

Linguistic features of friulian

Many are the linguistic features of Friulian that are worthy of notice. As regards phonology, i.e. the systematic organization of sounds in languages, is interesting to note the deletion of Latin final vowels, except for -A as well as the presence of a double series of vowels, both long and short, that are phonologically distinctive. This means that the presence of a long vowel in the place of a short one can also change the meaning of the word.

For example:

1. mil 'mille' (thousand) vs. mîl 'miele' (honey)
- pes 'pesce' (fish) vs. pês 'peso' (weight)
- lat 'latte' (milk) vs. lât 'andato' (gone) crot 'nudo' (naked) vs. crôt '(egli) crede' (he believes)
- brut 'brutto' (ugly) vs. brût 'brodo (clear soup); nuora' (sister-in-law) etc.

A second peculiarity is that of finding, in the Friulian language, the development of some particular diphthongs, either different or in conditions that differ from those which cause its development for example in Italian, near Latin central vowels (as it is known, diphthongs are two vowel sounds joined in one syllable to form one speech sound):

2. lat. PERDERE (TO LOSE) > pierdi, piardi 'perdere'
- lat. TERRA (EARTH) > tiere, tiare 'terra'
- lat. SEPTEM (SEVEN) > siet 'sette'
- lat. FESTA (HOLIDAY) > fieste 'festa'
- lat. PORTA (DOOR) > puarte 'porta'
- lat. FORTE (STRONG) > fuart 'forte'
- lat. BOREAS (BORA WIND) > buere 'bora'
- lat. PONTE (BRIDGE) > punt 'ponte' etc.

Another phenomenon that is typical of the Friulian language, still taking Latin as the starting point, is the palatalization of velar consonants, C and G followed by A:

3. lat. CANTARE (TO SING) > cjantâ 'cantare'
- lat. CASA (HOUSE) > cjase 'casa'
- lat. CANE (DOG) > cjan 'cane'
- lat. *GATTU (CAT) > gjat 'gatto'
- lat. *GAVARE (REMOVE) > gjavâ 'togliere, cavare' etc.

Still as regards consonants, the Friulian language preserves some consonant links that are typical of Latin which are deleted in Italian, especially the links with -L:

4. lat. FLORE (FLOWER) > flôr 'fiore'
- lat. PLUS (PLUS) > plui 'più'
- lat. PLANTA (PLANT) > plante 'pianta'
- lat. CLAVE (KEY) > clâf 'chiave'
- lat. GLUTTIRE (TO SWALLOW) > gloti 'inghiottire' etc.

Talking about morphology, i.e. the structure of words, it is interesting how to make the plural of words and adjectives in Friulian by adding -s to the singular, as in western Romance languages:

- 5. femine – feminis 'donna (woman) /-e'
- cjase – cjasis 'casa (house) /-e'
- man – mans 'mano (hand) /-i'
- paron – parons 'padrone /-i' (landlord) etc.