of all the people in the empire (Pizzorusso, 2001). Among the European powers, Italy faced a similar linguistic issue. Being numerous dialects and languages spoken throughout the country, Italian based on Florentine was considered the national

language[2] but at the same time dialects kept being used locally as well as minority languages.

The twentieth century was however not only the era of nationalist ideologies, it also witnessed the official recognition and safeguard of minority languages, especially in the second postwar period, at an international, European and regional level. As explained by Pizzorusso (2001), at the Paris Peace Conference held in the aftermath of World War I the need for protection of minorities' rights became evident and states such as Poland signed treaties which aimed at respecting and safeguarding religious, race and linguistic minorities present inside national boundaries. It needs to be reminded that the Paris Peace Conference also marked the annexation of modern Trentino-Alto Adige to the Reign of Italy, as the territories were previously part of the Habsburg Empire (Casalicchio and Cordin, 2020). After World War II more attention was paid to minority communities, most likely as a reaction to the nationalist regimes that had focussed on the development of a sigle unifying language and on the repression of all non-national others. At the international level, the United Nation General Assembly provided the guidelines for the safeguard of monitory communities in Art.27 of the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" in 1966. In addition, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the accords signed at the end of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, underlined the importance of the protection of linguistic minorities' rights. As for the European Union, the Council of Europe signed in 1950 the "European Convention on Human Rights", in which discriminations based on language are prohibited in Art.14 (Pizzorusso, 2001), and in 1995 the "Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities", in order to set further directions on the safeguard of minority groups inside the territories of the signatory states. At a more regional level, the Decree of President of the Republic n.670 of 1972, which approved the special status of autonomy of Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol and established the two autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano, granted with Art.2 equal rights to all citizens irrespective of the linguistic group they belong to. Furthermore, the Legislative Decree of December 16, 1993 n.592 specified the guidelines for the safeguard of Ladin,

[2] Although Italian was considered to be the common language of the Republic, the Constitution made (and still makes) no reference to it. It was Art.1 of law 482 that officially and overtly established it in 1999. A previous indirect mention can be read in Art.99 of the Decree of President of the Republic n.670 of August 31, 1972.

Cimbrian and Mòcheno communities in the Autonomous Province of Trento. With the Paris Peace Conference paving the way for monitories' safeguard, all the above mentioned international, European and regional legislations clearly prove a common attempt towards the survival of minority languages. They are part of the cultural and linguistic heritage of a nation or a region, like Ladin, Cimbrian and Mòcheno are with respect to Trentino-Alto Adige.

While the twentieth century brought a growing awareness of the importance of protecting minority languages, this period also marked the spread of a standard language and the consequent decrease in dialectal use. With the Fascist regime being poorly tolerant towards dialects (and minorities), the school system was reformed so as to encourage the use of standard language at the expense of dialects. Dialects started to be slowly abandoned and consistently translated into Italian during classes, and also dialectal interferences started to be marked as mistakes (Morgana 2010). However, the school system was not the sole responsible for the increasing eradication of dialect employment. As Dal Negro and Vietti (2011) and Morgana (2010) suggest, also the urbanisation and industrialisation processes and the consequent population movement from rural areas to cities played a role as well as the means of communication and the compulsory military service, because of which soldiers from different parts of Italy came into contact and communicated more easily by means of a shared standard Italian language. Around the end of the seventies, changes in the approach towards dialects occurred. Student-centred teaching methods were developed in the educational field directing the attention to learners. As a consequence, dialects gained the status of relevance as they were considered to be part of the linguistic and cultural heritage of students (Morgana, 2010). Educational paths became concerned with the relationship between Italian and dialects and, also, grammar books shifted from a prescriptive to a descriptive approach (Morgana, 2010), no more underscoring dialectal interferences as errors. Such changes in perspective however could not undo what had happened in the previous decades. A process of Italianisation of dialects had occurred, as the Italian language had dramatically influenced somehow all dialects throughout the peninsula, causing for instance the decline of dialect-specific terms. Proof of such phenomenon is the introduction of Italian-like words in dialects. For example, the Venetan archaic term

piron ‘fork’ was substituted by the modern *forcheta* (Masini, 2010), the Salentine archaic *casu* ‘cheese’ was superseded by the modern *formaggiu*, or in the case of the dialect of Trento the archaic *carega* ‘chair’ was replaced by the modern *sedia*. As suggested by Berruto (2006, p. 108), Italianisation affected to a greater extent the lexical dimension of dialects with respect to their phonology, morphology or syntax. This was predominantly due to extralinguistic factors, such as the fact that development in social, technological and economical fields provided new lexical domains for which dialects had no adequate and corresponding vocabulary.

Since the Unification of Italy, dialects underwent several processes of abandonment and contempt enough to make some scholars speculate for their possible disappearance. For instance, Berruto (1994, as cited in Berruto, 2006) hypothesised and dated their actual death in the worst-case scenario around 2060-2085 and in the best-case scenario around 2350. Nevertheless, the Italian population has not entirely ceased to speak dialects, in that it has shifted from a dialectal monolingualism to the current picture of bilingualism, by which people learn Italian as their mother tongue and can either use or simply understand at least one dialect (Morgana, 2010). Notwithstanding the fact that modern dialect speakers address their children not using dialect but standard Italian, Dal Negro and Vietti (2011, p. 5) suggest that dialect transmission is nonetheless ensured by cross-generational relations between grandchildren and their grandparents as well as communicational acts occurring within peer and neighbourhood circumstances. Although the amount of dialect speakers appear to be decreasing, the contexts in which dialects are employed seem to expand. For this reason Berruto (2006, p. 118) argues about dialectal revivals (*risorgenze dialettali*), indicating that, despite being to a great extent superseded by standard Italian, dialects are gradually reappearing in unexpected contexts, such as text messages, e-mails, forums, comics, puzzles, magazines, radios, local televisions, shops and pub signs as well as song lyrics. Despite the fact that young speakers display the tendency to mainly use Italian, dialects have survived until the present day, especially in the north-east, in the south and in the islands of Italy (Morgana, 2010), but not in the north-west (Berruto, 2006). According to the report on the use of the Italian language, dialects and foreign languages in the country published by ISTAT in 2017, there was a dramatic decline in exclusive users of dialect, who

decreased from 32% in 1988 to 14% in 2015. However, the same study shows that 54,9% of the population in the Province of Trento uses dialect, albeit not exclusively, when speaking to a family member. As for the minority languages, according to the press release of June 28, 2012 of the Autonomous Province of Trento on the fifteenth population Census, in 2011 3,5% of the citizens of Trentino declared to speak Ladin, while 0,3% to belong to the Mòcheno community and 0,2% to the Cimbrian minority.

To conclude, all languages currently spoken in Trentino-Alto Adige developed out of the contact of population flows coming from the diverse areas surrounding the region and evolved across the centuries into modern dialects and minority languages of Ladin, Cimbrian and Mòcheno. For a relatively concise period of time, dialects were disregarded as well as minority languages. Although this phenomenon lasted for less than half a century, the consequences cannot be undone. The decreasing tendency of dialectal use seems to be an unavoidable as well as an unstoppable matter of fact. However, it appears clear from international, European and regional legislations that there is a shared intent aimed towards the safeguard of linguistic variety, not only that of the minority languages but also that of dialects, which are being constantly studied and, although in a weaker form with respect to the past, being passed on to the new generations.

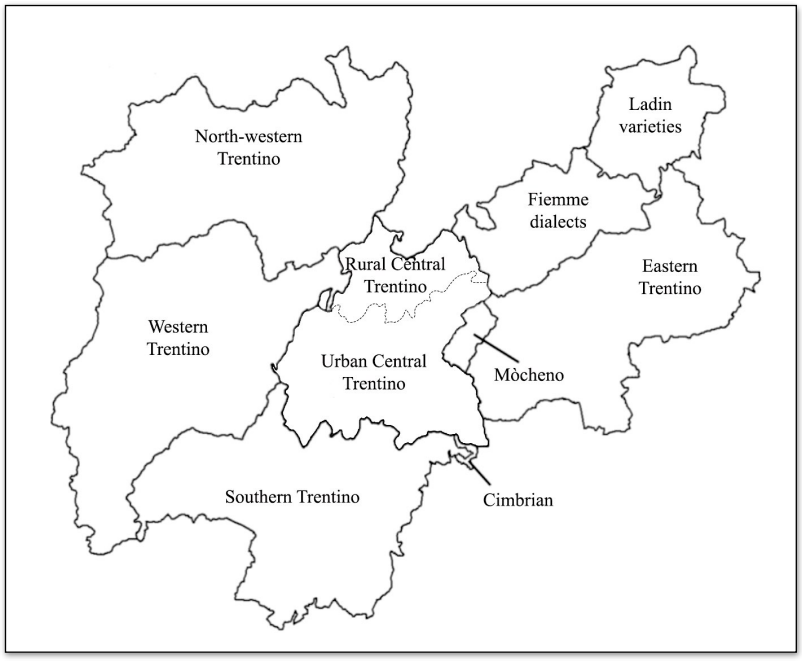
2.2. Languages and dialects spoken in the Autonomous Province of Trento

While the previous section has provided a historical analysis of the main events that led several linguistic varieties to come into contact in Trentino-Alto Adige shaping the multilingual and multidialectal character of the territory, the present section outlines the dialects and minority languages spoken in the Autonomous Province of Trento from a geographical and a linguistic point of view.

It is not possible to identify an actual dialect that originated in Trentino, as all the languages spoken in the territory come from the surrounding areas. Over time, those languages have however blended together and evolved into the modern dialects of the Province of Trento. The territory is therefore weak in its linguistic identity and can be deemed as the extension of the Venetan dialects on the one hand and of the Lombard

dialects on the other, as Baggio (2015, p. 32) suggests.

Casalicchio and Cordin (2020) present a thorough classification of the linguistic varieties that are present in Trentino. Firstly, the scholars distinguish between languages of Germanic and of Romance origin. The former are a particularly limited group in terms of both territorial extension and number, and they are composed of the minority languages Mòcheno and Cimbrian. The latter are a moderately large and assorted class which includes seven groups of dialects (North-western, Western, Southern, Central, Eastern, and Fiemme) and Ladin, the third linguistic minority of the region. A detailed analysis of the dialectal classes of Trentino based on Casalicchio and Cordin (2020) is reported in the following paragraphs.



Map 1. Languages and dialects spoken in Trentino

As it can be observed in Map 1[3], North-western dialects are spoken in the north-westernmost part of the Province of Trento, specifically in Val di Sole and Val di Non. As a whole, these dialects appear to be conservative as they preserve some old Alpine characteristics. If closely compared, Solandro, the variety spoken in Val di Sole, and Noneso, the variety spoken in Val di Non, exhibit dissimilarities, nevertheless they fall

[3] In order to fit the purposes of the present chapter, Map 1 was adapted from Map 2 of Casalicchio and Cordin (2020, p. 14).

under the same class, in that they display a number of shared phonological and morphological features. For instance, when the velar plosives [k] and [g] occur before the central open vowel [a], they tend to be palatalised as in [ç]auzòti[4] or [tʃ]auzòti[5] 'socks' (It. 'calzini'). When in Italian the lateral [l] occurs between the central vowel [a] and a consonant, Noneso and Solandro turn it into the back close vowel [u] as in cia[u]t 'warm' (It. 'caldo') and in a[u]t 'tall' (It. 'alto'). In addition, as far as morphological similarities are concerned, both dialects display the endings *-i* for the first person singular and *-s* for the second person singular in the indicative present and imperfect, as in *mi cianti* 'I sing' (It. 'io canto') and *ti ciantes* 'you sing' (It. 'tu canti'). As noted by Casalicchio and Cordin (2020), a number of outdated characteristics of Lombard can be traced in the most peripheral areas of Val di Sole, which border with the region Lombardia. Among these features, there is the absence of the above mentioned palatalisation phenomenon.

South of Val di Sole and Val di Non are the Western dialects, which resemble the Lombard variety in a number of characteristics and are spoken in the area of Tione, in Val Rendena and in Val di Ledro. Typical phonological features of this group of dialects are the fall of final vowels except for the central open [a], as in *gal* 'cock' (It. 'gallo') and *nòt* 'night' (It. 'notte'), and the presence of rounded front vowels [y] and [œ] as in *lüna* l[y]na 'moon' (It. 'luna') and *föch* f[œ]ch 'fire' (It. 'fuoco'). Furthermore, in Western dialects there is the tendency to replace the proto-Romance [e] with the open-mid front vowel [ɛ] when it occurs in a closed syllable as in *frèt* fr[ɛ]t 'cold' (It. 'freddo'), *sèch* s[ɛ]ch 'dry' (It. 'secco'). In addition, words that in Latin would end in -arius or -aria display in Western dialects the palatalisation of the front vowel [a], which turns into the open-mid front vowel [ɛ] as in *zenèr* zen[ɛ]r 'January'(Lat. 'Ianuarius', It. 'gennaio'), and in *ferèr* fer[ɛ]r 'smith' (Lat. 'ferrarius', It. 'fabbro'). Lastly, when singular words that end in voiceless dental plosive [t] or in nasal [n] are given in their plural forms, the ending consonants are palatalised as in *gat*/*gac* ga[t]/ga[k] 'cat'/'cats' (It. 'gatto'/'gatti'), and in *can*/*cagn* ca[n]/ca[ɲ] 'dog'/'dogs' (It.

[4] Dialect vocabulary henceforth used to exemplify dialect features is taken from *Piccolo Vocabolario Trentino Italiano* (https://arcopoesia.wordpress.com/piccolo-vocabolario-trentino-italiano/).

[5] As outlined by Tomasini (1955, as cited in Abram, 2017), the phenomenon in question can result both into the palatal fricatives [ç] and [ʝ] and into the post-alveolar affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ].

‘cane’/‘cani’). The aforementioned phonological characteristics are shared among the dialects of the Western group with some clear variation, as the area in which they are spoken is vast and slight changes can occur.

As the label itself suggests, the group of Southern dialects is unmistakably spoken in the southern area of Trentino. Due to the location in the region, the resemblance to the Venetan Veronese dialect is indisputably justified. What generally characterises these dialects is the fact that they use the close-mid back vowel [o] in place of the open-mid back [ɔ] in words such as *óf* [o]f ‘egg’, *nóf* n[o]f ‘new’ and *bóm* b[o]m ‘good’, and the fact that the (pre)palatal affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] undergo assibilation[6] as in *zima* [θ]ima ‘peak’ (It. ‘cima’) and *zent* [ð]ent ‘people’ (It. ‘gente’). Moreover, the set of vowels of this group does not include the rounded [œ] and [y] typical of the Western dialects. Southern dialects replace the dental nasal [n] with the bilabial nasal [m] when it occurs at the end of words such as *bóm* bó[m] ‘good’ (It. ‘buono’) and *vim* vi[m] ‘wine’ (It. ‘vino’). Lastly, these dialects tend to drop the dental consonant when it occurs in the last syllable and is surrounded by vowels as in *soldài* (It. ‘soldati’) and *battua* ‘joke’ (It. ‘battuta’).

Similarly to the Southern, Eastern dialects share a large amount of features with the close Venetan dialects, especially with those of Feltre and Vicenza which are close to the eastern borders of Trentino. These dialects are spoken in Valsugana, Valle di Primiero, in Val di Sella and Val Campelle, and in the Tesino plateau, but not in the Alta Valsugana. The areas around Pergine, Caldonazzo and Levico belong to the group of Central dialects, and the territories of Val dei Mòcheni to the Mòcheno. The fact that Eastern dialects do not generally drop the final vowel distinguishes them from the other dialects of Trentino. However, such fall occurs when vowels are preceded by nasal or liquid consonants. Note for instance that in *corvo* ‘raven’ the final vowel remains, whereas in *can* ‘dog’ (It. ‘cane’) and *bon* ‘good’ (It. ‘buono’) it falls because it follows nasal consonants. Further characteristics of the Eastern dialects are the transformation of [tʃ] and [dʒ] into dental fricatives (with the exception of the area of Primiero, in which cases of such affricates turning into voiced dental plosive [d] are attested) and the lack of rounded vowels [œ] and [y], as in the Southern dialects. Lastly, two more

[6] A discussion on assibilation and the resulting realisation of Trentino *z* is provided in §2.3.

phonological features are worth to be mentioned. The Latin lateral consonant [l] (given in modern Italian with [ʎ]) undergoes a weakening process when it occurs between vowels, as in *faméia* or *faméa* 'family' (Lat. 'familia', It. 'famiglia'). Verbs which in their infinitive form end in *-ere* tend to lose the penultimate front vowel [e], as in *métre* 'to put' (It. 'mettere') and *bévre* 'to drink' (arch. It. 'bevere').

In the heart of Trentino, Central dialects provide indisputable evidence of the contact between Venetan and Lombard populations. The area of distribution of such dialects is not only that of Trento and the surrounding hills, on the contrary it extends on the west side of the city to the towns of Terlago, Vezzano and Cavedine, on the east side to Val di Cembra, to the towns of Pergine, Levico and Caldonazzo and to the village of Piné. On the northern side, the Central dialect area is marked by the beginning of Alto Adige, while on the southern part it ends on the right bank of the Adige river with the village of Aldeno and on the left bank with the locality of Murazzi, around the villages of Besenello and Calliano. Central dialects present an internal subdivision, which is marked by the dotted line in Map 1 and mirrors the two main varieties within the territory. Thus, Central dialects are composed of the rural group and urban one, which is more closely analysed in the next section, as it represents the core of the present work. The character of the rural variety is more conservative if compared to that of the urban dialect. As a matter of fact, rural Trentino maintains typical features of Lombard dialects, leaving little room to Venetan or Italian interferences. This is not surprising, as central rural dialects are spoken in Val di Cembra, in the near Piné plateau, as well as in Roveré della Luna and in the Rotaliana Plain, which are all non-metropolitan areas and, for this reason, less open to innovations. Speakers of central rural Trentino typically do not turn the (pre)palatal affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] into interdental fricatives. On the contrary, they maintain the consonants as in *giòbia* [dʒ]òbia 'Thursday' (It. 'giovedì') and *céra* [tʃ]éra 'wax' (It. 'cera'). In addition, these dialects conjugate the second person singular in the indicative present using the ending *-es*, as in *ti te ciames* 'your name is' (It. 'tu ti chiami') and *ti te ses* 'you are' (It. 'tu sei'), similarly to Noneso and Solandro.

Inferable from the denomination itself, Fiemme dialects are spoken in the Fiemme Valley, that is located in north-eastern Trentino and, along with the Central dialects,

contain traits of both Lombard and Venetan languages. Despite sharing features of both their ancestors, Fiemme and Central dialects differ in several aspects, such as for the fact that, when the affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] occur in intervocalic position, Fiemme dialects turn them into palatal fricatives. If they occur at the beginning of a word, they do not undergo changes. This is however not true for the variety of Cavalese, which displays the affricate transformation into dental fricatives, as in the Central dialects. Lastly, Fiemme dialects realise the Italian palatal lateral [ʎ] occurring in intervocalic position with the voiced palatal affricate [dʒ], as in *pàgia* pà[dʒ]a ‘straw’ (It. ‘paglia’), and present the second person singular *-s* ending in verb conjugation, as in *ti te magnes* ‘you eat’ (It. ‘tu mangi’).

Ladin varieties cover the north-easternmost area of Trentino, precisely they are spoken in Val di Fassa and for this reason are also referred to as Fassan. They are composed of the varieties of Cazét, spoken in the northern area of the valley, of Brach, spoken in the central part of the valley, and of Moenat, spoken in the area of Moena. Among the three groups, the former constitutes the basis for the official standard variety of Fassan that is employed not only in schools, but also in official documents and by the press. Fassan, however, does not represent the sole variant within the Ladin group in north Italy, in that Alto-Adige and Veneto also host other Ladin communities. While the South-tyrolese Ladin varieties tend to be less open to alterations, the other variants are definitely less conservative in the acceptance of Italian and dialectal interferences. Among the characteristics illustrated in Casalicchio and Cordin (2020), relevant phonological features are the fact that, before the central vowel [a], the velar plosives [k] and [g] tend to be palatalised as in *ciavàl* [tʃ]avàl ‘horse’ (It. ‘cavallo’) and *gial* [dʒ]al ‘cock’ (It. ‘gallo’), and the fact that Latin stressed vowels that occur in open syllables of words accented on the penultimate syllable tend to be lengthened, as in *séidesc* s[e:]idesc ‘sixteen’ (Lat. ‘sēdĕcim’) and gol[o:]usa ‘greedy’ (Lat. ‘gŭlōsus’).

Besides Fassan, two more languages belong to the group of minority languages safeguarded in Trentino, namely Cimbrian and Mòcheno. The Cimbrian area is particularly restricted. Nowadays the language is only spoken in the village of Luserna, whereas in the past it could also be found in the Venetan provinces of Vicenza and Verona. As for Mòcheno, its distribution area is larger than Cimbrian, as a matter of fact

it is spoken in Val dei Mòcheni, precisely in Fierozzo, Frassilongo and Palù del Fersina. Both minority languages are of Germanic origin, as they were brought to Trentino by Southern Bavarian workers who reached the region in the Middle Ages. Since then, there were no further contacts with other languages of the same family. As a consequence, Mòcheno and Cimbrian have kept typical linguistic characteristics of medieval times.

The present section consisted of a linguistic and geographical review of dialects and languages spoken in the Autonomous Province of Trento. The following section is dedicated to central urban Trentino and provides an analysis of the phonological features of the dialect of Trento.

2.3. Linguistic analysis of the dialect spoken in the city of Trento

Despite the existence of a number of studies on the dialects of Trentino, the dialectological literature lacks a grammar that systematically covers all the linguistic aspects of the language. According to Casalicchio and Cordin (2020), the existing works consist at times of partial grammars or descriptions concerned with specific varieties that appear in the introductory chapters of glossaries. However, the scholars report an abundance of dictionaries, such as Fox (2014), Groff (1955), Ricci (1904), and Azzolini (1856), among others. Dialect dictionaries can either be differential or non-differential (Nessi, 2006, as cited in Cordin, 2011). To the former group belong those that exclusively list authentic archaic terms, whereas the latter group also includes modern vocabulary and may therefore display old as well as recent words such as *manegòt* and *polsìn*, ‘cuff’, *càile* and *braghe*, ‘trousers’, and *bólp* and *vólp*, ‘fox’. The purpose of the present section is to provide a linguistic analysis of the dialect specifically spoken in the city of Trento, which is here examined with a particular reference to its phonetic and phonological features.

As already introduced in the previous section, the dialect of Trento belongs to Central Trentino, precisely to the urban group spoken not only in the capital city of the region but also in the towns of Vezzano, Levico, Pergine, Vigolo Vattaro and Civezzano. Albeit urban Trentino is less conservative than the rural variety in that it allows for

linguistic innovations, it clearly comprehends features that are typical of its ancestors, namely Lombard and Venetan. Baggio describes the dialect of Trento as a venetanised Lombard (2015, p. 33), most likely because the Venetan influences have been increasingly accepted in the norm replacing Lombard traits. This is evidenced by the fact that front rounded vowels [œ] and [y], which are Lombard peculiarities (Casalicchio and Cordin, 2020), are currently excluded from the vocalic set of urban Trentino. These vowels are considered archaic and localised in the peripheral villages of the valleys. The sound difference is evident in the word 'moon', which is pronounced *lüna* l[y]na in Val di Cembra and *luna* l[u]na in the urban area. Due to the absence of rounded vowels, the contemporary dialect of Trento significantly resembles Venetan. Notwithstanding, Lombard traces continue to persist in the following two phenomena. Unlike Italian, dialect derivatives of Latin do not display diphthongs as the result of *ĕ* and *ŏ*, as in *el vèn* 'he comes' (Lat. 'vĕnit', It. 'lui viene') and *fòch* 'fire' (Lat. 'fŏcus', It. 'fuoco'). Secondly, the dialect of Trento exhibits the drop of unstressed final vowels different from [a] in singular nouns as in *còrf* 'raven', *nàs* 'nose' but *còla*, 'glue', and adjectives as *drìt* 'straight (M.SG.)' but *drìta* 'straight (F.SG.)'. The fall of final vowels can also be observed in the infinitive form of all verbs as in *ciapàr* 'to take', *fiocàr* 'to snow', *esser* 'to be', *scoèrzer* 'to cover', *sepelìr* 'to bury', *dìr* 'to say'. Along with Lombard and Venetan features, also Ladin traits are recognisable in central dialects of Trentino (Mastrelli Anzilotti, 1992, as cited in Casalicchio and Cordin, 2020), for instance the lack of the process of assibilation of [tʃ] and [dʒ] as in *gènt* 'people' and *cèna* 'dinner', and the existence of sequences allowing [l] to follow a consonant. Such Ladin characteristics are however typical of rural varieties and are not identifiable in urban Trentino, because assibilation is one of the main properties of the dialect, as it is presented below.

Casalicchio and Cordin (2020, p. 24) list a number of features that are approximately shared among the dialect varieties of Trentino. Those traits represent the major phonetic phenomena that characterise the dialect of Trento and its surrounding hills, and, along with others, are presented in the remaining part of the section.

The first peculiar aspect of urban Trentino consists in the absence of consonantal gemination as exemplified by the words *bèla* 'beautiful (F.SG.)' (Lat. 'bĕllus', It.

‘bella’), *caval* ‘horse’ (Lat. ‘caballus’, It. ‘cavallo’), *balàr* ‘to dance’ (Lat. ‘ballare’, It. ‘ballare’) and *nòno* ‘grandfather’ (Lat. ‘nonnus’, It. ‘nonno’). Secondly, Trento dialect displays the tendency to turn Latin intervocalic voiceless plosives into voiced as in the nouns *cazador* ‘hunter’ (Lat. ‘captŏr’), *roda* ‘wheel’ (Lat. ‘rŏta’) and in various past participles such as *famada* ‘hungry, starved (F.SG.)’ derived from Lat. *fămēs* and *bevuda* ‘drunk (F.SG.)’ derived from Lat. *bĭbĕre*. Occasionally, voiceless intervocalic plosives can however result in the fall of the entire final syllable, as in *prà* ‘lawn’ derived from Lat. *prātum*, *vestì* ‘dress’ derived from Lat. *vestītŭs* and *zugà* ‘(to have) played’ derived from Lat. *iŏcare*. A third phonetic feature concerns the lateral palatal [ʎ], which appears in Italian as the result of Latin lateral alveolar [l] but is absent in dialect, as in the examples *paia* ‘straw’ (Lat. ‘pălĕa’), *paiazzo* ‘clown’ (derived from Lat. *pălĕa*), *cunèi* ‘rabbits’ (Lat. ‘cunīcŭlus’). The following two characteristics represent the Lombard traces mentioned above. Typical of urban dialect is the drop of unstressed vowels different from [a] occurring in final position of singular nouns and adjectives, as in *òs* ‘bone’ but *òssi* ‘bones’, *vòlp* ‘fox’ but *vòlpi* ‘foxes’, *bòn* ‘good (M.SG.)’ but *bòni* ‘good (M.PL.)’. In addition, the result of Latin *ĕ* and *ŏ* not in diphthong but in simple vowels is also characteristic of urban Trentino, see for instance *fòra* ‘outside’ (Lat. ‘fŏras’, It. ‘fuori’), *algéri* ‘yesterday’ (Lat. ‘hĕri’, It. ‘ieri’) and *còr* ‘heart’ (Lat. ‘cŏr’, It. ‘cuore’).

A further phonetic aspect can be identified as peculiar of the dialect of Trento. Generally, Latin velar plosive [g] followed by alveolar nasal [n] results in lateral nasal [ɲ] in both Italian and Trentino, as in *pugno* and *pugnàt*, ‘handful’, from Lat. *pugnus*, in *regnare* and *regnàr*, ‘to reign’, from Lat. *regnāre*, and in *cognato* and *cugnà*, ’brother in law’, derived from Lat. *cognātus*. Such intervocalic lateral nasals are geminated in standard Italian pronunciation, whereas they are not in dialect. The different realisation can be observed in *pugno* pu[ɲɲ]o and *pugnàt* pu[ɲ]àt, in *regnare* re[ɲɲ]are and *regnar* re[ɲ]àr, and in *cognato* co[ɲɲ]ato and *cugnà* cu[ɲ]à.

The final phonetic feature that most characterises the dialect of Trento concerns the phenomenon of the so called *zeta trentina* (Trentino zed), which consists in the assibilation of (pre)palatal affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ]. The reason behind the label of the phenomenon lies in the fact that, graphically, the Italian affricates result in the dialect letter *z* as in *zemèi* ‘twins’ (It. ‘gemelli’), *zavatta* ‘slipper’ (It. ‘ciabatta’) and *giàz*

‘ice’ (It. ‘ghiaccio’). The realisation of the dialect *z* however does not resemble the sound of the Italian *z*, as a matter of fact *zéna* ‘dinner’ is never pronounced as *[dz]ena nor *[ts]ena. The *z* of Trento does not belong to the set of the Italian consonants, thus its identification inside the IPA chart appears particularly hard. Scholars such as Casalicchio and Cordin (2020) use the phonemes [θ] and [ð] to describe the Trentino *z*. However, the realisation of *zéna* does not always entirely correspond to [θ]èna nor does *zènt* ‘people’ always correspond to [ð]ènt. This is because Trentino speakers do not realise the sound placing the tongue in a fully interdental position, as it is the case of the fricatives used by the scholars. The *z* of Trento may be similar but it is not totally equal to the English pronunciation of *think* [θ]ink and *this* [ð]is. A plausible alternative may consist in the description of the *z* with the dental affricates [t̪θ] and [d̪ð][7] which sound more similar to the actual realisation of *zènt* and *zéna*, as they contain a weak trace of occlusion. A more detailed phonetic study of the Trentino *z* appears to be needed in order to provide evidence on whether the consonant is the result of a weak dental plosive combined with the interdental fricative or whether it is only composed of [θ] or [ð]. In §6.3, I propose a study to further phonetic knowledge related to the *zeta trentina*. However, such analysis is not the purpose of the present work, therefore it is here acknowledged that there exists no such norm prescribing how this specific sound is realised. In addition, there is not a standard variety for the dialect of Trento and it is possible to recognise slight variations in the pronunciation of the consonant at issue among urban speakers.

The present section listed and exemplified the linguistic features of the dialect of Trento, especially those that characterise central urban Trentino phonetically and phonologically. Chapter 4 provides a thorough phonetic analysis of the Trentino dialect speech samples used in the matched-guise experiment.

[7] Dental affricates [t̪θ] and [d̪ð] can be listened to in the IPA chart provided by the Laboratory of Experimental Phonetics ‘Arturo Genre’ of the University of Torino accessible at the following webpage: https://www.lfsag.unito.it/ipa/ .

3. Language attitudes and the matched-guise technique

The chapter provides information on language attitudes and methods employed by researchers to study how individuals react to certain languages, varieties or dialects. Special attention is paid to the matched-guise technique, the indirect approach developed by Lambert and his associates in the second half of the twentieth century. The procedure is here analysed in terms of contribution to the understanding of attitudes, advantages, disadvantages and peculiarities. In addition, a number of examples are reported as well as general trends on attitudes towards standard, non-standard varieties and dialects emerged from previous research.

3.1. Defining and studying language attitudes

How an individual feels, thinks and acts towards a certain person or object, either concrete or abstract, can serve as an explanation, albeit incomplete, for the introduction of the concept of attitude. Language attitudes are neither stable nor changeless, they are often covert and therefore accessing them requires effort (Williams, 2005).

A large number of scholars have provided a description of such notion. Among them, Thurstone (1931, as cited in Garrett[8], 2010) claimed that a positive or negative affect towards an object constitutes a reasonable account for attitude. For the purposes of her study, Baroni (1983, p. 20) defined attitudes as a set of opinions, experiences and beliefs which predispose the individual to assume a certain attitude towards an object. Similarly, Sarnoff (1970, as cited in Garrett 2010) asserted that attitudes represent favourable or unfavourable reactions that a person is inclined to have towards a class of objects. Given such a premise, Garrett developed the following definition for attitude: "an evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort" (2010, p. 20). Lastly, Allport (1954, as cited in Garrett 2010) described the phenomenon at issue as an inclination that we learn and that disposes us to act in a certain manner towards objects and other individuals.

The words used by Allport (1954, as cited in Garrett 2010) suggest that attitudes are

[8] Garrett's *Attitudes to Language* is often cited in the present work due to the fundamental relevance of the volume, in which the author examines a huge number of matched-guise experiments.

not innately developed, on the contrary they are the result of a learning process (Garrett, 2010). However, it is not entirely correct to state that attitudes display no innate character at all, as they are also influenced by hereditariness (Tesser, 1993, and Alford et al., 2005, as cited in Garrett, 2010). Thus, attitudes are both genetically inherited and learned by the individual, who acquires them through experience. The social environment in which a person grows up provides multiple sources from which it is possible to assimilate and develop attitudes, such as parental figures and teaching staff, who can intentionally or unconsciously influence attitudes, as well as the media (Garrett, 2010). Furthermore, Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 361) discuss the importance of the "perceived cultural factors", which constitute another type of influence in the creation of attitudes in terms of political, historical, social, economic and linguistic facts. Lastly, Garrett (2010, p. 22) mentions observational learning and instrumental learning as two of several processes that lead to the acquisition of attitudes. In the former, the individual learns particular attitudes through the observation and the assimilation of particular attitudes adopted by society, whereas in the latter, the individual pays attention to others' conduct and decides whether to adopt it or not, depending on whether such attitude is positively or negatively rewarded or whether it causes damage. Attitudes are the product of the social environment in which the individual lives and are part of a person's daily experience, whether they are covert or unconcealed. This therefore confirms Cargile and Bradac's claim according to which attitudes are not developed "in a social vacuum" (2001, p. 362).

A large number of scholars regard the structure of attitudes as tripartite, as these are characterised by three components, namely the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural (Loureiro-Rodriguez et al., 2013; Garrett, 2010; Di Ferrante, 2007; Garrett et al., 2003; Edwards, 1982, as cited in Garrett et al., 2003; Kretch and Crutchfield, 1962, as cited in Baroni, 1983). Language attitudes are considered to be cognitive as they involve the knowledge and beliefs concerning a certain language. They are deemed to be affective insofar as they encompass particular feelings towards a language. Lastly, they are behavioural (or conative) in that they affect and influence the behaviour of an individual, shaping a sort of predisposed way of acting (Garrett et al., 2003; 2010). In order to understand such tripartite structure with a practical example, it is useful to think

of a person who moves to Val dei Mòcheni or to the village of Luserna[9]. He or she would start learning Mòcheno or Cimbrian in order to integrate in the minority communities and increase his or her chances to find a job (cognitive component). During the process of language learning, he or she could experience different feelings, for instance being enthusiastic or anxious and upset (affective component). Lastly, the very fact that the individual makes an effort to study either Mòcheno or Cimbrian represents the behavioural or conative component.

Research and analysis of language attitudes is of particular importance in sociolinguistics, in that such approach not only provides insight into the way in which people behave towards a certain linguistic group and the related consequences this has in society, but it also allows to gather and expand knowledge about the sociolinguistic influential factors that play a role in the creation of attitudes (Garrett et al., 2003). A framework is proposed by Ryan, Giles and Sebastian (1982, as cited in Giles and Billings, 2004) in which two dimensions, i.e. standardisation and vitality, are considered to be the main factors playing a role in the formation of language attitudes. According to the scholars, standardisation is the concept representing the type of language that is accepted and used by the elite class, so that a language can be deemed either as standard or non-standard. Vitality, on the other hand, measures the actual employment of a language, which can be either increasingly or decreasingly used. From this perspective, it is reasonable to assume that people assess languages and dialects by means of their degree of standardisation and vitality (Giles and Billings, 2004).

As mentioned above, language attitudes are dynamic and subject to changes (Williams, 2005). They concern every level of the language, as they can regard the way in which people spell and pronounce words, the vocabulary they use, the accent they have, the language or dialect they employ, the speed at which they talk and also their linguistic competence (Garrett, 2010). Baker (1992, as cited in Garrett et al., 2003) lists a number of topics related to language attitudes on which researchers have investigated in the past, such as attitudes towards linguistic communities and minorities, or towards linguistic use, linguistic preferences and linguistic variation, among others. Studies on language attitudes can therefore deal with a large number of language-related topics and

[9] In the Mòcheni Valley and the village of Luserna two minority languages are spoken, Mòcheno and Cimbrian, respectively, as mentioned above in §2.1 and §2.2.

can be divided into two main groups, namely those that adopt a linguistic macro-perspective and those that adopt a linguistic micro-perspective. The former includes research on attitudes towards dialects, language varieties and languages in general, as in Bettoni and Gibbons (1988), Baroni (1983), and Lambert et al. (1960), among others. On the other hand, micro-perspective studies focus on specific linguistic features, such as specific vocabulary, syntactic structures, or phonetical realisations, as in Díaz-Campos and Killam (2012), who provided an analysis of the consonantal deletion phenomenon of Venezuelan Spanish, or Campbell-Kibler (2006), who investigated attitudes towards different pronunciations of American English *-ing*. Cargile and Bradac (2001, pp. 351-352) report a shift in attitudinal research from the macro to the micro perspective since the second half of the seventies, claiming that scholars' interest has moved not only towards precise features that characterise languages, varieties and dialects but also towards syntax and semantics at the expense of phonetics and phonology.

As suggested by Volkart-Rey (1990, p. 10), language attitudes directly concern the language, the variety or the dialect they are addressed towards. They are connected with the opinions that individuals form about the people who speak that specific language, variety or dialect to the point that it is of high importance not to mistake attitudes for opinions. In this respect, Asch (1952, as cited in Di Ferrante, 2007, p. 89) clarifies what it is meant by attitude. Firstly, the scholar distinguishes between opinions and feelings (or passions). He asserts that opinions consist of socially relevant behaviours that do not represent the core of an individual's concerns, whereas attitudes constitute the set of interests that are deeply rooted within a person and that are cognitively and affectively pivotal. Secondly, Asch makes a further distinction within feelings, as he identifies on the one hand private passions, which can be considered sociologically less relevant, and on the other hand attitudes, which are namely the feelings shared by the other members of society. In his work, Volkart-Rey (1990, p. 10) underlines the challenging nature of collecting data that concern attitudes and not linguistic opinions. He claims that direct methods which overtly state the phenomenon under study are suitable tools to gather information on linguistic opinions. In addition, he states that attitudes are more efficiently investigated by means of indirect methods, in that the object of study is

mainly covert preventing attitudes that can be negatively perceived to be either consciously or unconsciously censored. However, the concept of language attitudes includes that of linguistic opinions, in that the latter belong to the cognitive component within the tripartite structure of attitudes. Being attitudes psychological constructs (Oppenheim, 1982, as cited in Garrett, 2010), it is not possible to directly examine them (Garrett, 2010, p. 20). Thus, to observe and study them researchers can analyse what individuals declare or state and the way in which they emotionally react (Oppenheim, 1982, as cited in Garrett, 2010).

Generally, scholars resort to three main groups of techniques when they investigate language attitudes (Garrett, 2010; Garrett et al., 2003; Ryan, Giles and Hewstone, 1988, as cited in Garrett et al., 2003), namely societal treatment analysis of language varieties, direct approaches and indirect procedures. The former can also be referred to as content analysis (Knops and van Hout, 1988, as cited in Garrett et al., 2003, and in Garrett, 2010). These types of research analyse the way in which society behaves towards, or – more precisely – *treats*, a certain language or variety, and consequently gather information on the status of said language (Garrett et al., 2003, p. 15). As mentioned above, direct approaches entail the purpose of the research to be overtly communicated to participants, and typical examples of these methods are questionnaires and interviews comprising explicit and direct questions. Lastly, the indirect methodology consists in the elicitation of language attitudes through the use of "subtle, even deceptive techniques" (Garrett, 2010, p. 41). In other words, this means that the real aim of the study is concealed to the subjects, who are instead provided with a misleading purpose so as not to bias their answers or have them intentionally or unintentionally censored, in cases in which participants feel their response is not adequate to common decency. While there are a number of methods for the study of attitudes in general (Dawes and Smith, 1985, as cited in Garrett, 2010), one in specific is used in language attitude research, namely the matched-guise technique.

The present section focussed on language attitudes and on the approaches researchers can employ to investigate them; the following section proceeds with an in-depth analysis of the matched-guise technique, which is the par excellence approach to study language attitudes and represents the core methodology of the present work.

3.2. The matched-guise technique

The matched-guise technique is an indirect research method developed by Lambert and other scholars[10] in the second half of the twentieth century and it is designed to investigate language attitudes in various contexts. Participants in matched-guise experiments are normally asked to listen to a number of recorded voices, after being told that these belong to different people. Once they hear each speaker, respondents need to rate him or her by filling in a questionnaire (Garrett, 2010, p. 41). Both the real purpose of the study and the fact that the same orators speak multiple times in different guises are concealed to the participants, who evaluate the voices by means of several personality traits being unaware of the actual phenomenon they are rating (Garrett, 2010, p. 41). Such a methodology allows researchers "to elicit stereotyped impressions or biased views" (Lambert, 1967, p. 93), in that respondents are not aware of the purpose of the study and thus cannot censor either consciously or unconsciously their attitudes towards the language, variety or dialect under examination.

Presumably, the experiment carried out by Pear (1931) through the British BBC radio paved the way for future more developed matched-guise studies (Giles and Billings, 2004). Individual listeners were asked to participate in an investigation, in which they had to evaluate speakers' characters heard on air. Pear's research, however, did not make use of the matched-guise technique (which was devised by Lambert almost thirty years later). The British scholar's study was based on the verbal-guise technique (Díaz-Campos and Killam, 2012). This type of method differs from Lambert's in that voices are always different and speakers are never repeated (Nejjari et al., 2019; Biliotti and Calamai, 2012; Garrett, 2010).

Overall, modern research on language attitudes deems Lambert's technique to be pioneering, in that it provided an efficient method that allowed for the elicitation of emotional reactions informing on the actual attitudes individuals have towards a certain language, variety or dialect spoken in a specific community (Dìaz-Campos and Killam, 2012). Because of such characteristic and because of the fact that in matched-guise studies participants do not feel the need to censor their answers, the work of Lambert et

[10] The study at issue was conducted by Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum in 1960 and is analysed in detail in section §3.2.2 below.

al. (1960) had a trigger effect causing an increasing worldwide interest and use of the technique (Giles and Billings, 2004). As a matter of fact, the amount of matched-guise research on language attitudes conducted since the sixties is huge.

Some scholars refer to the matched-guise technique as 'speaker evaluation paradigm', as in Giles and Billings (2004). The two labels are synonyms, in that respondents are asked to evaluate the same speakers with different guises on a number of traits concerning socioeconomic conditions, personality attributes and social distance and proximity (Biliotti and Calamai, 2012). According to Giles and Billings (2004, p. 189), the predisposition to accord specific personality traits to speakers takes shape in participants when they connect the voices they are hearing to specific linguistic groups. This means that at the base of the approach designed by Lambert lies the fact that the rise of social categories, which generate trait-interferences associated to social groups, is triggered by the style of an individual's speech. As a matter of fact, Lambert et al. (1960, p. 44) themselves maintained that generalisations and stereotypes towards a certain linguistic group are in all likelihood the outcome of the act of listening to the specific language spoken by that group. The indirect method at issue ensures the circumvention of intentional and internalised attitudes (Stefanowitsch, 2005, p. 1), in that, as suggested by Labov (1971, p. 174), it allows for an unconscious translation on the part of the respondents of their social attitude into naive differential evaluations of the disguised voices.

The advantages of the matched-guise technique are substantially represented by the purpose and the working mechanism of the approach itself and have already been discussed. One aspect that makes the indirect method at issue valuable in sociolinguistic studies of language attitudes consists in the fact that this type of research allows scholars to unveil authentic, concealed and internalised attitudes and reactions towards certain languages, varieties and dialects (De Pascale et al., 2017; Garrett, 2010; Lambert, 1967). As a consequence, the matched-guise technique has led to a profound understanding of the introspective and personal character of respondents with reference to language reactions, as Lambert (1967) himself clarifies. Given that the approach brought such a high degree of knowledge on language attitude and language variation (Garrett, 2010), since the study of Lambert et al. (1960) sociolinguists have increasingly

employed the technique in their research, resulting in the huge amount of worldwide works on attitudes towards languages, varieties and dialects that are currently available.

As other empirical methods, the matched-guise technique presents several downsides as well, for instance the very fact that the language in the recordings rated by participants is predominantly decontextualised. This is never the case of reality, as a point of fact Cargile and Bradac (2001, p. 353) underline that communication never occurs in a linguistic vacuum, rather in specific circumstances, which speech styles depend on. Along with the lack of linguistic contextualisation, an additional disadvantage of the technique at issue consists in the fact that a number of studies are not entirely reliable due to the fact that speech recorded in laboratories does not replicate spontaneous social interactions (Lee, 1971, as cited in Díaz-Campos and Killam, 2012, p. 87). In this regard, Garrett (2010, p. 59) posits the 'style-authenticity question', highlighting that the process of speaker recording generally consists of a reading of a written passage on the part of the disguised orators. Thus, respondents listen to and evaluate read extracts instead of spontaneous speech. Clearly, the former is rated differently from the latter, and this aspect needs to be acknowledged by researchers. A further drawback is referred to as the "observer's paradox" (Labov, 1972, as cited in Volkart-Rey, 1990, pp. 32-33), according to which the presence of the interviewer during the recording process can influence the speaker, causing him or her to adjust his or her accent to the level of that of the investigator and becoming even less spontaneous. In addition, finding and selecting bilingual speakers able to produce native-like speeches in two or more languages is not an easy task for researchers (Ansifeld, 1974, as cited in Baroni, 1983, p. 25). As a matter of fact, Nejjari et al. (2019, p. 92) discuss the concept of representativeness and its relevance in matched-guise studies, asserting that it is challenging for speakers to generate either speeches or readings in two or more linguistic guises, especially if the languages they are performing in are not their mother tongues. This relates to the mimicking-authenticity problem mentioned by Garrett (2010, p. 58), according to which recorded speakers sound less accurate in either one or more languages they attempt to represent. Furthermore, it can occur that participants misperceive the spoken varieties and accord to them different places of origin with respect to the actual ones (Preston, 1989, as cited

in Garrett, 2010, p. 58), or relate them to ungrammatical instead of non-standard languages (Bradac, 1990, as cited in Garrett, 2010, pp. 57-58). Voice recordings played during the experiment are identical in terms of their content, and this can constitute a further disadvantage for matched-guise studies, in that multiple repetition of the same message can cause the amplification of linguistic differences that are less prominent in real life (Garrett, 2010, p. 57). Moreover, respondents can be fatigued by the amount of speakers they are asked to listen to. As a matter of fact, it is important not to overload their attention with excessive voice recordings or languages, varieties or dialects (Garrett, 2010, p. 63), unless participants are divided into groups to which an equal reasonable number of recorded voices is allotted (Huygens and Vaughan, 1983, as cited in Garrett, 2010, p. 63). Lastly, Hudson (1979, as cited in Solís Obiols, 2002, p. 4) provides a further downside for the technique at issue, namely the fact that providing respondents with a pre-selected set of traits for the evaluation of the speakers can prevent the rise of spontaneous judgements and thus create artificial or biased language attitudes.

Hitherto the matched-guise technique has been analysed with reference to its origins, purposes, advantages and drawbacks. The following subsections provide notions on the choices to be made when designing such an experiment (§3.2.1) and practical examples of previous studies conducted by means of this approach (§3.2.2), including the pioneering work by Lambert et al. (1960).

3.2.1. Designing a matched-guise experiment

When devising a study based on the matched-guise technique, there are a number of stages that require specific decisions and considerations to be made on the part of the experimenter. They concern, for instance, the choice of the text the speakers have to read, the selection of the representative matched guises, the inclusion of filler samples, the type of questions asked in the questionnaire and the personality traits relevant for the linguistic groups under investigation. All these aspects are analysed in the following paragraphs.

The selection of the text that the speakers will read in the recordings is of

fundamental importance, in that it needs to be as neutral as possible, so as to prevent any possible influence on the respondents' evaluations of the voices. It is for this reason that Garrett (2010, p. 59) and Kircher (2015, as cited in Mura, in press) discuss neutrality in terms of content and culture of the reading. It is necessary for the text to be neutral in order to avoid participants' reactions and judgments to be referred to the textual contents and not to the language under investigation (Garrett, 2010, p. 59). Content neutrality proves to be challenging at times. For instance, the matter was problematic in the experiment conducted by Giles et al. (1990, as cited in Garrett, 2010, p. 59) on attitudes towards people of diverse ages, in which the scholars could not produce a neutral text in terms of age, as the passage received different interpretations depending on the speakers' age. Other researchers, such as Mura (in press) and Price et al. (1983, as cited in Mura, in press), overcame nonetheless the issue of content and cultural neutrality employing appropriate texts that did not risk to bias respondents' evaluations. Mura, for example, chose a text on Hungary, a neutral topic with regard to his study on language attitudes towards Italian and Sardinian. Along with the content of the reading, a further aspect that needs to be taken into account is the length of the texts itself and how often participants are going to listen to it. As suggested by Mura (in press), on the one hand, it is possible to have the speakers read the text in its entirety or with slight changes, especially in the cases in which the passage is brief or the voices are not numerous. On the other hand, when the reading lasts a considerable amount of time or when respondents have to listen to a large number of speakers, it is advisable to either select two similar extracts on the same topics, as in Nejjari et al. (2019), or divide the text into portions, as in Mura (in press). To provide a practical example, the fact that in Mura's (in press) experiment participants were to listen to more than twenty voices was a problem. Therefore, the researcher parted the original text into two sections ensuring them to be identical in linguistic phenomena, structures and length. In addition, he had the same part of the text read by the same speaker in both Italian and Sardinian, so as to guarantee the absence of possible influences of the text on respondents' evaluations. As a point of fact, it is fundamental that speech samples do not vary in terms of complexity, terminology and structures, otherwise it is likely to bias participants' reactions, as suggested by Nejjari et al. (2019, p. 103).

In the matched-guise experimental design, text choice is followed by speaker selection. Once the extract is decided and a group of candidates is recorded reading it, the voices need to be examined and selected. This procedure can be carried out either by the researcher himself or herself, or by means of a pre-survey fulfilled by a number of judges (Mura, in press; Nejjari et al., 2019; Newman, 2008). Participants in such preliminary experiments can be either scholars or non-experts in the field of linguistics (Nejjari et al., 2019, p. 93). In the latter case, it is likely that the evaluations of respondents do not coincide with those of the researchers (Nejjari et al., 2019), whose judgement may be biased by their language-related knowledge. In the studies conducted by Mura (in press) and Nejjari et al. (2019), the pre-test relied on the ratings of linguistically naive respondents. It is important to note the requirements for a speaker to be selected and the questions to be posed to the participants in the pre-survey. In order for a speaker to be chosen as representative of the two languages, varieties or dialects under investigation in the matched-guise experiment, two conditions have to be fulfilled, namely that of standardness and that of nativeness (Nejjari et al., 2019). On the one hand, the concept of standard representativeness implies that the recorded person has to sound as a standard speaker of the given language or variety. For instance, respondents in Mura's (in press) research were asked whether or not and to what extent each Italian speaker sounded Sardinian-accented. On the other hand, it was deemed needless to rate dialect speakers on standard parameters, in that there exists no standard variety of such language. By contrast, in Nejjari et al. (2019), all British, American and Dutch English speakers were evaluated on their degree of standardness and nativeness by means of a Likert scale composed of seven points. Native representativeness denotes the extent to which a person is perceived as a native speaker of a particular language, variety or dialect (Mura, in press). As a matter of fact, Mura asked participants to rate the degree to which speakers sounded natural representatives of Sardinian. The nativeness parameter can be at times problematic, especially when it is related to dialects or minority languages. As a point of fact, a huge amount of — if not almost all — speakers are not literate in such languages, as a consequence they may lack the ability to read and sound native in their own dialect or minority language, as it is acknowledged by Mura (in press).

Considering that matched-guise experiments require the same person to be listened to two or multiple times depending on the languages, varieties or dialects under investigation, it is appropriate to add filler voices in the design. The inclusion of buffer speakers has the purpose of minimising the chances of respondents compromising the study because they recognised the same person taking on different guises (Garrett, 2010) or because they realised the actual purpose of the study (Nejjari et al., 2019). In the matched-guise literature, a number of scholars made use of fillers to divert participants from either the actual aim of the research or the matched-guises present in the experimental design, for instance the very first study devising the technique, namely Lambert et al. (1960), as well as Schüppert et al. (2015, as cited in Mura, in press). A solution that is contrived to avoid the aforementioned risks and that is used regardless of the presence of fillers is that of ordering the recordings in such a manner that the voices of the same speaker occur as far as possible from one another, as it was done by Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013).

A further aspect that has to be taken into consideration concerns the structure of the questionnaire to be submitted to participants during the experiment. Researchers can choose to adopt either semantic differential scales or Likert scales. The former were devised by Osgood et al. (1957) and consist in having pairs of antonymous adjectives equidistantly located at the opposite ends of a rating scale. Matched-guise studies frequently employ semantic differential scales (Garrett, 2010, p. 55), for instance it is possible to observe such rating technique in the work of Reid et al. (2019) as well as in that of Díaz-Campos and Killam (2012) and of Bettoni and Gibbons (1988), among others. Likert scales are instead named after their creator, Rensis Likert, and present a number of statements called *items* on favourable or unfavourable beliefs, feelings and behaviours to participants, who have to express the extent to which they agree with them (Likert, 1932, as cited in Di Ferrante, 2007, p. 90). Among scholars who employed such rating scales are Nejjari et al. (2019), Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013), Di Ferrante (2007), and Newman et al. (2008). Regardless of the rating type employed in the experimental design, the range number given in the scale has to be taken into close consideration on the part of researchers. Typically, both Likert and semantic differential scales display a five or seven point structure, nevertheless decreasing or increasing the

options by one allows examiners to eliminate the central neutral evaluation normally present with odd ranges (Garrett, 2010, p. 55). Such mid-point was avoided for instance in Díaz-Campos and Killam (2012) and Lambert et al. (1960).

The phase in which the structure of the questionnaire is determined is followed by the stage of selection of personality traits on which participants rate the speakers. According to Garrett (2010, p. 56), researchers have several alternatives to consider. Firstly, they have the possibility to adopt the lists of attributes present in similar previously conducted works. Secondly, they can set a study aimed at the elicitation of a number of traits assigned to the language, variety or dialect on the part of people belonging to the same linguistic group under investigation. Lastly, they can blend the previous alternatives, namely they can employ items from former studies and integrate them with others from their research or perception. This occurred in Newman et al. (2008), who used Woolard's (1984) set of personality traits adding three more, so as to explore language gender-related attitudes as well.

At this point, the researcher can deem the matched-guise experimental design to be complete, in that the texts to be read by speakers were chosen, the native and standard representativeness of the guises were established, the filler voices were deceivingly added, the structure of the questionnaire was determined and the personality traits were decided. One last non-compulsory but worth mentioning aspect to ponder over is the possibility to add a practice trial before the actual beginning of the questionnaire, so as to allow participants to familiarise with the structure of the survey, as suggested by Lambert (1967, p. 94).

3.2.2. Examples of matched-guise studies

The present subsection deals with an overview of a number of examples of matched-guise experiments, and of the consequent trending attitudes towards standard languages, non-standard varieties and dialects, which will help with the justification and support of the hypotheses provided in the following chapter.

As already mentioned in §3.2, the work of Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum (1960) was pioneering in that it was the research in which the matched-

guise technique was firstly devised and put into practice. The scholars designed the technique so as to investigate language attitudes that Canadians had towards Canadian English and French speaking communities. At the time of the experiment, however, the actual purpose of the research was concealed to the participants, who were instead informed that the study aimed at the analysis of the impression an individual develops of another person solely through his or her voice. The researchers predicted that attitudes towards the linguistic groups would emerge from candidates' positive or negative evaluations of both English and French community members. Participants heard a total of ten recordings, eight of which belonged to the same four male speakers who had read a text once in English and once in French, while the remaining two tapes consisted of two filler voices of males performing in their own language, English and French. Fourteen traits were selected by the scholars for the candidates to evaluate the speakers on a Likert six-point scale by means of a questionnaire. In addition to the evaluations and the demographic data, researchers asked the subjects questions about the type of job they thought the speakers had, the degree of relevance the traits would have in their friends, their beliefs on English-Canadians and French-Canadians, and their levels of bilingualism. Participants in the study were voluntary male and female students who belonged either to the English or to the French Montreal community, and each group was instructed in their own mother tongue. Speaker selection was achieved through a number of recordings of four male bilinguals performing several times without errors, which were subsequently rated appropriate by other bilinguals. The study demonstrated that the English speaking community in Montreal favoured members of their own group. In contrast to such expected result, it was surprising for researchers to discover that the attitudes of the French speaking community were not positive towards members of the same group but towards the opposite one. As a point of fact, English appeared to be favoured over French by both communities.

As stated in §3.2, the work of Lambert et al. (1960) triggered the employment of the matched-guise technique in a copious amount of research. As far as the international scene is concerned, two micro-linguistic studies and a macro-linguistic one need to be mentioned, i.e. Campbell-Kibler (2006), Díaz-Campos and Killam (2012) and Bettoni and Gibbons (1988). The former consisted in a sociolinguistic analysis of the attitudes

of Americans when listening to different pronunciations of *-ing* in English. The scholar modified Lambert et al.'s (1960) method by means of a digital manipulation of the speech samples, in that she substituted all the original *-ing* instances with [in] and [iŋ] captured from the same speakers after the first recording session. The researcher obtained therefore identical speeches differing in a single specific variable, which turned out to be a widespread stereotype[11] among Americans. The [in] pronunciation conferred a less educated character to American English speakers, whereas the [iŋ] realisation appeared to be associated with higher status. Also focussing on micro aspects of language, Díaz-Campos and Killam (2012) analysed consonantal deletion in Venezuelan Spanish, in particular they investigated attitudes towards the deletion of /d/ in intervocalic position and /ɾ/ in syllable-final position. Unlike Campbell-Kibler (2006), the scholars did not employ digital manipulation in the speech sample creation, in that recordings were produced following the guidelines of the classic matched-guise technique. The research did not provide remarkable results on attitudes towards intervocalic /d/ deletion, on the contrary a general neutrality emerged. As for the other linguistic phenomenon, the study demonstrated that speakers retaining /ɾ/ in syllable-final position were evaluated more favourably and prestigious that those deleting it. In Australia, Bettoni and Gibbons (1988) concentrated their research on attitudes towards English, Italian varieties and dialects spoken in Sydney. Participants were asked to rate a number of subjects speaking Sicilian and Venetan dialects and varieties, as well as English with heavy Sicilian and Venetan dialect transfer and light Sicilian and Venetan Italian transfer. The experiment showed that light mixtures received neutral evaluations in that they were rated neither favourably nor unfavourably, whereas speakers with heavy dialectal transfer were negatively considered. Similarly, regional Italian guises were preferred over dialect speakers, who were instead marked by low sophistication and prestige levels.

At the European level, Woolard et al. (1984) designed what can be considered the first matched-guise study in Catalonia aimed at the investigation of language attitudes towards Castilian and Catalan in Barcelona. It was hypothesised that participants would

[11] In Labovian terms, a stereotype represents a linguistic variable that has social and stylistic stratification. Characteristic of the stereotype is the explicit awareness of it inside a linguistic community, who is consciously influenced by it in the reactions towards and perceptions of individuals using a specific variable (Labov, 1971).

rate more favourably speakers of their own linguistic group. The scholars were able to confirm such prediction solely as far as the solidarity traits were concerned, in that data unexpectedly determined that both communities associated high status to Catalan. Using the work of Woolard et al. (1984) as a model, Newman et al. (2008) analysed how attitudes towards Catalan and Castilian evolved after language policies in favour of Catalan had been established in Spain. The scholars showed that both languages were considered equal with respect to status and solidarity traits. A further study employing (and modifying) the matched-guise technique was conducted by Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013) on Spanish, standard and non-standard Galician. The scholars asked rural and urban high school Galician adolescents to rate a number of speakers reading a text in Spanish and in standard and non-standard Galician. Due to the above mentioned difficulty in finding perfect bilinguals representing all varieties, the experiment did not entirely follow the matched-guise design. Researchers had to record a female and a male Spanish native speakers reading a text in Castilian and in standard Galician, as well as different female and male vernacular Galician native speakers reading the same passage in Spanish and non-standard Galician. The study demonstrated that Spanish users are considered more socially correct than those who speak standard Galician in urban settings. In addition, both rural and urban adolescent groups evaluated more positively native Galicians when using their non-standard variety than when speaking Spanish, highlighting the fact that individuals with Galician-marked accents are less socially approved when they speak Spanish.

Among the first Italian scholars using the matched-guise approach is Baroni (1983), who investigated the attitudes towards standard Italian, regional varieties and dialects in the cities of Bologna, Catania, Milano and Padova. The researcher found evidence suggesting that standard speakers are generally more favourably evaluated as compared to speakers who have a regional accent, whereas dialect users obtain positive ratings in personality traits, such as likeability. Among language attitude studies in Italy, Volkart-Rey (1990) employed the modified version of the matched-guise technique, i.e. the verbal-guise method, and researched the extent to which accents influence social interactions. He conducted his study in Catania and in Roma, where he found that standard Italian is associated with high socioeconomic and cultural status, whereas

regional Italian is favourably rated with respect to friendliness and social proximity when it is not excessively marked. The work of Volkart-Rey (1990) was repeated by Di Ferrante (2007). The researcher adopted the same text genre for the recordings, namely a weather report, in that forecasts require specific but high frequency and shared vocabulary to which everybody has access. Differently from Volkart-Rey (1990), Di Ferrante (2007) widened the research context to the north of Italy, conducting the experiment not only in Napoli and Roma, but also in Milano. More recently, De Pascale et al. (2017) investigated attitudes towards Italian regional varieties, as a consequence of a process of re-standardisation in the language of the peninsula. The scholars employed the verbal version of Lambert's technique and recorded nine speakers: one for standard Italian, two for the Lombard variety, two for the Tuscan variety, two for the variety of Lazio and two for the variety of Campania. The survey was conducted in the region of Campania. It revealed an increasing acceptance of the Milanese accent and a drop in the degree of likeability of Neapolitan variety. This indicates a gradually increasing approval of specific regional Italians. An ongoing investigation needs to be lastly mentioned, i.e. that of Mura in Sardegna. The PhD student of the Ca' Foscari University of Venezia is conducting a research on Sardinian students' attitudes towards Italian and the two Sardinian varieties, Campidanese and Logudorese. It is not possible to report and discuss the results found by Mura, in that the study is at the present time still in progress, however part of the experimental design process is analysed in Mura (in press), where the researcher thoroughly explains the procedure he followed during speaker selection (mentioned in §3.2.1).

A clear tendency to favour standard over regional varieties and dialects emerges from the analysis of the findings reported above (and in other language attitude research, as well). In matched-guise experiments, standard languages are generally the variety to which high socioeconomic status, power and prestige are accorded (Giles and Billings, 2004). However, when such language is absent within the recording set, it is more likely that participants evaluate regional varieties more positively, as suggested by Mura (in press). As a matter of fact, data in Bettoni and Gibbons (1988) and Baroni (1983) provide evidence for such assumption. In the Australian study, standard Italian was not part of the set of languages under investigation, hence Sicilian and Venetan varieties

were assigned favourable scores, whereas in Baroni's Italian research, standard Italian was present and influenced participants' decreased appreciation of regional varieties (Mura, in press). Literature appears to indicate that non-standard varieties are perceived as pointers of low socioeconomic status, nevertheless it is also possible to detect that regional languages are frequently associated with kindness, solidarity and attractiveness traits, in particular on the part of speakers who share the same variety (Fuertes et al., 2012; Cargile and Bradac, 2001). In addition, some regional varieties seem to be accorded more prestigious values than others, as emerged from the study of De Pascale et al. (2017). The same work also showed how language attitudes vary according to participants' age. The youngest (18-23 years old) and the middle-aged (24-45 years old) groups rated Milanese as favourably as the standard language, thus assigning the northern regional variety the same prestige conferred to the national language as far as speech status was concerned. Conversely, the older population (46-76 years old) deemed standard Italian as the most prestigious variety with respect to the speech status dimension and Milanese "a completely alien social identity and a negligible language norm" (De Pascale et al., 2017, p.136). This is arguably due to the historical background of the group, in that the oldest participants lived in a time in which the promotion of standard language flourished undermining not only dialects but also regional varieties, as it was mentioned in §2.1.

4. Methodology

The chapter deals with the methodology used in the present research. It firstly provides information on the methodological approach in terms of research aim, research questions and hypotheses (§4.1). Secondly, three crucial phases in the experimental design process are described (§4.2), namely the stage in which the text to be read by the guises was chosen and translated into dialect (§4.2.1), the pre-survey for speaker selection (§4.2.2) and the phase in which the relevant traits for the questionnaire were decided (§4.2.3). Afterwards the section on data collection (§4.3) analyses on the one hand the group of respondents (§4.3.1) and on the other the actual procedure and questionnaire used in the research (§4.3.2).

4.1. Methodological approach

The objective of the present research was to analyse language attitudes that Italians in general and Italians grown up in Trentino-Alto Adige have towards the dialect of the city of Trento. In particular, three sociologically relevant macro-areas were investigated, i.e. competence, status and solidarity. Thus, three major research questions related to such domains were posited. Firstly, it was enquired whether speakers are perceived less competent when using dialect than when using Italian. Secondly, it was researched whether the dialect of Trento conveys the idea of speaker lower socioeconomic status. Lastly, it was investigated whether dialect users are considered more favourably than Italian ones with respect to solidarity. Solidarity traits indicate social proximity, namely "how likely they (listeners) are to have the speaker in their various social circles" (Licata, 2019, p. xiv). In addition, it was researched whether perceived differences between dialect female and male speakers exist. The independent variables of the experiment were therefore represented by two opposing contrasts, namely standard Italian versus dialect of Trento, and female versus male speakers. The dependent variables in the investigation consisted instead in participants' attitudes that were elicited through the matched-guise technique.

It was hypothesised that dialect speakers would be generally perceived less

favourably than Italian ones in status and competence traits, especially according to Italian participants who do not come from Trentino-Alto Adige. Such prediction was expected to be incorrect as far as solidarity traits were concerned. On the contrary, it was expected that dialect speakers would be perceived more positively on qualities such as likeability, as it had emerged in Baroni (1983). This was hypothesised to be especially evident among judges from Trentino-Alto Adige. Furthermore, it was assumed that dialect speakers' gender would play a role in reactions towards them. It was predicted that females would be evaluated more unfavourably than males in all three macro-areas, in particular on status and competence traits.

For the achievement of the research aim, quantitative data was needed. Information was collected by means of a questionnaire (analysed in detail in §4.3.2 below and reported in Appendix F) within the framework of a matched-guise experiment. Before the creation of the survey, however, three relevant procedures were carried out: the choice of the text the speakers would read in the recordings, the selection of readers in terms of standardness and nativeness, and the creation of a set of meaningful traits through which participants could evaluate the speakers. These processes are described in the following section.

4.2. Designing the experiment

4.2.1. Text choice and phonetic analysis

It was decided that the same text had to be used for all recordings of the experiment, in order for such variable to be controlled. This was decided so as to make sure that diversities in text vocabulary and meaning would not play an influencing role in participants' evaluations. Having candidates listening to an identical text — albeit in different languages — for a considerable amount of times could have caused a decrease in their levels of attention. The solution to such issue was found in the length of the text itself, which was brief enough to be read on average in 38 seconds. Thus, recordings of 30 to 45 seconds of the same story would not tire participants.

The text that was used consisted of an adaptation and simplification of Aesop's fable

The Fox and the Crow present in Project Gutenberg's *Aesop's Fables* (Aesop, 2002). Both vocabulary and meaning were straightforward. The English original and the Italian simplified version of the story are reported in Appendix A. The passage was translated in the dialect of Trento (central urban Trentino) with the assistance of two dialect speakers, one with dialect as L1 and one as L2. In addition, the text was translated with the help of native speakers in Venetian and in the dialect spoken in Salento, the southern part of Puglia, in order to be read by the filler voices. The three dialect versions are displayed in Appendices B, D and E, respectively, whereas Appendix C provides the phonetic transcription of the text in Trento dialect[12].

During the translation of the story, specific attention was paid to the phonetic features of the dialect of Trento mentioned in §2.3. For instance, the word *zera*, 'aspect, appearance', was inserted so as to ensure the presence of the *zeta trentina* (Trentino zed). The term *zera* displayed the typical sound present in the dialect of the urban area of Trento that appears in place of the Italian (pre)palatal affricates, in this case of [tʃ] in Italian *cera*. In addition, words such as *alora*, 'then', *tuti*, 'all', and *spètava*, 'waited', showed the absence of consonantal gemination that is characteristic of the dialect. The drop of unstressed final vowels different from [a] was provided in the words *vòlp*, 'fox', *ancor*, 'still', *corf*, 'crow', *tòch*, 'piece', *bèch*, 'beak', *savest*, 'tasted', *bon*, 'tasty (M.SG.)', *dis*, 'said', *bel*, 'beautiful (M.SG.)', *cantar*, 'to sing', and *veder*, 'to show'. Words such as *famada*, 'hungry (F.SG.)' and *tera*, 'ground', did not display such fall precisely because they ended in [a]. The text included words such as *famada*, 'hungry (F.SG.)' and *entesida*, 'satiated (F.SG.)', in which the passage from Latin voiceless intervocalic plosives to dialect voiced ones was visible. Lastly, two further features are evident in the phonetic translation. Front vowels *u* and *o* in *sicur*, 'sure', and *osei*, 'birds', were pronounced unrounded, in that rounded front vowels are typical of rural and not urban dialect. Lastly, lateral nasal [ɲ] occurring in intervocalic position was not produced as geminated, as in *magna*, 'eats (3SG.PRS.)'.

[12] The transcription is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet and is prescriptive, in that it indicates how the text would be theoretically read by a dialect speaker.

4.2.2. Speaker selection: a pre-survey

After choosing and translating the text, this was shared with candidate speakers who had previously agreed to be anonymously recorded for the purposes of the experiment. Speakers were provided with the story two days before the recording session, so that they could read the text in advance and familiarise with it. This was done in order to obtain recordings that were more similar to spontaneous speech than actual readings. The recording sessions were carried out in silent domestic environments. Speakers were asked to read the story two or three times — depending on speed, errors and mispronunciations — while they were recorded by means of the default iOS app Voice Memos. Each representative from the city of Trento read both the Italian and the Trentino dialect versions, whereas the fillers read only the Venetian and Salentine versions. In total, fourteen people were recorded: five females and five males reading in the dialect of Trento and in Italian, one female and one male reading in Venetian, and one female and one male reading in Salentine. Of each set of readings, the best recording in terms of quality and clarity of voice was kept.

Afterwards, a pre-test was carried out, so as to select the four best representative speakers for the dialect of Trento and standard Italian. In addition, in order to avoid tiring effects and consequent losses of attention, the amount of recordings for participants to listen to in the experiment had to be balanced and not excessive. Twenty recordings (plus four filler voices) were deemed undoubtedly overloading, thus the pre-test also aimed at the reduction of their number. The purpose of the preliminary survey was therefore to establish a group of two female and two male speakers whose Italian was as close to standard as possible and whose dialect reading sounded as natural and native as possible.

Two parallel questionnaires were created on Google Form to investigate the degrees of standardness and nativeness of each speaker from Trento. A group of ten 22- to 61-year-old participants (nine of which from outside Trentino-Alto Adige) was asked to indicate whether the voices in the Italian guise sounded standard or regional. The question was posed as follows:

La persona che hai appena ascoltato:

○ *Non si sente per niente da quale regione provenga*

○ *Non so dire da quale regione provenga*

○ *Si sente da quale regione proviene*

○ *Si sente chiaramente la sua regione di provenienza*.

('The person you have just listened to: It is not clear at all which region he or she comes from / I cannot tell which region he or she comes from / I can tell which region he or she is from / It is clear which region he or she is from').

In addition, respondents who gave either of the last two answers were invited to specify the region of speakers' provenance. A parallel group of sixteen 18- to 61-year-old participants from Trentino-Alto Adige was asked to indicate whether the voices in the dialect guise sounded as native dialect speakers. The question was posed as follows:

La persona che hai appena ascoltato:

○ *Non è sicuramente madrelingua di dialetto trentino*

○ *Non mi sembra che sia madrelingua di dialetto trentino*

○ *Mi sembra che sia madrelingua di dialetto trentino*

○ *È sicuramente madrelingua di dialetto trentino*.

('The person you have just listened to… He or she is certainly not a native Trento dialect speaker / I do not think he or she is a native Trento dialect speaker / I think he or she is a native Trento dialect speaker / He or she is certainly a native Trento dialect speaker').

In order to select the four most representative guises among the ten recorded speakers from Trento, scores were assigned to the answers of the questionnaires. As for the standardness survey, score 1 indicated that the speaker in the Italian guise had a clearly identifiable regional accent, whereas score 4 marked that he or she had none. On the other hand, in the nativeness test score 1 meant that the voice in the dialect guise sounded non-native at all, whereas score 4 indicated that he or she was considered a native speaker of dialect. In order to be selected, speakers had to sound standard Italian as well as native dialect speakers, thus they had to obtain an ideal total score of 8 points.

Within the famale group, the fifth candidate reached the maximum score in both standardness and nativeness. However, she was not selected because she did not grow

up in the urban area of Trento, and indeed her dialect sounded more rural. For instance, her recording lacked the *zeta trentina*, in that she pronounced the dialect word for 'aspect, appearance' as [tʃ]era and not [t̪θ]era. The sixth and ninth candidates appeared to be the best representatives. However, after a close analysis of their scores, the sixth speaker was substituted for the seventh. This occurred because a quarter of the respondents believed that the sixth candidate was not a native dialect speaker at all, as opposed to the seventh voice who was never considered so. In addition, the sixth speaker produced the Trentino zed in the Italian recording as well, making it sound less standard and more regional. Lastly, the seventh speaker was preferred over the sixth for a matter of age. Since it was decided to select both a young and an adult voice for each sex, the seventh speaker represented the younger choice needed to balance the already selected ninth adult candidate.

Within the male group, only the first candidate reached a total score of 7 points. Although in his Italian reading the *zeta trentina* made the language sound regionally marked, it has to be acknowledged that such phonetic phenomenon was present in all male recordings in different degrees. Since the first candidate was selected, one more speaker was needed. Both the third and the eighth candidates appeared to reach lower levels of standardness when speaking Italian than the first speaker. However, the third seemed to be perceived even less standard than the eighth. Despite the fact that the third candidate resulted to be a more native dialect speaker than the eighth, such difference was not significant. As a result, the eighth candidate was chosen over the third. While the first candidate represented the more mature voice, the eighth stood for the young representative.

Overall, the four selected speakers were on the one hand 22 to 31 years old and on the other 52 to 71 years old. They were all born and grown up in the city of Trento. Due to this fact, it has to be acknowledged that the Italian spoken by all the selected candidates was the one sounding as close to the national standard as possible among the whole group. Nonetheless, a light regional accent marked all their recordings. Hereafter, the older male speaker will be referred to as M1, the younger male speaker as M2, the older female speaker as F1 and the younger female speaker as F2.

4.2.3. Trait choice

As mentioned in §3.2.1, researchers can either adopt lists of traits from previous studies or conduct a pre-survey aimed at the elicitation of relevant traits on the part of the participants (Garrett, 2010, p. 56). For the purposes of this research, trait selection was carried out after a close analysis of attributes employed in previous studies. Among the various studies considered were De Pascale et al. (2017), Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013), Biliotti and Calamai (2012), Newman et al. (2008), Di Ferrante (2007), Woolard (1984) and Lambert et al. (1960).

The twelve selected traits were divided into three main macro-areas: solidarity, competence and status. Likeability, entertainment, friendship, open-mindedness, pleasantness, politeness, and trustworthiness belonged to the solidarity group. Education and speech accuracy were part of the competence area, whereas prestige, success and job type referred to status.

In the experiment, only positive adjectives were used with reference to the traits, in that it was assumed that participants would be more likely to disagree with a statement such as “the person you have just listened to is trustworthy” than to agree with an assertion such as “the person you have just listened to is unreliable”. Negative adjectives could have been perceived as judgemental, therefore they were avoided. Lastly, traits in the questionnaire were not divided according to the category they belonged to, on the contrary they were arranged in a random order.

4.3. Data collection

4.3.1. Samples

Overall, 120 subjects participated in the experiment. They were voluntary individuals reached through social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp). For the purposes of the research, 24 subjects were excluded from the analysis, in that they had

recognised one or more Trento dialect speakers[13], as a result the total number of participants was reduced to 96.

Female respondents were more numerous than males (76% female, 23% male, 1% other). Participants born in the nineties, thus aged 22-31, were slightly more than the half (52%), while those born in the eighties, thus aged 32-41, were 17%, those born in the seventies, thus aged 42-51, were 12%, those born in the sixties, thus aged 52-61, were 13%, those born in the fifties, thus aged 62-71, were 6% and only 1% of the participants was born in the new millenium[14]. Almost half of the participants were from Trentino-Alto Adige (44%), whereas the rest of them was from Veneto, Puglia, Sicilia, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Toscana, Lombardia, Piemonte, Basilicata, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Lazio and Liguria (here listed in descendent order). As a result, the group of Trentino-Alto Adige was composed of 42 subjects, whereas the group of participants from the rest of Italy was composed of 54 subjects. Levels of respondents' bilingualism appeared considerable. 86% of the subjects claimed to know one or more than one language and 84% declared to speak one or more than one dialect.

4.3.2. Procedure

The experiment was carried out by means of two online questionnaires on Qualtrics, one of which is reported in Appendix F. The surveys contained identical questions and varied only in the order in which speakers appeared, so as to avoid order effects. Before the beginning of the questionnaire, clear instructions were provided about the structure of the test. The aim was deceivingly declared to be the impression we have of a person when we listen to her but we cannot see her. In order for respondents to familiarise with the questionnaire, a practice trial preceded the actual survey. Each recording appeared with its related questions on a separate page with respect to the other voices, and it was

[13] Two specific questions were posed in the questionnaire, so as to verify whether participants had recognised one or more speakers of the dialect of Trento and were therefore biased in their evaluations. They were firstly asked whether they had recognised any one of the voices they had listened to and, in case of positive response, they were invited to indicate the language or dialect spoken by such identified speakers. It is to be noted that it was impossible for subjects to recognise all Trentino dialect, Venetian and Salentine guises, in that all the speakers came from different regions and contexts. However, half of participants who maintained to have recognised the voices, selected all the dialects. This was assumed to be due to a quick misreading of the question.

[14] All participants were eighteen years old or older. Minors did not take part in the study.

not possible to go backwards in the survey. The duration of each question was controlled, respondents could not move to the following question until they had listened to the whole reading and eight more seconds had passed. This was done to ensure that every speaker was heard in his or her entire recording and that subjects could have time to answer the questions either while or after listening to the readings. In order to avoid neutral ratings, six-point Likert scales were employed, whereby 6 corresponded to "I strongly agree" and 1 to "I strongly disagree". However, a Likert scale could not be used in the question concerning the type of work participants associated to the voices. In order to accord a score to the answers, it was established that 1 corresponded to "manual work", 3.5 to "commercial work" and 6 to "intellectual work".

A section on the purpose of the research followed. Respondents were asked whether they had recognised any one of the speakers and were invited to provide a brief explanation of what they thought the research aim was about. Eventually, participants' sociodemographic data were collected. Respondents were asked about their age, their gender, the place of birth, the place where they live, and the languages and/or dialects they know. Once the questionnaire was sent, respondents were thanked and explained the real purpose of the study. Overall, the estimated duration of the entire questionnaire was of twenty minutes.

5. Analysis and results

The chapter deals with the procedures adopted to study the data and with the analysis of the obtained results. The tests that were carried out in order to reach an understanding of the data are described in §5.1. Subsequently, §5.2 provides the analysis of the results of the matched-guise experiment. The result section is divided into two parts. Section §5.2.1 examines the evaluations given by the two groups of judges on the Italian and dialect guises of each speaker. Section §5.2.2 provides a comparison between the evaluations of the guises given by Trentino participants and those given by non-Trentino participants.

5.1. Methods of analysis

Before analysing the data, the evaluations given by the total 96 respondents were divided into two groups, namely those by participants from Trentino-Alto Adige and those by subjects from the rest of Italy. As a result, 42 judges belonged to the Trentino group, and 54 to the non-Trentino group.

For the data analysis, parametric and non-parametric tests were carried out. If compared, the results obtained from the *t*-tests and those obtained from the Wilcoxon signed-rank tests and the Mann-Whitney *U* tests were generally similar. However, I decided to report in the present work only the non-parametric data, in that normality could not be assumed and the number of respondents composing both groups of judges was not remarkably high. Differences in the evaluations provided by the two groups of judges on Italian and dialect guises were calculated by means of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The Mann-Whitney *U* test was instead employed to compare the evaluations by the Trentino participants with those given by the rest of the judges, so as to observe which group of respondents rated each guise more favourably. Beyond statistical significance that emerged from Wilcoxon signed-ranked tests and Mann-Whitney *U* tests, also tendencies appeared. Although tendencies have a more limited value as compared to statistically significant data, and did not reach levels of significance in the experiment, they are taken into account when they approach significance. In these cases,

results are not disregarded and the limited value of the tendencies is acknowledged.

Table 1 and Table 2 below report the results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test and provide the evaluations given by judges from Trentino-Alto Adige and by those from the rest of Italy, respectively. Data obtained from the Mann-Whitney *U* tests are contained in Table 3 below.

5.2. Results

5.2.1. Evaluations on Italian and dialect guises

The data clearly show that the Italian guises were evaluated more favourably as compared to the dialect ones in status and competence traits by both groups of judges. In particular, such differences appeared to be more significant in the cases of the non-Trentino respondents. As noted below, speech accuracy emerged as always connected to the Italian language, with special significance within non-Trentino ratings.

Observing as a whole solidarity evaluations given by all participants, it seems that no relevant differences existed between the dialect and the Italian guises, in that on average the guises appeared to be equally rated (*M* = 4.19, *SD* = 1.2, *Mdn* = 4 versus *M* = 4.18, *SD* = 1.2, *Mdn* = 4). However, by dividing the responses into the two groups of judges such data emerged as the clear result of a countertrend. While Trentino participants favoured the dialect guises over the Italian ones (*M* = 4.24, *SD* = 1.1, *Mdn* = 4 versus *M* = 3.97, *SD* = 1.2, *Mdn* = 4), non-Trentino respondents rated the Italian guises more positively than the dialect ones (*M* = 4.35, *SD* = 1.2, *Mdn* = 4 versus *M* = 4.16, *SD* = 1.3, *Mdn* = 4).

5.2.1.1. Evaluations given by Trentino judges

As can be observed in Table 1 below, a tendency appeared in favour of the dialect guise of M1[15] in the evaluations on solidarity traits given by the judges from Trentino-Alto Adige. However, this tendency never reached a level of significance, except for

[15] As mentioned in §4.2.2, M1 is used to refer to the old male speaker, M2 refers to the young male speaker, F1 to the old female speaker and F2 to the young female speaker.

likeability (p = 0.025). Status and competence ratings seemed to point towards an opposite direction as compared to solidarity. Data appeared to be in favour of the Italian guise, with a significant difference emerging in the prestige trait (p = 0.007).

Table 1
Wilcoxon signed-ranked test: z values for significant differences in evaluations of Italian and dialect guises given by Trentino judges

	Trait	M1	M2	F1	F2	Overall	Male	Female	Old	Young
Solidarity	Likeability	-2,24 *	-1,26	-4,23 **	-3,04 **	-4,32 **	-0,62	-5,21 **	-4,71 **	-1,20
	Entertainment	-1,44	-0,77	-4,43 **	-2,99 **	-4,50 **	-0,54	-5,35 **	-4,41 **	-1,74
	Politeness	-0,22	-2,12 *	-0,95	-1,64	-0,06	-1,87	-1,78	-0,69	-0,52
	Open-	-0,36	-1,41	-1,26	-0,29	-0,17	-0,83	-1,19	-1,19	-0,98
	Trustworthiness	-0,18	-0,68	-2,12 *	-3,07 **	-2,67 **	-0,32	-3,62 **	-1,80	-1,97 *
	Frienship	-1,58	-0,83	-3,12 **	-2,85 **	-3,52 **	-0,31	-4,19 **	-3,46 **	-1,54
	Pleasantness	-0,36	-0,38	-2,25 *	-1,98 *	-2,19 *	0,00	-3,00 **	-1,90	-1,15
Status	Success	-0,36	-1,15	-0,19	-2,22 *	-0,25	-1,06	-1,25	-0,42	-0,79
	Prestige	-2,70 **	-0,25	-0,41	-2,51 *	-0,35	-1,99 *	-1,23	-2,13 *	-2,13 *
	Job	-1,70	-2,86 **	-1,12	0,00	-2,95 **	-2,96 **	-0,99	-2,01 *	-2,33 *
Competence	Speech	-1,11	-2,30 *	-1,98 *	-0,06	-2,56 *	-2,23 *	-1,43	-2,19 *	-1,48
	Education	-1,65	-0,39	-0,56	-1,10	-0,14	-1,48	-1,12	-0,61	-0,52

Note.
Yellow cells indicate that the sum of ranks of the dialect guise is higher than the sum of ranks of the Italian guise.
Purple cells indicate that the sum of ranks of the Italian guise is higher than the one of the dialectal guise.
* p < 0.05. ** p < 0.01.

Evaluations concerning M2 showed a tendency to favour the Italian guise in all areas, resulting in this speaker displaying a slight countertrend in solidarity as compared to the other voices. The preference for the Italian guise presented levels of significance in politeness, job, and speech accuracy. Observing the descriptive values, the Italian guise was rated more favourably than the dialect one, except for prestige, a trait in which dialect (M = 3.38, SD = 0.9, Mdn = 3.5) was rated more positively than Italian (M = 3.33, SD = 0.8, Mdn = 3).

As for F1, her dialect guise was significantly positively rated in almost all solidarity traits, namely in likeability, entertainment, trustworthiness, friendship, and pleasantness. Politeness and open-mindedness appeared to show a tendency in favour of this guise, but did not reach significant levels. As explained below, these traits often constituted a

separate cluster within solidarity. Descriptive data revealed that the Italian guise was favoured in status and competence features. However, significant differences in evaluations emerged only in speech accuracy.

A tendency to favour the dialect guise of F2 in almost all traits appeared within Trentino judges' ratings. In particular, such trend reached significance levels in the majority of traits of solidarity and status, namely in likeability, entertainment, trustworthiness, friendship, pleasantness, success, and prestige. Again, it is to be noted that politeness and open-mindedness formed a separate cluster, in that the *z*-values of these traits either represented just a tendency or were too low to be even considered as a trend. One more aspect to be highlighted concerns the job trait. As clearly observable from Table 1, a white cell signals the job trait, indicating that no difference at all emerged in the evaluations regarding the dialect and the Italian guises (M = 3.86, SD = 1.3, Mdn = 3.5 versus M = 3.86, SD = 1.0, Mdn = 3.5).

So far, an evident preference in evaluations by Trentino-judges for the Italian guises emerged in status and competence, except for the young female speaker, who seems to have obtained different ratings. On the contrary, solidarity evaluations demonstrate that Trentino participants supported their own local language favouring the dialect guises, except for the ratings regarding the young male speaker. Such preference for the dialect guises was more significant in ratings of female voices. In particular, the same traits resulted to be significantly in favour of the dialect guises of F1 and F2, namely likeability, entertainment, trustworthiness, friendship, and pleasantness. Conversely, it was not possible to attest the existence of a clear preference in solidarity evaluations of male speakers, in that data on M1 showed a favourable tendency towards the dialect guise, whereas data on M2 did so towards the Italian guise. As a matter of fact, Table 1 does not provide a clear picture on solidarity in the 'Male' column. Within solidarity evaluations, politeness and open-mindedness appear to constitute a separate trait cluster, especially in data concerning females, in that these were the only traits that did not reach levels of significance.

After having analysed the data of the older voices together (column 'Old' of Table 1), a tendency to favour dialect guises in solidarity traits was visible. A significant preference for dialect emerged in likeability, entertainment, and friendship, namely the

traits that are mostly associated with solidarity. However, this result needs to be further examined. As mentioned above, it emerged that the dialect guise of M1 was more favourably rated within solidarity but such evaluations did not reach levels of significance, except for likeability. Conversely, it was observed that the ratings in favour of the dialect guise of F1 were significant in most of the solidarity traits (likeability, entertainment, trustworthiness, friendship, and pleasantness). Evidently, such F1 significant data played a role in the results concerning older voices, influencing the levels of significance in entertainment and friendship. Likeability, on the other hand, appeared to be the only significant trait shared by both speakers. A preference for the Italian guises emerged in status and competence, being it significant in prestige, job, and speech accuracy.

As for younger voices, it was not possible to identify a specific tendency. This was due to the fact that the ratings concerning the young female and male speakers pointed towards opposite directions. Within solidarity traits, it appeared that the young dialect guises were rated more favourably that the Italian ones, with a significant difference in trustworthiness. However, this result needs to be analysed and understood. Firstly, trustworthiness significance did not seem to be particularly marked (p = 0.048). Secondly, such significance was not shared in the evaluations of both speakers, but only in those regarding F2, where it reached a high value (p = 0.002). Clearly, the ratings of F2 influenced the overall results on the young guises. No specific tendencies emerged in competence and status. Status results present however the same significance issues analysed above as far as solidarity was concerned. It appears that the dialect guises were rated more favourably than the Italian ones in prestige, whereas the Italian guises seemed to be significantly preferred in the job trait. The prestige result needs to be explained, in that a particularly low tendency in favour of the dialect guise of M2 emerged (Z = -0.25, p = 0.804), whereas the evaluations regarding the dialect guise of F2 were significantly positive (p = 0.012). Thus, F2 data influenced the prestige trait of the younger voices. Also the job result needs to be explained, in that the significance in favour of the young Italian guises was influenced by the evaluations accorded to M2, whose Italian guise was significantly favoured (p = 0.004), whereas no differences emerged in this trait in the evaluations concerning F2.

5.2.1.2. Evaluations given by non-Trentino judges

As can be observed in Table 2, there was a general positive tendency in favour of the Italian guise in evaluations regarding M1. The speaker was evaluated significantly more favourably in his Italian guise on likeability and entertainment. If compared to the ratings by the Trentino judges, non-Trentino participants evaluated more positively the Italian guise of M1.

A clear and significant difference appeared in all traits concerning M2, except for likeability. The Italian guise was more positively rated than the dialect one in solidarity, status, and competence, in which the levels of significance were particularly high.

Non-Trentino judges seemed to significantly favour the Italian guise of F1 in politeness and open-mindedness. As mentioned above in §5.2.2.1, these traits represented a separate group within solidarity, in that they did not mark a positive tendency or preference for the dialect guises. In this case, politeness and open-mindedness are significantly in favour of the Italian guise. In addition, the Italian guise of F1 was significantly more favourably rated than the dialect one in all status and competence traits, except for job, in which only a tendency in favour of the Italian guise appeared.

In the evaluations regarding F2, a tendency to favour the dialect guise emerged in solidarity, with significant values in entertainment and friendship. No particular preferences were observed as far as status was concerned. As for competence, the Italian guise seemed to be evaluated more positively, with significant values in speech accuracy.

So far, a tendency to favour the Italian guise in the ratings by the non-Trentino judges emerged. Differently from the evaluations given by the Trentino participants, non-Trentino respondents seemed to prefer the Italian guises also as far as solidarity was concerned, except for the young female speaker, who appeared to be generally favoured in her dialect guise in this area. Visible in Table 2, M1, M2 and F1 columns displayed either a tendency or significant values in favour of the Italian guises. The evaluations on status and competence remained unchanged also in the group of non-Trentino judges, indicating a preference for the Italian language.

Considering the data of the male voices together, it appeared that the Italian guises were evaluated significantly more favourably than the dialect ones in almost all traits. However, as observed in similar cases in §5.2.1.1, it has to be acknowledged that such significance was due to the influence of the significant evaluations accorded to the Italian guise of M1.

Table 2
Wilcoxon signed-ranked test: *z* values for significant differences in evaluations of Italian and dialect guises given by non-Trentino judges

	Trait	M1	M2	F1	F2	Overall	Male	Female	Old	Young
Solidarity	Likeability	-3,27 **	-1,55	-0,96	-1,26	-1,34	-3,36 **	-1,58	-1,86	-0,18
	Entertainment	-2,67 **	-3,12 **	-1,04	-2,67 **	-1,12	-4,12 **	-2,72 **	-1,27	-0,39
	Politeness	-1,79	-3,79 **	-3,12 **	-0,72	-4,07 **	-4,10 **	-1,55	-3,45 **	-2,43 *
	Open-	-1,54	-4,43 **	-2,73 **	-0,57	-4,11 **	-4,37 **	-1,45	-3,03 **	-2,79 **
	Trustworthiness	-0,53	-2,85 **	-0,35	-1,10	-0,83	-1,82	-0,64	-0,12	-1,18
	Frienship	-0,46	-2,79 **	-0,04	-2,47 *	-0,42	-2,27 *	-1,77	-0,39	-0,22
	Pleasantness	-1,67	-3,12 **	-1,57	-0,64	-2,81 **	-3,43 **	-0,56	-2,29 *	-1,70
Status	Success	-1,06	-3,19 **	-2,25 *	-0,10	-3,35 **	-3,07 **	-1,69	-2,38 *	-2,29 *
	Prestige	-1,13	-3,10 **	-2,62 **	-0,79	-2,74 **	-1,41	-2,45 *	-1,17	-2,76 **
	Job	-0,45	-4,04 **	-1,89	-0,37	-3,55 **	-3,16 **	-1,58	-1,42	-3,59 **
Competence	Speech	-1,66	-5,12 **	-4,72 **	-4,85 **	-9,19 **	-6,28 **	-6,72 **	-5,97 **	-7,00 **
	Education	-0,54	-3,80 **	-2,60 **	-1,66	-3,94 **	-2,57 *	-3,01 **	-1,56	-3,92 **

Note.
Yellow cells indicate that the sum of ranks of the dialect guise is higher than the sum of ranks of the Italian guise.
Purple cells indicate that the sum of ranks of the Italian guise is higher than the one of the dialectal guise.
* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$

The data on female speakers showed a significant favourableness towards the dialect guises in entertainment. Such outcome was influenced by the high significance in favour of the dialect guise of F2. As for the rest of the solidarity traits, no significant differences in ratings emerged. In status and competence, a tendency to prefer the Italian guises was visible. In particular, evaluations reached levels of significance in prestige, speech accuracy, and education. Prestige and education appeared to present significant values as a function of the influence of evaluations on F1.

Two aspects are to be noted. Firstly, the fact that politeness and open-mindedness presented an overall tendency in favour of the Italian guises. It was highlighted in

§5.2.1.1 that such traits were not significantly in favour of the dialect guises in evaluations by Trentino judges. Here, they seem to be positive for the Italian guises, except for the case of F2. Thus, there appeared to be a pattern indicating that politeness and open-mindedness were more associated to the Italian guises than the dialect ones. Furthermore, speech accuracy was in all cases related to the Italian guise, both by the group of Trentino judges and by that of non-Trentino judges.

As for older voices, a tendency to favour the Italian guises emerged from the evaluations given by the non-Trentino respondents. Significance was reached in pleasantness as well as politeness and open-mindedness. The significance of these last two traits was influenced by significant ratings received by F1 for her Italian guise. As already mentioned, the tendency in status and competence was in favour of the Italian guises. It appeared that speech accuracy presented a significant difference in older voices, favouring the Italian guises. The influence of the significance in evaluations accorded to F1 played a role in such result.

It appeared that young speakers were rated more favourably in their Italian guises. At times, such preference seemed to reach significant values, in particular in politeness, open-mindedness, status, and competence. Speech accuracy was significantly in favour of the Italian guises in the evaluations accorded to both M2 and F2.

5.2.2. Differences between Trentino and non-Trentino judges' evaluations

Overall, it appeared that the Italian guises were rated more favourably by the non-Trentino judges in all areas. It emerged that in specific cases such evaluations were more significant than in others, thus it can be affirmed with a certain degree of confidence that the respondents who did not come from Trentino-Alto Adige were the group of judges rating the Italian guises more positively.

As for the dialect guises, they were accorded more favourable evaluations by Trentino participants in speech accuracy. Such results were however not shared by the younger female voice, in that F2 appeared to be more favourably judged by non-Trentino respondents in speech accuracy, in which the levels of significance were notably high (p = 0.001). In the evaluations on all other traits regarding the dialect

guises, no specific tendency emerged as being predominant. This is because in some cases Trentino judges evaluated the dialect guises more positively, while in other cases non-Trentino participants did. In addition, evaluations resulted to be tendencies at times or, more rarely, significant differences. In solidarity and competence, there was no overall significance in the difference of ratings by Trentino and non-Trentino respondents, except for the likeability of the older dialect guises (M1 and F1), who were more favourably rated by the Trentino group. In status, it seemed that non-Trentino participants evaluated more positively the dialect guises.

Table 3
Mann-Whitney *U* test: *z* values for significant differences in evaluations, Trentino vs. non-Trentino judges

Trait		M1		M2		F1		F2	
		Dialect guise	**Italian guise**	**Dialect guise**	**Italian guise**	**Dialect guise**	**Italian guise**	**Dialect guise**	**Italian guise**
Solidarity	Likeability	-2,40 *	-1,97 *	-0,31	-0,63	-2,50 *	-1,67	-0,49	-1,44
	Entertainment	-1,48	-2,15 *	-0,86	-1,63	-3,05 **	-1,36	-1,35	-0,92
	Politeness	-0,34	-1,56	-0,87	-2,16 *	-0,61	-3,12 **	-2,87 **	-2,81 **
	Open-	-0,17	-1,38	-0,77	-2,77 **	-0,78	-2,48 *	-1,94	-1,87
	Trustworthiness	-0,27	-0,17	-0,01	-1,49	-0,36	-2,29 *	-0,52	-2,23 *
	Frienship	-0,37	-1,23	-0,54	-1,34	-0,99	-2,25 *	-1,52	-1,67
	Pleasantness	-1,05	-1,03	-0,17	-2,28 *	-0,82	-2,58 *	-0,82	-1,54
Status	Success	-0,78	-0,28	-1,25	-3,28 **	-0,56	-2,61 **	-0,62	-2,58 *
	Prestige	-1,77	-1,08	-1,09	-3,56 **	-2,43 *	-4,36 **	-1,78	-4,24 **
	Job	-0,16	-0,95	-2,36 *	-4,29 **	-2,14 *	-2,58 *	-1,72	-2,30 *
Competence	Speech accuracy	-2,01 *	-0,80	-1,54	-2,56 *	-1,77	-2,20 *	-3,41 **	-2,83 **
	Education	-0,88	-0,75	-2,02 *	-4,96 **	-1,10	-3,90 **	-1,67	-3,74 **

Note.
Green cells indicate that the sum of ranks of Trentino judges is higher than the sum of ranks of non-Trentino judges.
Light blue cells indicate that the sum of ranks of non-Trentino judges is higher than the sum of ranks of Trentino judges.
* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

No clear pattern emerged in the evaluations of the Italian guise of M1. Likeability and entertainment were the traits to which non-Trentino participants significantly accorded more positive ratings. Apart from likeability and entertainment, the values of all the other traits did not reach levels of significance nor were the *z*-values particularly distant from 0. Hence, it was not reasonable to assume a tendency by which Trentino or

non-Trentino judges better evaluated the Italian guise. Nor were the results regarding the dialect guise of M1 homogeneous. A significant difference in ratings emerged only in likeability and speech accuracy, in which the dialect guise was more favourably rated by the Trentino participants. In all other traits, there was no sign of significant differences or tendencies towards one or the other group of judges, in that both groups seemed to rate the dialect guise almost equally.

The Italian guise of M2 was rated significantly more positively by non-Trentino respondents in all traits of status and competence. As for solidarity, levels of significance emerged in pleasantness, politeness, and open-mindedness. These last two traits appeared to be a separate cluster within solidarity pointing in favour of the Italian language in §5.2.1.1 and in § 5.2.1.2, and emerged here as indicating that the non-Trentino judges evaluated more favourably the Italian guise of M2. As for the dialect guise, a lack of differences in evaluations by the two groups of judges was noted in solidarity traits. A tendency emerged instead in status, in which non-Trentino respondents appeared to evaluate the dialect guise more positively than Trentino ones did. Trentino judges seemed to confer their dialect a lower socioeconomic status. Within competence traits, a countertrend emerged. While Trentino judges appeared to rate more positively the dialect guise of M2 in speech accuracy, the same guise was significantly evaluated more favourably in education by non-Trentino participants.

The Italian guise of F1 was significantly better rated by the non-Trentino judges. Such difference in evaluations resulted to be significant in all traits except for likeability and entertainment, in which only a tendency emerged. Likeability and entertainment represented instead the attributes in which the dialect guise was significantly more positively evaluated by the group of Trentino judges. As for the remaining solidarity traits, no actual tendency emerged, in that *z*-values of evaluations regarding the dialect guise resulted to be close to 0. Non-Trentino respondents rated the dialect guise more favourably that the Trentino ones in status, with significant values in prestige and job. As occurred with M1 and M2, speech accuracy evaluations regarding the dialect guise of F1 were more positive by the Trentino judges. On the other hand, a countertrend emerged in the other competence trait. As noted for M2, a tendency to favour the dialect guise by non-Trentino respondents appeared.

Similarly to M2 and F1, the Italian guise of F2 was better rated by non-Trentino participants. Such differences emerged with significant values in status, competence, politeness, and trustworthiness. Within the dialect guises, that of F2 represented an exception. It appeared that the dialect guise of F2 was never evaluated more positively by Trentino judges, in that her dialect guise was always favoured by non-Trentino respondents in all areas. In some traits such preference consisted in a tendency, as in entertainment, open-mindedness, friendship, prestige, job, and education. In some other traits it was not reasonable to assume a proper trend, in that *z*-values were close to 0, as in likeability, trustworthiness, pleasantness, and success. However, in politeness and speech accuracy the difference in evaluations resulted to be significant. It is to be noted that this case represented an exception as far as speech accuracy was concerned, in that the dialect guise of F2 was significantly favoured by the group of non-Trentino participants, whereas all other dialect guises were better evaluated by Trentino judges.

6. Discussion

The chapter provides a discussion on the results obtained in the present study. In §6.1 the research hypotheses are verified. The results emerged from evaluations given by the two groups of judges regarding the dialect and the Italian guises are analysed in §6.1 and §6.2. Lastly, in §6.3 the limits encountered during the experimental design process are provided as well as further research proposals.

6.1. Trentino and Italian guises

This study aimed at the understanding of language attitudes Trentino and non-Trentino participants have towards the Italian language and the dialect spoken in the city of Trento. In §4.1, it was hypothesised that speakers using Italian would be perceived more favourably than Trentino speakers in status and competence. Furthermore, such assumption was held to be especially true by non-Trentino judges. The hypothesis resulted to be correct not only considering non-Trentino answers but also considering the Trentino ones. Both groups rated more favourably the Italian guises of all speakers in status and competence. However, the evaluations regarding the younger female voice were in favour of her dialect guise. As it is mentioned below, ratings concerning F2 went at times against the prevailing trend.

As far as solidarity was concerned, it was assumed that judges — especially Trentino ones — would evaluate the dialect guises more favourably than the Italian ones. The hypothesis was confirmed by Trentino participants and refuted by non-Trentino judges. Dialect guises were more favourably evaluated by Trentino judges, except for M2, whose Italian guise was preferred. Conversely, non-Trentino evaluators favoured the Italian guises in solidarity, except for the ratings regarding F2, whose dialect guise was more positively judged.

Lastly, it was expected that evaluations would be influenced by the gender of the voices. In particular, it was hypothesised that Italian female guises would always be favoured over dialect female guises, especially in status and competence, and that they would be evaluated less positively than men when speaking dialect. As noted in the

previous chapter, the data showed that status and competence traits are frequently associated with the Italian language. As a matter of fact, in these traits non-Trentino judges favoured the Italian guises over the dialect ones in evaluations regarding both females and males. Non-Trentino judges rated all the Italian guises more positively in solidarity, except for F2, whose dialect guise was more positively evaluated. This shows that women are rated less favourably when they speak dialect than when they speak Italian by non-Trentino judges. Similarly, Trentino participants preferred the Italian guises over the dialect ones in status and competence, except for F2. However, Trentino judges evaluated female dialect guises more positively than the Italian ones in solidarity. This did not confirm the hypothesis put forth in §4.1.

In addition to verifying the correctness of the hypothesis proposed in §4.1, there are further aspects that have to be noted. A remark concerning the younger speakers has to be made. It emerged that the evaluations regarding M2 and F2 often go in opposite directions. On the one hand, the Italian guise of the young male speaker is more favourably perceived than the dialect one in all traits by both groups of judges. On the other hand, the dialect guise of the young female speaker is preferred over the Italian one by both Trentino and non-Trentino participants, in particular in solidarity traits. Although it is not surprising that the Italian guise of M2 was significantly favoured by non-Trentino participants, it is unexpected that Trentino judges evaluated the Italian guise of M2 more positively than the dialect one. It appears that in this case Trentino participants lacked "group solidarity" (Woolard, 1984, p. 69), the factor responsible for speakers to be perceived closer by the judges who share their same language or dialect. It could be argued that the fact that the young male speaker read the story more quickly than the other voices made him sound cursory and careless. However, the speed at which he read was equal both in the Italian and in the dialect recording, as a result such variable was controlled and could not play a role in the disfavouring of the dialect guise of M2. It can also be posited that the voice of the younger male speaker sounded unpleasant and was therefore penalised.

Furthermore, the results concerning the young female speaker are noteworthy. It is surprising that her dialect guise was evaluated more favourably than the Italian one, especially in solidarity traits by non-Trentino judges and in status traits by Trentino

judges. Women are normally associated with standard varieties (Labov, 2001). As a matter of fact, in Licata (2019) the dialect female guise was rated more negatively than the Italian female guise and than the dialect male guise. In the same study, the female Italian guise was favoured over the male one. However, there are cases in literature in which women were not linked with the standards, as in Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013). Although the Galician linguistic situation is not directly comparable to the Italian one, in the study of Loureiro-Rodriguez et al. (2013) female guises were evaluated more socially correct when using a non-standard Galician accent. The results related to young speakers in this experiment are clearly not straightforward. The sample of the study only contained one young male and one young female speaker, thus it is not possible to understand whether the results are specific to this experiment or whether they are indicative of a more general perspective. It seems therefore necessary to further investigate the attitudes Trentino and non-Trentino respondents have towards Trentino and Italian young speakers. For this reason, I propose a follow-up experiment aimed at analysing language attitudes towards young Trentino and Italian speakers (a more detailed explanation of the study is provided in §6.3).

A further aspect that has to be noted concerns the older speakers who participated in the research. It appears that there is a stereotype connected to the older voices. Unsurprisingly, Italian guises were rated more favourably than dialect guises in status and competence, in that these areas are clearly associated with the Italian language rather than with dialect. However, as far as solidarity is concerned evaluations by Trentino judges were in favour of the dialect older guises. This provides evidence for the fact that older dialect speakers are stereotypically considered likeable and entertaining by people who share their same dialect.

Within solidarity, there are two traits which require special attention. As noted in §5.2.1.2, politeness and open-mindedness constitute a pattern that is often distinguishable among the other solidarity traits. This is visible in Table 1 and Table 2, where politeness and open-mindedness are at times the only unmarked traits, as in evaluations regarding F1 and F2 by Trentino judges, or the only significant traits, as in ratings concerning F1 by non-Trentino judges. It has to be acknowledged that these two traits require most likely to be ascribed to a different area rather than solidarity. For

instance, it is presumably more reasonable to attribute politeness and open-mindedness either to status or competence. This is because these traits are frequently associated with the Italian guises as it occurs for status and competence. Arguably, a larger amount of collected data and a factor analysis would have resulted in a clearer picture regarding politeness and open-mindedness.

One last brief remark has to be made concerning speech accuracy. Speech correctness is always associated with the Italian guises. Unsurprisingly, this highlights the fact that dialect is downgraded when compared to Italian, in that the standard language is considered more accurate than dialect.

6.2. Trentino and non-Trentino judges

Related to the results discussed in §5.2.2 and reported in Table 3, there are several aspects that need to be underlined concerning the difference in evaluations given by Trentino and non-Trentino participants. In speech accuracy, the dialect guises were more positively evaluated by Trentino judges than by non-Trentino respondents, except for the case of the younger female guise. The reason behind this result is arguably to be found in the fact that the text the speakers were asked to read was grammatically correct. As a matter of fact, during the translation process particular attention was paid to the *consecutio temporum*, to subjunctives and other grammatical aspects. The correctness of the text has most likely played an influencing role during the evaluations, especially in those given by respondents from Trentino. This is because Trentino judges know the dialect at issue, and they are therefore more likely to consider it correct than non-Trentino participants, who do not know Trentino dialect. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Trentino judges recognised the speech in the dialect recordings as accurate and without errors. In the case of the younger female speaker, her dialect guise was evaluated more positively by non-Trentino respondents. It may be hypothesised that Trentino judges are less likely to associate young female speakers with high levels of competence when using dialect. However, this remains an assumption and it should be investigated by means of a follow-up study.

Furthermore, it has to be noted that all the dialect guises were more favourably rated by non-Trentino judges in status traits and in education. This may suggest the fact that Trentino participants (un)consciously self-judged themselves, their socioeconomic status and their competence levels by evaluating their fellow speakers. It appears that participants from Trentino conveyed low socioeconomic status and low levels of education to individuals who speak Trentino dialect, and indirectly also to themselves.

Lastly, the stereotype connected to the older dialect speakers that was mentioned above is here visible in likeability. Both dialect guises of the older speakers were more positively evaluated by Trentino judges. This is indicative of a stereotype according to which older dialect speakers are considered particularly likeable by Trentino judges.

6.3. Acknowledgement of methodological limitations and further research proposals

The experiment conducted in this research proved to be a valid tool for the investigation of attitudes that people inside and outside Trentino-Alto Adige have towards the dialect of the city of Trento and the Italian language. Although it contributed to an in depth sociolinguistic understanding of language attitudes towards a specific north-eastern dialect, this study exhibited limitations. During the design of the experiment, I conducted a pre-survey so as to select the speakers that were the best representatives of both Trentino dialect and standard Italian. It has to be acknowledged that neither the selected nor the unselected speakers produced a standard Italian reading during the recording sessions. On the contrary, traces of regional Italian were present in various degrees in all the recordings, for instance the Trentino zed was used in the word *pezzetto*, 'piece', by the older male speaker.

A further limit consisted in the fact that participants were asked to rate readings rather than spontaneous speech recordings. Although speaker candidates were provided with the story before the recording sessions so that they could familiarise with the text, they did not learn the passage by heart and recite it, they only read it out. This is one of the limits researchers encounter when devising matched-guise experiments, especially macro-linguistic ones. A possible solution for such limitation is proposed below in a follow-up micro-linguistic study. However, the use of an identical text to be read in all

recordings allowed for vocabulary and topic variables to be controlled, and therefore allowed me to elicit attitudes concerning only the variable of dialect versus Italian.

One last aspect has to be noted, namely the one concerning traits. When designing the survey, I selected a number of traits on the basis of the ones employed in previous research. However, the studies I took as a starting point were conducted in territories different from Trentino-Alto Adige and at times different from Italy, and, most importantly, in different years. Although the most recent dated to 2017 (De Pascale et al., 2017), the earliest dated to 1960 (Lambert et al., 1960). It is important to acknowledge that the traits used by population to evaluate speakers may have changed over the decades. As a result, it is possible that not all the adjectives used in the experiment were considered relevant by participants. A pre-survey on trait relevance could have provided a clearer picture of the present evaluative situation.

For the purposes of the study, the real aim of the research was not explained at the beginning of the questionnaire. On the contrary, it was provided once the survey was completed. In the last section of the questionnaire participants were asked to indicate what they thought the objective of the research was. Patterns of hypothesised aims emerged from the data. For instance, a number of respondents believed that the purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate stereotypes and prejudices related to northern and southern Italian dialects. This indicates that the presence of filler speakers using Salentine and Venetian dialects did distract participants from the real focus on Trentino dialect. In addition, respondents named speech rate as a possible object of study. One last aspect often noted as possible research purpose concerned age and gender. As a matter of fact, participants hypothesised that the study aimed at analysing whether the evaluations accorded to speakers were influenced by the fact that the voice was of a man or a woman or of a young or an old person.

The present experiment can be expanded in various ways. Firstly, I propose a follow-up study dedicated to the analysis of language attitudes towards young Trentino dialect and Italian speakers. The experiment should be structured following the lines of the present research. Speakers in the proposed survey should be eight: two young Trentino females, two young Trentino males, one older Venetian female, one older Venetian male, one older Salentine female and one older Salentine male. The reason behind the

use of older filler guises lies in the fact that participants should not understand that the research aims at analysing attitudes towards young speakers. Two pre-surveys are highly recommended. Not only do I suggest to conduct a pre-test to select the speakers who best represent Trentino dialect and standard Italian, but I also advise to research what are the traits that participants consider as the most relevant at the moment of the research.

The influence of urban central Trentino is visible in regional Italian spoken in the city of Trento in many respects. There is one in particular which occurred frequently in the Italian recordings made for this experiment, namely the presence of the Trentino zed. It appears that the literature lacks recent detailed studies on this phonetic phenomenon. Conventionally, the *zeta trentina* is associated to the voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives [ð] and [θ], as in Casalicchio and Cordin (2020). However, the linguistic phenomenon requires to be analysed in a laboratory so as to establish its place and manner of articulation and verify whether the international phonetic symbols for the interdental fricatives describe it at best or whether affricates [t̪θ] and [d̪ð] suggested in §2.3 would better identify it.

In addition to this qualitative phonetic study, I also propose a quantitative research focussed on the sociolinguistic investigation of language attitudes towards the presence and absence of the Trentino *z* in regional Italian spoken in the city of Trento. In this case, I do not suggest to conduct a macro-linguistic experiment as the present one but a micro-linguistic research, in that the object of study is limited to a specific sound. This would allow for the employment of the digital manipulation of the recordings carried out in Campbell-Kibler (2006) as a means to partially solve limitations of matched-guise surveys. The fact that speakers have to read a text in order for vocabulary and topic variables to be controlled would not constitute an issue anymore. This is because it would be possible to record the voices during a spontaneous speech and then manipulate the presence or absence of the *zeta trentina* digitally. The aim of the proposed research would be that of investigating attitudes towards the use of the Trentino zed so as to analyse whether this phonetic phenomenon has a social value and, if so, whether it represents a Labovian indicator, marker or stereotype.

7. Conclusions

The present research focuses on Trentino dialect, in particular on the central urban variety. As analysed in Chapter 2, central urban Trentino is the dialect spoken in the city of Trento and it presents specific features, such as the *zeta trentina*, the absence of consonantal gemination and the drop of unstressed final vowels different from [a]. The purpose of the study is to investigate the language attitudes that people from Trentino-Alto Adige and from outside the region have towards Trentino dialect and Italian. A definition of the notion of language attitudes is provided in Chapter 3 along with the various methods that allow for attitude-related studies. The approach chosen for the present research is the one devised by Lambert and his colleagues in 1960, namely the matched-guise technique. The methodology employed in this work allows for the investigation of language attitudes towards Trentino dialect in Italy and contributes to a further understanding of the sociolinguistic situation within the country.

For the purpose of the research, a matched-guise experiment was conducted. A group of 120 subjects were asked to evaluate a number of speakers on a series of traits related to personality, socioeconomic status and competence. Results show that status and competence are generally associated with the Italian language. In particular, speech accuracy presents a clear connection with Italian rather than with dialect. Participants from Trentino-Alto Adige demonstrate levels of solidarity towards speakers using their dialect, especially towards older voices and female ones. However, politeness and open-mindedness result to be a cluster inside solidarity in favour of the Italian guises. The data is not straightforward as far as young speakers are concerned. As a matter of fact evaluations regarding young voices go in opposite directions. Thus, a further research is required so as to investigate language attitudes towards young dialect speakers.

In addition, I propose a study focussed on a specific phonetic feature of central urban Trentino which frequently occurs in regional Italian spoken in Trento, namely the *zeta trentina*. On the one hand, a qualitative phonetic research is needed in order to establish place and manner of articulation of the Trentino *z* and an IPA symbol that best describes the sound. On the other hand, I propose a quantitative sociolinguistic research so as to investigate language attitudes related to the phonetic phenomenon. A modified matched-

guise experiment should be conducted and reveal whether the Trentino *z* displays a social value and, if so, whether it can be identified as a Labovian indicator, marker or stereotype.

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Appendix A: *Il corvo e la volpe* (Italian version and original English version)

Italian adapted version used in the experiment

La volpe era ancora affamata quando vide un corvo con un pezzetto di formaggio nel becco. Pensò fra sé e sé che quel formaggio le sarebbe piaciuto e avrebbe saziato la sua fame, così disse al corvo: "Come sei bello! Se il tuo canto è tanto bello quanto il tuo aspetto, di sicuro sei il più bello di tutti gli uccelli!".

Il corvo si mise a cantare per far vedere alla volpe che il suo canto era tanto bello quanto il suo aspetto. Così facendo però il pezzo di formaggio gli cadde dal becco e finì a terra. La volpe, che non aspettava altro, se lo mangiò subito e scappò via.

English translation of the above adapted Italian version

The fox was still hungry when she saw a craw with a piece of cheese in his beak. She thought she would have liked to eat that cheese and it would have satiated her. So, she said to the crow: "How beautiful you are! If you sing as beautifully as you are, certainly you are the most beautiful of all birds!".

The crow started singing so as to show to the fox that his voice was as beautiful as his look. This was the piece of cheese fell out of his beak and got to the ground. The fox, who had been waiting for this to happen, quickly ate the cheese and ran away.

Original English version from Project Gutenberg's *Aesop's Fables*

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. "That's for me, as I am a Fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. "Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking to-day: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds." The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox. "That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In

exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future. “Do not trust flatterers.”

From: Aesop. (2002). *Aesop’s Fables*. Project Gutenberg

Appendix B: *El corf e la vòpl* (Trento dialect version)

La vòlp l'era ancor famada, quando che la vede en corf con en toch de formai en tel bech. La pensa che quel formai el ghe averia savest bon, e che l'averia entesida. Alora, la ghe dis: "Che bel che te sei! Se 'l to cantar l'è bel come la to zera, de sicur te sei el pù bel de tuti i osei!"

El corf scominzia a cantar per farghe veder a la volp che 'l so cantar l'è bel come la so zera. Ma quan che el taca, el toch de formai el ghe casca dal bech e el va en tera. La volp, che l'era lì che no la spètava altro, la se magna subito el formai, e la scampa via.

Appendix C: Phonetic transcription of the Trento dialect story

la ˈvolp ˈlɛːra aŋˈkoːr faˈmaːda / ˈkwando ˈke la ˈveːde en ˈkorf ˈkon en ˈtɔːk de forˈmai en tel ˈbɛːk / la ˈpensa ke ˈkwel forˈmai ˈel ge aveˈria saˈvɛst ˈbɔn / ˈe ke laveˈria enteˈzida / aˈloːra la ge ˈdis / ke ˈbɛl ke te ˈsei / ˈsel to kanˈtaːr lɛ ˈbɛl ˈkoːme la to ˈʈθeːra / de siˈkuːr te sei el ˈpu ˈbɛl de ˈtuːti i oˈzei

el ˈkorf scoˈmintsia a kanˈtaːr per ˈfarge veˈdeːr a la ˈvolp ˈkel so kanˈtar lɛ ˈbɛl ˈkoːme la so ˈʈθeːra / ma ˈkwan kel ˈtaːka / el ˈtɔːk de forˈmai el ge ˈkaska dal ˈbɛːk e el ˈva en ˈtɛːra / la ˈvolp ke ˈlɛːra ˈli ke no la speˈtaːva ˈaltro / la se ˈmaːɲa ˈsuːbito el forˈmai / e la ˈskampa via

Appendix D: *El corvo e ea volpe* (Venetian version)

Ea volpe gaveva ancora fame quando chea se ga inacorto de un corvo che gaveva un tochetìn de formagio sul becco. Ea pensò che chel formaggio che gavarìa piasuo e che no ea gavarìa avuo più fame, così ea che dise al corvo: come che ti se beo. Se el to cantar se cussì beo come del to aspetto, de sicuro ti sè el più beo de tutti i osei.
El corvo ga tacà cantar par farghe veder aea volpe chel so canto gera tanto beo quanto el so aspetto. Fasendo cusì però el tochetìn de formaggio ghe se cascà dal becco e el se finio in tera. Ea volpe, che no spetava altro, el se o ga magnà subito e ea scampò via.

Appendix E: *La urpe e lu corvu* (Salento dialect version)

Na urpe ca tenia ncora fame, idde nu corvu cu na stozza de casu ntra lu beccu. Pensau fra iddra stessa ca ddru casu n'ia piaciutu e ca l'ia pututa binchiare, cussí ni disse allu corvu: "ce si beddru! Se lu cantu tou ede beddru quantu a tie, sicuru sinti lu chiu beddru de tutti li aceddri". Lu corvu ncignau cu canta, cu face bidere alla urpe ca lu cantu sou era beddru comu a iddru. Facennu cussí però la stozza de casu ni cadiu de lu beccu e spicciau a nterra. La urpe, ca nu sta spettava autru, se lu futtiu de pressa e se ne scappau.

Appendix F: The questionnaire

Hereafter are reported title, instructions, questions and conclusions of the questionnaire in their original Italian version. An English translation is provided below each section. Since the practice trial and the twelve questions on the guises were identical, only one exemplary query is reported.

Title of the questionnaire

Qual è l'impressione che una persona ci dà quando la sentiamo parlare ma non possiamo vederla?

What's the impression we have of a person we can listen to but not see?

Instructions

In questo questionario ti verrà chiesto di ascoltare delle persone raccontare una storia e di rispondere a delle domande su di loro.
Riprodurrai un video per sentire il loro racconto e, dopo che saranno trascorsi almeno dieci secondi, inizierai a rispondere alle domande.
Per favore, riproduci il video una sola volta.
Comincerai sentendo una voce di prova che ti permetterà di familiarizzare con la struttura del questionario. Dopodiché ascolterai dodici persone e risponderai alle domande.
Infine troverai dei quesiti che ti riguardano. Il questionario è anonimo, non dovrai inserire il tuo nome in nessun campo.

In this questionnaire, you will be asked to listen to a number of people telling a story and to answer some questions about them.
You will play the video to listen to the story and, after at least ten seconds, you will be allowed to answer the questions.
Please, play the video only once.
You will start with the listening of a practice trial that will allow you to become familiar with the structure of the questionnaire. Afterwards, you will listen to twelve people and you will answer the questions.
In the end you will find some questions concerning your background. The survey is anonymous, you will not be asked to provide you name.

Example question

Prima voce

Riproduci il video sottostante e, dopo che saranno trascorsi almeno dieci secondi, inizia a rispondere alle domande.
Per favore, riproduci il video una sola volta.
Quando avrai terminato, clicca sulla freccia azzurra in basso a destra per proseguire (la freccia apparirà solo dopo che avrai completato l'ascolto).

[video]

Quanto sei d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni?
La persona che hai appena ascoltato:

	Del tutto d'accordo	Per lo più d'accordo	Parzialmente d'accordo	Parzialmente in disaccordo	Per lo più in disaccordo	Del tutto in disaccordo
Trasmette simpatia	○	○	○	○	○	○
Parla in modo corretto	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ha successo nella vita	○	○	○	○	○	○
È divertente	○	○	○	○	○	○
È educata	○	○	○	○	○	○
È aperta mentalmente	○	○	○	○	○	○
Occupa un ruolo di prestigio	○	○	○	○	○	○
È affidabile, di fideresti di lei	○	○	○	○	○	○
È colta	○	○	○	○	○	○
Vorresti che fosse tua amica	○	○	○	○	○	○
È piacevole da sentire	○	○	○	○	○	○

Quale lavoro pensi che svolga questa persona?
○ Lavoro manuale (operario, agricoltore, ecc.)
○ Lavoro commerciale (addetto vendita in un negozio, al supermercato, ecc.)
○ Lavoro intellettuale (medico, insegnante, ecc.)

First voice

Please, play the video below and, after at least ten seconds, start answering the questions.
Please, play the video only once.
When you are done, click on the light blue arrow on the lower right to procede (the arrow will appear only after you complete the listening)

[video]

How much do you agree with the following statements?
The person you have just listened to:

	Strongly agree	*Mostly agree*	*Partially agree*	*Partially disagree*	*Mostly disagree*	*Strongly disagree*
Seems nice	○	○	○	○	○	○
Speaks properly	○	○	○	○	○	○
Has success in her life	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is entertaining	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is polite	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is open-minded	○	○	○	○	○	○
Holds a prestigious position	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is reliable, you would trust her	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is educated	○	○	○	○	○	○
You wish she was your friend	○	○	○	○	○	○
Is pleasant to hear	○	○	○	○	○	○

What job do you think this person has?
○ *Manual work (factory worker, farmer, etc.)*
○ *Commercial work (salesperson in a shop, in a supermarket, etc.)*
○ *Intellectual work (doctor, professor, etc.)*

Purpose of the questionnaire

Credi di aver riconosciuto la voce di una o più persone?
○ Sì, ho riconosciuto la voce di prova
○ Sì, ho riconosciuto la voce di prova e una o più altre voci
○ No, non ho riconosciuto nessuna voce

Puoi indicare la lingua o il dialetto delle persone che hai riconosciuto?
o Italiano
o Dialetto trentino
o Dialetto salentino
o Dialetto veneziano

Hai sentito più volte la stessa persona raccontare la storia?
o Sì
o No

Quante persone diverse hai sentito in totale, esclusa la voce di prova?

_____

Secondo te, qual era l'obiettivo del questionario?

_____

Did you recognise any one of the voices you heard?
o *Yes, I recognised the practise voice*
o *Yes, I recognised the practice voice and one or more other voices*
o *No, I did not recognise any voice*

Can you indicate the language or dialect spoken by the voices you recognised?
o *Italian*
o *Dialect of Trento*
o *Salentine dialect*
o *Venetian dialect*

Did you listen to the same person more than once?
o *Yes*
o *No*

How many different people did you listen to, except from the practice voice?

_____

In your opinion, what was the purpose of the questionnaire?

_____

Personal information

Indica per favore la tua età
o 18-21 anni
o 22-31 anni
o 32-41 anni
o 42-51 anni
o 52-61 anni

o 62-71 anni
o 72-81 anni
o 82-91 anni

Indica per favore il tuo genere
o Femminile
o Maschile
o Altro

In quale regione italiana sei nato/a?
o Abruzzo
o Basilicata
o Calabria
o Campania
o Emilia Romagna
o Friuli-Venezia Giulia
o Lazio
o Liguria
o Lombardia
o Marche
o Molise
o Piemonte
o Puglia
o Sardegna
o Sicilia
o Toscana
o Trentino-Alto Adige
o Umbria
o Valle d'Aosta
o Veneto
o Non sono nato/a in Italia

In quale regione italiana sei cresciuto/a?
o Abruzzo
o Basilicata
o Calabria
o Campania
o Emilia Romagna
o Friuli-Venezia Giulia
o Lazio
o Liguria
o Lombardia
o Marche
o Molise
o Piemonte
o Puglia

o Sardegna
o Sicilia
o Toscana
o Trentino-Alto Adige
o Umbria
o Valle d'Aosta
o Veneto
o Non sono cresciuto/a in Italia

I tuoi genitori provengono dalla regione in cui sei cresciuto/a?
o Sì
o No

Se hai risposto "No" perché tua madre non proviene dalla regione in cui sei cresciuto/a, indica per favore la sua regione di provenienza
o Abruzzo
o Basilicata
o Calabria
o Campania
o Emilia Romagna
o Friuli-Venezia Giulia
o Lazio
o Liguria
o Lombardia
o Marche
o Molise
o Piemonte
o Puglia
o Sardegna
o Sicilia
o Toscana
o Trentino-Alto Adige
o Umbria
o Valle d'Aosta
o Veneto
o Non proviene dall'Italia

Se hai risposto "No" perché tuo padre non proviene dalla regione in cui sei cresciuto/a, indica per favore la sua regione di provenienza
o Abruzzo
o Basilicata
o Calabria
o Campania
o Emilia Romagna
o Friuli-Venezia Giulia
o Lazio

o Liguria
o Lombardia
o Marche
o Molise
o Piemonte
o Puglia
o Sardegna
o Sicilia
o Toscana
o Trentino-Alto Adige
o Umbria
o Valle d'Aosta
o Veneto
o Non proviene dall'Italia

Conosci altre lingue oltre all'italiano?
o Sì
o No

Indica per favore quali lingue conosci
_____

Consoci uno o più dialetti italiani?
o Sì
o No

Indica per favore quali dialetti conosci
_____

Quali lingue e/o dialetti parli giornalmente a casa?
_____

Attualmente, studi o lavori?
o Studio
o Lavoro
o Entrambi
o Non studio né lavoro

Quali lingue e/o dialetti parli giornalmente al lavoro?
_____

Quali lingue e/o dialetti parli giornalmente a scuola/all'università?
_____

Please indicate your age
- *18-21*
- *22-31*
- *32-41*
- *42-51*
- *52-61*
- *62-71*
- *72-81*
- *82-91*

Please indicate your gender
- *Female*
- *Male*
- *Other*

In which Italian region were you born?
- *Abruzzo*
- *Basilicata*
- *Calabria*
- *Campania*
- *Emilia Romagna*
- *Friuli-Venezia Giulia*
- *Lazio*
- *Liguria*
- *Lombardia*
- *Marche*
- *Molise*
- *Piemonte*
- *Puglia*
- *Sardegna*
- *Sicilia*
- *Toscana*
- *Trentino-Alto Adige*
- *Umbria*
- *Valle d'Aosta*
- *Veneto*
- *I was not born in Italy*

In which Italian region did you grow up?
- *Abruzzo*
- *Basilicata*
- *Calabria*
- *Campania*
- *Emilia Romagna*
- *Friuli-Venezia Giulia*
- *Lazio*

o *Liguria*
o *Lombardia*
o *Marche*
o *Molise*
o *Piemonte*
o *Puglia*
o *Sardegna*
o *Sicilia*
o *Toscana*
o *Trentino-Alto Adige*
o *Umbria*
o *Valle d'Aosta*
o *Veneto*
o *I did not grow up in Italy*

Do your parents come from the region in which you grew up?
o *Yes*
o *No*

If your answer was "No" because your mother does not come from the region in which you grew up, please indicate the region she comes form
o *Abruzzo*
o *Basilicata*
o *Calabria*
o *Campania*
o *Emilia Romagna*
o *Friuli-Venezia Giulia*
o *Lazio*
o *Liguria*
o *Lombardia*
o *Marche*
o *Molise*
o *Piemonte*
o *Puglia*
o *Sardegna*
o *Sicilia*
o *Toscana*
o *Trentino-Alto Adige*
o *Umbria*
o *Valle d'Aosta*
o *Veneto*
o *She does not come from Italy*

If your answer was "No" because your father does not come from the region in which you grew up, please indicate the region he comes from
o *Abruzzo*
o *Basilicata*
o *Calabria*
o *Campania*
o *Emilia Romagna*
o *Friuli-Venezia Giulia*
o *Lazio*
o *Liguria*
o *Lombardia*
o *Marche*
o *Molise*
o *Piemonte*
o *Puglia*
o *Sardegna*
o *Sicilia*
o *Toscana*
o *Trentino-Alto Adige*
o *Umbria*
o *Valle d'Aosta*
o *Veneto*
o *He does not come from Italy*

Can you speak any other languages other than Italian?
o *Yes*
o *No*

Please indicate the languages you can speak

_____

Can you speak one or more Italian dialects?
o *Yes*
o *No*

Please indicate which dialects you can speak

_____

Which languages or dialects you do usually speak at home?

_____

Currently, do you study or work?
o *I study*
o *I work*
o *Both*
o *Neither*

Which languages or dialects do you usually speak at work?

_____

Which languages or dialects do you usually speak at school/university?

_____

Conclusion

Il questionario mirava all'analisi dell'atteggiamento che assumiamo nei confronti della lingua italiana e del dialetto trentino.
In totale hai sentito otto persone: quattro di loro hanno raccontato la storia due volte, una in italiano e una in dialetto trentino.
Grazie per aver partecipato!

The questionnaire aimed at the analysis of the attitudes we have towards the Italian language and the dialect of Trento.
Overall, you listened to eight people: four of them told the story twice, once in Italian and once in Trento dialect.
Thank you for your participation!