

Friulian

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Friulian is spoken by over 700,000 people in the far northeastern Italian region Friuli-Venezia Giulia, a noticeably conservative area which borders Austria in the north, Slovenia in the east, the Adriatic sea in the south and the Veneto region in the west. The Friulian varieties are sufficiently well-differentiated from adjacent dialects of the Romance group, especially from the Venetian ones. Some varieties of the Venetian type are also spoken within the boundaries of the administrative region Friuli Venezia-Giulia, in the east (including Trieste), in the west and in several areas in the extreme south. A Friulian-Venetian diglossia is widespread in the main towns of the region, being a result of both historical (prestige of Venetian institutions during the centuries of the Serenissima's supremacy) and social circumstances (recent immigration from the neighbouring Veneto). On the other hand, Friulian is also spoken outside Friuli, in the district of Portogruaro (today part of the Veneto region), along the Friulian border (coinciding with the Tagliamento river), as well as outside Italy (especially in Australia, the Americas and South Africa), as a result of emigration. Some groups of Friulian speakers are still found in Rumania (Iliescu 1972).

Friulian is not homogeneous but exhibits a considerable geographical variation. According to dialectologists (Frau 1984, Francescato 1966), three main macro-varieties (in reality, three diasystems constituted by several subvarieties) may be identified: i) central-southern Friulian, spoken west of the Tagliamento river; ii) western Friulian, spoken east of this river; and iii) Carnic Friulian, spoken in the Alpine area. Depending on whether the palatal plosive /c/ (with its voiced counterpart /ɟ/) is maintained or lost, being replaced by /tʃ/ (and /dʒ/), two major groups may be distinguished, i) and iii) vs. ii). The contrast is only found in the former group. It is to be pointed out that the variety spoken in the main Friulian town, Udine, is not herein taken into consideration, due to the fact that it has lost the above-mentioned opposition. Central Friulian is the most widespread dialect group. Besides, it is the variety the literary common language (the so-called KOINE) is based on, as well as the pattern for the current official use. By the act of December 1999 (concerning several linguistic minorities of Italy), Friulian has been finally recognized as an official language in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region along with Italian, although this equalization does not concern yet all frameworks of social and public life. The present description is based on recordings of about fifteen native Friulian speakers from several villages of central Friuli. The sample text in particular is based on the speech of an educated male speaker in his mid-fifties, who also assisted in rendering the text from Italian to Friulian.

The phonetic system described here refers to the varieties spoken in a rather narrow area including a number of localities around Udine, where the most typical, and ideally near-standard, central linguistic features are found (Frau 1984: 16–17, Vanelli 1998a: 14). Nevertheless, since some non-central phone(ma)tic features have also been accepted in the standard pronunciation (for instance, the lengthening of the final vowel in the infinitives), the normative precepts do not always coincide with the actual usage of the central varieties. On the other hand, we are inclined to regard as phonologically relevant some phenomena for which the official spelling does not use any special orthographic mark, for instance, the word-medial vocalic lengthening, originated by several diachronic processes, as well as the opposition between the post-alveolar (/ʃ, ʒ/) and the alveolar (/s, z/) fricatives, which are still distinctive in some subvarieties.

The spelling used here is the official one, as elaborated by the Regional Observatory for Friulian Language and Culture (OLF) together with the Friulian Philological Society and passed by the region Friuli-Venezia Giulia in 1998.

Consonants

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial -Velar
Nasal	m			n		ɲ		
Plosive	p b		t d			c ɟ	k g	
Affricate			ts dz		tʃ dʒ			
Fricative		f v		s z	ʃ (ʒ)			
Approximant						j		w
Rhotic				r				
Lateral approximant				l				

/m/	/ˈmat/	<i>mat</i>	‘mad’	/tʃ/	/ˈtʃate/	<i>çate</i>	‘leg, paw’
/n/	/ˈnape/	<i>nape</i>	‘cowl’	/dʒ/	/ˈdʒa:l/	<i>zâl</i>	‘yellow’
/ɲ/	/ˈlaɲe/	<i>lagne</i>	‘whine’	/f/	/ˈfa:ri/	<i>fari</i>	‘smith’
/p/	/ˈpa:ri/	<i>pari</i>	‘father’	/v/	/ˈvace/	<i>vacje</i>	‘cow’
/b/	/ˈbabe/	<i>babe</i>	‘gossip’	/s/	/saˈve:/	<i>savê</i>	‘to know’
/t/	/ˈtatʃe/	<i>tace</i>	‘glass’	/z/	/ˈmuze/	<i>muse</i>	‘face’
/d/	/dasˈpɔ/	<i>daspò</i>	‘after’	/ʃ/	/ˈpa:ʃ/	<i>pâs</i>	‘peace’
/c/	/ˈca:r/	<i>cjâr</i>	‘dear’	/ʒ/	/ˈʒave/	<i>ˈsave</i>	‘toad’
/ʃ/	/sˈpɔɲje/	<i>spongje</i>	‘butter’	/j/	/alˈjeve/	<i>al jeve</i>	‘he gets up’
/k/	/ˈtʃukar/	<i>zucar</i>	‘sugar’	/w/	/ˈvwe:/	<i>vuê</i>	‘today’
/g/	/ˈage/	<i>aghe</i>	‘water’	/r/	/ˈram/	<i>ram</i>	‘copper’
/ts/	/ˈratse/	<i>raze</i>	‘duck’	/l/	/ˈlaɲe/	<i>lagne</i>	‘whine’
/dz/	/ˈdzero/	<i>zero</i>	‘zero’				

The main difficulty presented by the Friulian consonant system lies chiefly in establishing the phonemic status of the dental affricates, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, and above all the phonemic status of the post-alveolar fricatives, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ (see below).

Nasals

Nasal phonemes, /m, n, ɲ/, contrast both in syllable-initial position, where they are realized as [m, n, ɲ], respectively, and before a pause, where /n/ becomes [ŋ]: *mat* /ˈmat/ [ˈmaat] ‘mad’, *none* /ˈnɔne/ [ˈnɔɔnɛ] ‘grand-mother’, *flum* /ˈflum/ [ˈfluum] ‘river’, *lagne* /ˈlapɛ/ [ˈlaapɛ] ‘whine’, *ragn* /ˈrap/ [ˈraap] ‘spider’. It should be noted that in most central Friulian, final /ɲ/ tends to split up into [i]+[ŋ] or [n]: [ˈraːiŋ, ˈraːin]. Generally, when a word beginning with a vowel (and belonging to the same intonational phrase) follows, /m, n, ɲ/ are [m, ŋ, ɲ] although resyllabification sometimes makes /n/ to recover the alveolar place of articulation ([n]). The /m/ vs. /n/ contrast is generally maintained also in pre-consonantal position, except in front of the bilabial plosives /p, b/, where both nasals are neutralized to [m]: *a cjantin ben* /aˈcantin ˈbɛn/ [aˈcaantim ˈbɛɛŋ] ‘they sing well’, *flum profont* /ˈflum prɔˈfɔnt/ [ˈfluum prɔˈfɔɔnt] ‘deep river’. Before other consonants, /m, n/ appear to show a different behaviour, according to the place of articulation of the following segment. Thus, if /m/ seems never to lose its labial component, /n/ only has fully homorganic allophones when the consonant it precedes is a plosive or an affricate, although, in front of /c, ʃ/, [ɲ] may alternate with [ŋ]. On the contrary, a partially assimilated velar articulation (transcribed here as [ŋ]) is typically found before other consonants: *un flum curt* /unˈflum ˈkurt/ [uŋˈfluum ˈkuːrurt] ‘a short river’, *fueam vert* /fweˈam ˈvɛrt/ [fweˈaam ˈvɛːɛrt] ‘green leaves’, *o vin viodût* /oˈvin vjoˈdut/ [oˈviin vjoˈduːt] ‘we have seen’, *dincj* /ˈdɪnc/ [ˈdiinç, ˈdiinç] ‘teeth’, *violence* /vjoˈlɛntʃɛ/ [vjoˈlɛɛnˈtʃɛ] ‘violence’, *blanc* /ˈblank/ [ˈblaank] ‘white’, *inneâ* /inneˈaː/ [iŋneˈaː] ‘to drown’, *pensâ* /penˈsaː/ [penˈʃaː] ‘to think’. If the following word begins with /j/, word-final /n/ may be resyllabified, giving rise to the sequence, [nʲ], less frequently with the nasal segment fully assimilated to the place of articulation of the palatal approximant ([ɲ]): *cun jê* /kunˈjeː/ [kuːnˈjeː, kuːɲjeː] ‘with her’. However, resyllabification is often avoided: [kuɲˈjeː, kuɲˈjeː, kuɲˈjeː].

Affricates

/tʃ, dʒ/ are phonetically dental affricates [tʃ, dʒ] in the normative pronunciation. /tʃ/ usually appears in terms ending in vowel + *-zion, -zi* and derivatives, e.g. *nazion* /naˈtʃjon/ ‘nation’, *vizi* /ˈvitsi/ ‘vice’, *viziôs* /viˈtʃjoːs/ ‘vicious’, through which Latin endings *-tj/ONE, -tj/U, -tj/OSU* and their Italian reflexes *-tʃtʃjone/, -tʃtʃjo/, -tʃtʃjozo/* are rendered by the official spelling. All terms containing such suffixes usually are Italian loanwords of recent entrance, as well as learned latinisms from a written literary source, but some more instances of /tʃ/ may be found, including Italian loans like *anzian* /anˈtʃjan/ ‘elderly person’, *pazient* /paˈtʃjɛnt/ ‘patient’, *malizie* /maˈlitsje/ ‘malice’. In all these cases, [tʃ] is the prescribed pronunciation in the normative variety, since it is the most conservative and ancient variant, having a lot of testimonies in medieval texts: [naˈtʃˈjoɔŋ, viˈtʃi, viˈtʃjoːɔs, anˈtʃˈjaan, paˈtʃˈjɛɛnt, maˈliˈtʃˈjɛ]. Nevertheless, it is to be borne in mind that nowadays central Friulian presents a rather complex variation, according to different factors: geographical area, degree of exposure of the speaker to the schooling language (i.e. Italian), one’s degree of familiarity with the local Friulian dialect, as well as, obviously, one’s own linguistic awareness. [tʃ] is rather rare nowadays, being maintained only in the most conservative areas, i.e. in the extreme north and south of the area under consideration. Nowadays, the alveolar fricative realization, [ʃ], seems to be even more widespread in all the environments mentioned above, very likely due to the influence exerted by the Venetian linguistic pattern, diffused through the usage of the urban middle classes. The presence of [ʃ] is particularly detectable in most innovative areas, i.e. along the main lines of communication which connect the chief town, Udine (where a dialect of the Venetian type is deeply rooted), to the main localities of Friuli-Venezia Giulia (practically most central Friuli is nowadays affected), but an ever-increasing use of [ʃ] is to be expected everywhere among young generations. In spite of this, several instances of [tʃ] have also been noted in innovative areas. Such cases are not to be regarded as inconsistent survivals of an archaic pronunciation

at all; on the contrary, they can be attributed to an inadequate linguistic competence of the speaker, who follows the Italian pattern instead of conforming to the common usage. In fact, less current loans are usually concerned, such as the above-mentioned *viziôs* (It. /vits'tsjozo/), *anzian* (It. /an'tsjano/), etc. /ts/ is also found in a small number of words of Italian or foreign origin where the original phoneme, usually occurring intervocally or word-initially, is maintained as voiceless, even when a voiced one appears in the lending language. This is the case of Italian loans like *zucar* /'tsukar/ 'sugar' (It. /dzukker o ~ 'tsukker o/), *zingar* /'tsingar/ 'gipsy' (It. /dzingar o ~ 'tsingar o/), *raze* /'ratse/ 'race' (It. /ratstsa/) and foreign loans, which include a few Slovenian and German words like *raze* /'ratse/ 'duck', *zirucâ* /tsiru'ka/ 'to go back'. Phonetically, /ts/ may be realized as either [ts] or [s] in such words. Note that the affricate [ts] is not to be confused with [ts], a cluster of plosive + fricative, both dental, resulting from the addition of the plural marker /s/ to words ending in /t/ or /tʃ/: *fruts* /'fruts/ [f'ruuts] 'children' (sing. /'frut/), *braçs* /'brats/ [braats] 'arms' (sing. /'bratʃ/). Nevertheless, although this is the prescribed pronunciation, such clusters are nowadays still retained in scattered villages south and north of Udine, whereas they are very widespread out of the area described here. The prevalent pronunciation in the central varieties is [s]: [f'ruus, 'braas].

The voiced affricate /dz/ is a peripheral phoneme in the consonant inventory of central Friulian, restricted to a small number of words, mainly of Italian or Venetian origin. Due to its paucity, it is quite difficult to examine the behaviour of the phoneme having recourse to the traditional conservative vs. innovative parameter. Given the fact that, as was made clear above, /dz/ occurs mostly in more or less recent loans, it will be the linguistic competence of the speaker, as well as his familiarity with each word, which determine whether or not the phoneme is pronounced in each case; however, it is to be borne in mind that less current words generally maintain the affricate realization, as in the lending language. In the normative variety, /dz/ is realized as [dz] (see /ts/). Nevertheless, our data show that most instances of [dz] are only encountered, as it is to be expected, in the conservative localities in the north and the south of the area under consideration; less systematically, the affricate realization is also encountered in some localities in the close proximity of Udine well. Generally, [dz] seems to be more stable word-initially than word-medially in such areas, alternating with [z] in the latter position (at least if a vowel precedes): *zornade* [dzor'naade] 'day', *lizêr* [li'dze:er, li'ze:er] 'light', *organizâ* [or, gani'dza, or, gani'za] 'to organize', but *binzine* [bin'dziine] 'petrol, gasoline'. Elsewhere, [z] is the more prevalent variant, but [dz] may be heard in more unusual words as *zero* [dze:erɔ] 'nought, zero', *zone* [dzo:one] 'zone', *orizont* [ori'dzoont] 'horizon', *localizâ* [lo, kali'dza] 'to locate'.

/tʃ/ is a post-alveolar affricate [tʃ]. Note that an etymological [tʃ] may be replaced by [ts] (in more conservative areas) or [s] (the prevalent variant in central Friulian) in the ending *-ce* /tʃe/ of words that may be either of direct Latin origin (usually exhibiting the sequence TIA /tja/ or TEA /tea ~ tɛa/ > /tja/ > central Fr. /tʃe/) or ancient Italian loanwords (with /ts)tsa/). Such a replacement is particularly noticeable when an uncommon abstract concept is involved: *altece* [al'te:esɛ ~ al'te:tsɛ] 'height' (Lat. ALTITIA or It. /al'tetstsa/) instead of [al'te:tʃɛ], *bielece* [bje'le:esɛ ~ bje'le:tsɛ] 'beauty' (It. /bel'letstsa/) instead of [bje'le:tʃɛ], *violence* /vjo'lentʃe/ [vjo'le:esɛ ~ vjo'le:tsɛ] 'violence' (Lat. VIOLENTIA or It. /vjo'lentstsa/) instead of [vjo'le:entʃɛ]. Nevertheless, at times, current words are also concerned: *place* ['plaa:ɛ, 'pla:tsɛ] 'square' instead of ['pla:tʃɛ] (Lat. PLATEA).

Fricatives

Alveolar fricatives /s, z/ ([s, z]) only contrast in syllable-initial position: *masse* /'mase/ 'too much', *cjase* /'caze/ 'house', *persone* /per'sone/ 'person', *parsore* /par'zore/ 'upon'. In front of any consonant, /s, z/ may be [ʃ, ʒ], but the labialized alveolar allophones [sʷ, zʷ] seem to be more frequent. This has been mostly observed in spontaneous speech: *scjampâ* [ʃcam'pa, sʷcam'pa] 'to flee', *sdrumâ* [ʒdru'ma, zʷdru'ma] 'to demolish'. Before a pause,

every occurrence of /s/ (/z/ being excluded in this position) is also affected by the phenomenon, except, virtually, in the minimal pairs where the place of articulation, alveolar vs. post-alveolar, is contrastive (see below), although even in such cases a certain tendency to neutralize (in favour of either /s/ or /ʃ/) has been noted in several speakers: *sacs* /saks/ [ʃaakʃ, ʃaakʃ^w] ‘sacks’, *pas* /pas/ [paaf, paaf^w] ‘step’, *vôs* /vo:s/ [vo:of, vo:os^w] ‘voices’ (sing. /vo:f/ ‘voice’), *paîs* /pa:is/ [pa:i:ʃ, pa:i:ʃ^w] ‘village’ (pl. /pa:i:f/ ‘villages’). Word-final /s/ usually becomes partially or fully voiced before a voiced consonant: *lis gjambis* /lisʒambis/ [lizʒaambis, liʒʒaambis, liʒ^wʒaambis^w] ‘the legs’.

The post-alveolar fricatives /ʃ, ʒ/ may be regarded as peripheral phonemes in the consonant inventory of central Friulian for at least two reasons: i) the geographical distribution of their allophones, [ʃ, ʒ] and [ʃ^w, ʒ^w], is not so uniform in central Friuli, having merged with [s, z] in most innovative areas; and ii) their functional yield is, nowadays, low (cf. official descriptions of the normative variety in OLF, p. 12). Nevertheless, due to the fact that /ʃ, ʒ/ are not completely lost in central Friulian and their functional yield is latent in most typical pronunciations, the present description prefers to regard them as distinct phonemes. /ʃ/ is virtually distinctive in prevocalic position and word-medially after a vowel. It may be realized as either a post-alveolar [ʃ] or a labialized alveolar fricative [ʃ^w] in both positions. According to our data, the former variant (as well as its voiced counterpart [ʒ]) is nowadays more prevalent with older speakers in more conservative areas: *messedâ* /meʒeˈda/ [meʒeˈda, meʒeˈda^w] ‘to mix, to stir’, *vôs* /vo:f/ [vo:of, vo:os^w] ‘voice’. Word-finally, the /ʃ/ vs. /s/ contrast has the morphological function of differentiating the singular from the plural in a small number of words, but it is to be pointed out that speakers may exhibit individual alternations in the treatment of the opposition in word-final position, given a certain tendency to neutralize it, especially in favour of /s/. Examples of a regular paradigm are the following: *pês* /pe:s/ ‘weight’ vs. *pês* /pe:ʃ/ ‘weights’, *paîs* /pa:is/ ‘village, country’ vs. *paîs* /pa:i:ʃ/ ‘villages, countries’, which form their plurals by replacing final /s/ with /ʃ/, while *vôs* /vo:f/ ‘voice’ vs. *vôs* /vo:s/ ‘voices’ and *crôs* /kro:f/ ‘cross’ vs. *crôs* /kro:s/ ‘crosses’ show /ʃ/ in their singular forms, the plurals ending in /s/. Word-final /ʃ/, like /s/ in the same position, usually becomes partially or fully voiced if a voiced consonant follows: *crôs di len* /kro:f diˈlen/ [kro:of diˈlen, kro:os^w diˈlen] ‘wooden cross’. It is to be pointed out that most authors do not include /ʒ/ among the phonemes of central Friulian, preferring to assign it to /z/ (Frau 1984: 57). Nevertheless, since our data show that /ʒ/ is in complementary distribution with /z/ in prevocalic position, we are inclined to regard it as a distinct phonemic unit. Although minimal-contrast pairs do not seem to be found, the following examples will illustrate this: *al bruse* /alˈbru:ʒe/ [alˈbru:ʒe, alˈbru:ʒe^w] ‘it burns’ vs. *muse* /mu:ʒe/ [mu:ʒe] ‘face’, *asêt* /aːʒe:t/ [aːʒe:t, aːʒe:t^w] ‘vinegar’ vs. *cjase* /ca:ʒe/ [ca:ʒe] ‘house’. Word-initial prevocalic /ʒ/ is quite rare in central Friulian. It is found at least in popular terms like *ʒave* /ʒave/ [ʒaave, ʒaave^w] ‘toad’, *ʒuf* /ʒuf/ [ʒuuf, ʒuuf^w] ‘wheatmeal porridge’ (/dʒuf/ in some subvarieties).

From what has been mentioned so far, one infers that the dental, alveolar and post-alveolar sector of the consonant inventory of central Friulian is a well-balanced eight-consonant set, constituted by two voiceless affricates, /tʃ, tʃ̺/, two voiceless fricatives, /s, ʃ/, and their voiced counterparts, /dʒ, dʒ̺/ and /z, ʒ/, respectively. It should be noted that these eight phonemes are characterized by a considerable geographic variation; moreover, their distinctiveness is rarely respected, since most subvarieties have lost at least one of the pairs of the set. In the most widespread situation, only one pair of affricate phonemes is maintained (/tʃ̺, dʒ̺/), /tʃ, dʒ/ being neutralized in favour of /s, z/, while the two pairs of fricatives resist quite well, although /ʃ, ʒ/ tend to be even more stigmatized and a certain tendency may be observed to neutralize the /ʃ/ vs. /s/ (and /ʒ/ vs. /z/) contrast in favour of /s/ (and /z/). This may be observed, as was made clear above, in less suburban areas. As a result, most innovative subvarieties, i.e. those which are most influenced by the linguistic pattern of the main towns (Udine in particular), exhibit a much more simplified consonant inventory than that of most conservative areas, due to the loss of the important oppositions mentioned above.

Approximants

Word-initial /j/ is [j] in the normative variety, but it may vary with /d͡ʒ/ in terms like *judizi* /ju'diʒsi, d͡ʒu'diʒsi/ 'judgment', *jugn* /'juɲ, d͡ʒuɲ/ 'June'. This replacement may be due to the extension of one of the two regular diachronic outcomes of Latin initial /j/: [d͡ʒ] (Lat. JANUARIU > Fr. *zenâr* /d͡ʒe'na:r/ 'January' vs. Lat. (AD)JUTARE > Fr. *judâ* /ju'da:/ 'to help'), but in more recent loanwords a pressure of Italian is to be supposed if /d͡ʒ/ appears word-initially in the lending language (cf. It. /d͡ʒu'ditʃʒjo/ 'judgment'). In unstressed position, [j] may vary with [i] when a tautosyllabic consonant precedes: *domenie* [dɔ'meenjɛ, dɔ'meeniɛ] 'Sunday'.

Rhotics

/r/ is usually realized as an alveolar tap [ɾ] in any position: *ram* ['raam] 'copper', *frut* ['fruut] 'child', *fari* ['fa(ː)ari] 'smith', *fornâr* [for'na:ar] 'baker'. This realization may be in free variation with other variants, including an alveolar trill [r] and the velarized rhotics [ɾ̤, ɾ̥].

Laterals

In preconsonantal position, the lateral approximant /l/ is homorganic with the following consonant only in front of palatal, post-alveolar and dental segments, becoming, respectively, [ʎ], [l̥] and [l̥]: *il cjan* [iʎcaɲ] 'the dog', *dolç* [dool̥tʃ] 'sweet', *alt* ['aal̥t] 'high'. Elsewhere it is alveolar [l]. Before /j/, /l/ behaves similarly to the nasal /n/ in the same environment (see above), although the alternations in the place of articulation are more limited in the case of the lateral phoneme. A full palatal articulation seems to be excluded before /j/. If /j/ is word-initial, resyllabification may take place: *al jeve* [alʝeevɛ, alʝjeevɛ; a'lʝeevɛ, a'lʝjeevɛ] 'he gets up'.

Vowels

In stressed syllables, central Friulian displays a seven-vowel set and a prosodeme, the chroneme /ː/. On the one hand, the main distinctive feature, i.e. quality, ensures the contrast between seven basic vocalic phonemes, opposing high /i, u/, high mid /e, o/, low mid /ɛ, ɔ/ and low /a/ vowels; on the other hand, the chroneme is matched with each vowel to give rise to a considerably rich system in which the functional yield of each short unit is practically doubled. /ɛː, ɔː/ are very rare in central Friulian, being frequently replaced with /eː, oː/. Note that this is consistent with the general assumption that long vowels tend to be more peripheral than short ones (Baroni & Vanelli 2000). In the list below, for *ros* 'red' two variants are in reality found in central Friulian, the former with /ɔ/, the latter with /ɔː/, both being well-attested.

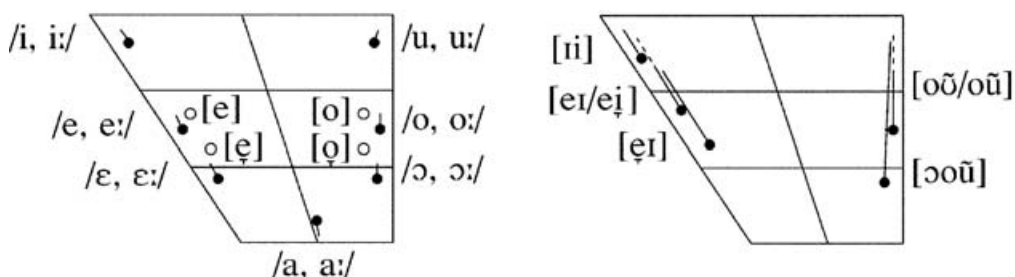


Figure 1 Vowel realizations in central Friulian. Black circles represent the realizations in stressed position, white circles represent the realizations in unstressed position. In the left chart, the movements of the normative phonetic diphthongs are also shown; in the right chart, some particular realizations of /e, o/ before a word-final /n/ are represented.

/i/	ˈdi/	<i>dì</i>	‘day’	/i:/	ˈmi:l/	<i>mîl</i>	‘honey’
/e/	ˈnestri/	<i>nestri</i>	‘our’	/e:/	ˈfret/	<i>frêt</i>	‘cold’
/ɛ/	ˈsece/	<i>secje</i>	‘dry’ (fem.)	/ɛ:/	ˈbɛ:ts/	<i>bêçs</i>	‘money’
/a/	ˈalt/	<i>alt</i>	‘high’	/a:/	ˈfi:gar/	<i>figâr</i>	‘fig-tree’
/ɔ/	ˈbocce/	<i>bocje</i>	‘mouth’	/ɔ:/	ˈrɔ:s/	<i>ros</i>	‘red’
/o/	ˈroze/	<i>rose</i>	‘flower’	/o:/	ˈpo:k/	<i>pôc</i>	‘not much’
/u/	ˈfrut/	<i>frut</i>	‘child’	/u:/	ˈfu:k/	<i>fûc</i>	‘fire’

From a phonetic point of view, /i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u/ are normally realized in central Friulian as narrow diphthongs, i.e. vowel clusters originated by a slight raising or lowering of the place of articulation of the vowel in the second half of its production. The first element of such diphthongs has a varying length, conditioned by both the phonetic environment and the position of the word in the intonational phrase (maximum lengthening occurring under primary stress; see below). Thus, under primary stress, /V/ is generally [VV] in front of a tautosyllabic consonant: *a çampe* /aˈtʃampe/ [aˈtʃaampe] ‘on the left’, *frut* /ˈfrut/ [ˈfruut] ‘child’, while there is a widespread tendency to realize it as [V·V] (alternating with [VV]) if a consonant cluster occurs word-finally and a sonorant, especially /r/, appears as its first member: *alc* /alk/ [aˈalk, ˈaalk] ‘something’, *vert* /vert/ [vɛˈɛrt] ‘green’. It should be noted that /V/ may be [V·V] (less frequently [V:V]) before a word-final nasal, /o/ being often nasalized and considerably raised ([õ] or [ũ]) at the end of its production: *Zuan* /dʒuˈan/ [dʒuˈaan, dʒuˈaːan, dʒuˈaːan] ‘John’, *nazion* /naˈtʃjon/ [naˈtʃjoon, naˈtʃjoːon, naˈtʃjoːon, naˈtʃjoːon] (sometimes also [naˈtʃjoːon]) ‘nation’ (see the right vowel chart in figure 1). For the behaviour before word-final /r/, see below. Word-medially, a phonemically short vowel is usually [VV] in front of a heterosyllabic voiced consonant, but some speakers tend to lengthen the first vowel of the diphthong: *cjase* /ˈcaze/ [ˈcaaze, ˈcaːze] ‘house’. Before a voiceless consonant, [VV] is found more frequently: *masse* /ˈmase/ [ˈmaaʃe] ‘too much’. Nevertheless, if a voiceless glottalized plosive or affricate follows ([Cʔ], see below), the vowel tends to be phonetically short or slightly lengthened, but [VV] is also possible: *poce* /ˈpɔtʃe/ [ˈpɔtʃʔe, ˈpɔtʃʔe, ˈpɔtʃʔe] ‘puddle’.

Vowels +/:/ are also phonetically diphthongs, the first element being long ([V:V̄], but [V:V̄] in the case of /a:/; see the left vowel chart in figure 1, where the movements of the diphthongs are shown) if /V:/ occurs in the position of maximum contrast, i.e. in a word-final closed syllable (see below), half-long or short ([V(·)V]) if /V:/ is found word-medially (as a rule, in an open syllable): *frêt* /fret/ [fret] ‘cold’, *pôre* /po:re/ [po(·)ore] ‘fear’. Note that the realization of the long vowel in the latter case may coincide with that of a short vowel before a heterosyllabic voiced consonant (see above), but the difference between *cjase* (with [VV]) and *pôre* (with [V·V]) may be clearly heard in more conservative pronunciations. Word-medially, the opposition may be still clearly heard only before a voiceless consonant (where a phonemically short vowel is always phonetically short or slightly lengthened, as was made clear above): *cocce* /ko:tʃe/ [koofʃe] ‘pumpkin’. In any case, it can safely be stated that the functional yield of /:/ is very low word-medially in present-day Friulian, hence this is why most central speakers have neutralized the contrast in favour of /V/. On the other hand, the distribution of Friulian vowels shows that the functional yield of /:/ is very high in a word-final syllable closed by a voiceless consonant or /r, l/. After /:/, /tʃ/ however appears to be optional (even if very widespread in central Friulian) and quite rare from a distributional point of view, since its occurrence is restricted to a few contexts with morphological relevance, i.e. the 1st person singular and 3rd person singular of present indicative of verbs ending in -/Vdʒi/ (as a rule, Italian loanwords): *al distruç* /aldistru:tʃ/ ‘he destroys’ (inf. /distru:dʒi/). In spite of the normative precepts, in most central Friulian, the /V/ vs. /V:/ contrast has been neutralized in favour of the latter in front of any final /r/, *cjar* /ˈcar/ ‘cart, meat’ having merged with *cjâr* /ˈcar/ ‘dear’ (both [ˈcaːr]). When the plural marker /s/ is added, the sequence /rs/ tends to

be treated as any word-final cluster of voiced consonant + /C/ (see above); as a result, *cjars*, *cjârs* become both [ca'ars, 'caars].

Phonemically, /V:/ may occur also as the first member of a diphthong, but only before /i/. This diphthong is usually found as the plural ending of nouns in /-V:l(i):/ *pêi* /pe:i/ 'hair' (pl.; sing. *pêl* /pe:l/), *voi* /vo:i/ 'eyes' (sing. *voli* /vo:li/), contrasting with /Vi:/ *cjavai* /ca'vai/ 'horses' (sing. *cjaval* /ca'val/), *mai* /mai/ 'May'. Phonetically, according to the regular paradigm, /V:/ is [VV] or [V·V] in such cases: [d̥ʒaai, d̥ʒa'ai], [vooi, 'vo'oi], while /V/ is realized as [V·] or [V:]: [ca'vai, ca'vai], [ma'i, 'mai]. Nevertheless, there is a widespread tendency to neutralize this opposition in most present-day central Friulian. Statistically, central speakers are observed to be more inclined to generalize [V(·)V] in front of any word-final /i/.

In word-final position before a pause, /:/ may also be found, although it is still rare in such a context, its occurrence being restricted to infinitives, for instance, *pensâ* /pen'sa:/ 'to think', *savê* /sa've:/ 'to know', *partî* /par'ti:/ 'to leave', as well as to a small number of monosyllables, including the feminine possessives, *mê* /me:/ 'mine' (fem.), *tô* /to:/ 'yours' (fem.), *sô* /so:/ 'his, hers' (fem.), the personal pronouns *jê* /je:/ 'she', *nô* /no:/ 'we', *vô* /vo:/ 'you' (pl.) and a few other items such as *vuê* /vwe:/ 'today', *trê* /tre:/ 'three' and *chê* /ke:/ 'that' (fem.). Although the opposition between /V/ and /V:/ is not realized phonetically in word-final position in any central Friulian subvariety, /V:/ being prevalently [V·] (exactly like any stressed vowel in the same position; cf. *dî* /di:/ 'to say' and *dî* /di/ 'day', both [d̥i]), the present description prefers to regard the final vowels of the forms just listed as phonemically long, according to the standard precepts (as can be seen in the examples, in official spelling such long vowels are marked with a circumflex accent). It should be noted that if the morpheme /s/ is added to pluralizable forms (such as the feminine possessives and the feminine demonstrative *chê*), /V:/ is, as a rule, phonetically restored as [V:V]: *mês* [me:es] 'mine' (pl. fem.), *chês* [ke:es] 'those' (pl. fem.).

In unstressed position, only /i, e, a, o, u/ may be found. The realizations of the two mid vowels vary according to their position relative to the stress. At the end of an intonational phrase, i.e. in the syllable(s) following the last stressed one, /e, o/ are rather lowered ([e̞, o̞]), as indicated in all the transcriptions (see the left vowel chart in figure 1, where the realizations in unstressed position are represented by white circles).

North of Udine, stressed /i, u/ tend to be lower than elsewhere, mostly when they occur in a final (both closed and open) syllable. In broad pronunciations, the lowering may lead to the merging of /i/ and /u/ with /e/ and /o/, respectively. For /i/, a wide range of realizations has been attested, including some very extended diphthongizations (see the right vowel chart in the figure 1): *dî* [d̥e] 'day' (elsewhere [d̥i]), *curtis* [kur'tees^(w)] 'knife' (elsewhere [kur'tiis^(w)]), *zardin* [zar'deen, zar'deɪ̯n, zar'deɪ̯n, zar'deɪ̯n, zar'diɪ̯n] 'garden' (elsewhere [-diɪ̯n]), *frut* ['froot] 'child' (elsewhere ['fruut]). In the northern areas, a similar lowering may affect unstressed /i, e, o, u/ when preceding the stressed syllable. This seems to be due to a process of quality adjustment involving mostly the words exhibiting the typical lowering /i, u/ in their ultimate stressed syllable (see above). In such cases, the lowering may be even more noticeable in the case of unstressed /i, u/, which may become [e, o]: *clericut* [kl̥ere'koot] 'little altar boy' (elsewhere [kl̥eri'kuut]), *cidin* [t̥j̥e'deen] 'silent' (elsewhere [t̥j̥i'diɪ̯n]).

Stress and rhythm

Stress in central Friulian may fall on any of the word's last four syllables, as in *cjacadâ* /caka'ra:/ 'to chat', *tu cjacaris* /tuca'karis/ 'you chat', *lis cjacaris* /lis'cakaris/ 'the chats', *dânusindi* /da.nusindi/ 'to give us some'. Accents on the fourth last syllable are, however, rather rare and normally limited to certain verb + clitic combinations. The position of the stress is phonemically relevant in Friulian, its location being unpredictable. This is illustrated in the

transcriptions above as well as minimal pairs like the following: (a) *cjantin* /ˈcantin/ ‘they sing’ vs. (o) *cjantin* /canˈtin/ ‘we sing’. Friulian words carry only one primary stress but, in polysyllables, a secondary stress may appear on the most peripheral unstressed syllable, usually when preceding the stressed one: *cjacarâ* [ˌcakaˈra]. The occurrence of such a secondary stress normally depends on the rhythmic context in which the words are found. Stressed syllables are longer than unstressed ones, but the length of the stressed vowel is determined by two main factors – the structure of the syllable and the characteristics of the following segment (see the section on vowels above). As was made clear above, length is usually accompanied by the diphthongization of the vowel, as can be observed for both /V:/ and /V/ in most environments.

/p, t, k, ts, tʃ, s/ and, less systematically, their voiced counterparts (except /z/) and /f v/ are frequently syllabified with the preceding stressed vowel, becoming its coda. The stressed vowel may also affect the manner of articulation of the following consonant, giving usually rise to a glottalized realization [Cʰ]. This is mostly noticeable with voiceless plosives and voiceless affricates, while voiced plosives and affricates, as well as labiodental fricatives, are at times slightly lengthened under the same conditions ([ˈV·Cʰ.V, ˈVVC(·).V]): *mate* [ˈmatʰ.ɛ, ˈmat.ɛ] ‘mad’ (fem.), *altece* [aɫˈtɛˈtʃʰ.ɛ, aɫˈtɛˈtʃ.ɛ] ‘height’, *lade* [ˈlaad.ɛ, ˈlaad.ɛ, ˈlaadɛ] ‘gone’ (fem.), *blave* [ˈblaav.ɛ, ˈblaav.ɛ, ˈblaavɛ] ‘fodder’. This lengthening is indeed more frequent with the alveolar fricative /s/: *masse* [ˈmaasʰ.ɛ] ‘too much’. The same phenomena (glottalization and lengthening) may be also observed in a stressed syllable after a vowel, affecting mostly [ts] and, less systematically, the voiceless plosives and /s/ (which may become geminate under these conditions). In such cases, the consonants involved are usually syllabified with the unstressed vowel ([VCʰ(·).V, VC(·).V]): *nazion* [natsʰ.ˈjoon, nats.ˈjoon; naʃ.ˈjoon, naʃ.ˈjoon, naʃˈjoon] ‘nation’, *passâ* [paʃ.ˈa, paʃ.ˈa, paʃˈa] ‘to pass’, *buteghe* [butʰ.ˈɛɛg.ɛ, butɛɛgɛ] ‘shop’. Note that word-initial /m, p, b, f, v/ may be syllabified with the vowel they follow, regardless of the position of stress. Moreover, /m, b, f, v/ may be slightly lengthened and /p/ glottalized in such a context ([VC(·).^oV, VCʰ(·).^oV]): *la margarite* [lam.argaˈritʰ.ɛ, lam.ˌargaˈritʰ.ɛ] ‘the daisy’, *la peraule* [lap.eˈraulɛ, ˌlap.ˈeˈraulɛ] ‘the word’, *la vene* [lav.ˈɛɛnɛ, lav.ˈɛɛnɛ] ‘the vein’. As can be seen in the transcriptions (cf. *peraule*), /V/ is generally half-long [Vː] when it is the first member of a stressed diphthong, but before word-final /i/ it may be also realized as [V:] or [VV, V·V], like /V:/ in the same environment (see above).

Intonation

As is the case in most northern Italian dialects, in Friulian, words normally maintain their primary stress within an intonational phrase, except the clitics – such as most articles, relative and personal pronouns, prepositions, etc. – which are grouped under the stress of the word to which they are syntactically and semantically related (as can be seen in the transcriptions). The three main communicative functions, conclusive /./, suspensive /;/ and interrogative /?/, are defined by the pitch of the last stressed syllable (which we call TONIC) of the intonational phrase, the unstressed one which precedes (PRE-TONIC) and the unstressed ones (POST-TONIC) which follow the tonic syllable, as well as the movement, i.e. the pitch variations, of the tonic syllable itself. In central Friulian the intonational pattern is as follows. The conclusive tune (for statements) is characterized by the fall of the last post-tonic syllable ([ˌ]); all the syllables maintain a rather low pitch in this tune. The interrogative tune (for Y/N-questions) is rising-falling, with a pronounced rising movement of the tonic syllable ([ˌ]); all the syllables are generally higher than those of statements. Finally, the suspensive tune has a more complex structure, being rising-falling-rising ([ˌˌ]), with the last post-tonic syllable somewhat lower than the tonic one. The pitch of each syllable is generally quite high in this tune. In the section of intonational phrase which precedes the tunes (the PRE-TUNE), the movements of the PRE-TONIC syllables are similar to those of the tune in the same intonational phrase. In

the illustrations below, a typical pre-tune, the non-marked (normal) one, and the three marked tunes, respectively /./, /:/ and /?/, are represented.



Figure 2 The non-marked pre-tune and the three marked tunes.

Transcription of a passage

The passage recorded and transcribed is ‘The North Wind and the Sun’. In the transcription, the intonational symbols precede the last stressed syllable (the tonic one) of an intonational phrase. [] indicates the end of an intonational phrase, and [] the end of an utterance. In both the phonetic and the orthographic transcription, two non-standard morphological features, belonging to the informant’s subvariety, emerge: *a tacà* ‘she began’ (standard *e tacà*) and *al ere* ‘it was’ (imperfect; standard *al jere*).

uunɛ̃ .dɪr | la'bwɛɛrɛ̃ e.ilʂo'reeli ʂib.aru'faavim | par'virɛ̃ | ke.ɔnɪduun | al.praɪn̩'dɛɛvɛ̃ di'jɛɛs'i
'pluri'fwa'art.dike.laatri | 'kwaant̩ ke.ɔvjo'dɛɛrɪŋ un.vjadʒa.do:or | ke.alvi'niiivɛ̃ di.luun̩k | 'duu
tɪnt̩.ta.ba.ra:at || i'do:ri.liti˜gaaɪts | ,ina'lɔɔrɛ̃ | a.dɛtʃi'dɛɛrɪŋ ke'ku:ri kal'foos̩'ta:at 'boon̩ ,diʒa'va:ri
,iɫta'ba:a ral.vjadʒa˜do:or | ,alʂa'rees̩'ta:at 'luri il'pluri .fwa'art || la'bwɛɛrɛ̃ ,ata'ka' ,aʂo .fla' |
,kun̩vjo.lɛɛn̩'tʃɛ̃ | map.'luri ,ɛʂo˜flaav.ɛ̃ | e'pluri il,vjadʒa'do:or ʂis̩'wren̩'dʒɛɛvɛ̃ ,taɫta .ba:ar |
al'pɔɔnt̩ ,keta˜luun̩tɪŋ | il'pura'raaja ,ralʂku'n̩r̩ .riiɪndiʂi || ,ilʂo'reeli | ,ina'lɔɔrɛ̃ | ,aɫta'ka' ,atʃo .ka'
| ,ɛʂu'biit da˜uu | ril,vjadʒa˜do:or | ke.alʂklo'paavɛ̃ di'caalt̩ | ʂiʒa'va' ,iɫta .ba:ar || ,eku'ʂi' |
ae˜bwɛɛrɛ̃ | ,ito'ca' di,riko˜n̩ɔʃi | ke.ilʂo'reeli | a'lɛɛrɛ̃p 'luri'fwa'art di.jɛ̃ ||

Orthographic version

Une di, la buere e il soreli si barufavin, par vie che ognidun al pratindeve di jessi plui fuart di chel atri, cuant che a vioderin un viazadôr, che al vignive dilunc, dut intabarât. I doi litigants, inalore, a deciderin che cui che al fos stat bon di gjavâi il tabâr al viazadôr, al sarès stât lui il plui fuart. La buere a tacà a soffâ, cun violence; ma, plui e soflave, e plui il viazadôr si strenzeve tal tabâr; al pont che, tal ultin, il puar aiar al scugnî rindisi. Il soreli, inalore, al tacà a çocâ; e, subit daûr, il viazadôr, che al sclopave di cjalt, si gjavà il tabâr. E cussì, ae buere i tocjà di ricognossi che il soreli al ere plui fuart di jê.

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