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Empirical evidence of the use of marketing communication strategy in local language for diglossic consumers: the results of a survey in Friuli Venezia Giulia region

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Abstract. Cross cultural consumer behavior is a topic of growing market interest: the globalization of marketplaces, migration, multicultural market places, emerging proudness for personal ethnic identity, suggest to consider the local language for communication marketing strategies. The communication is characterized by specific protocols and business writing, which are used by international companies for multilingual communication and for representing a specific culture and identity. According to Morin (2009: 23), "Le marchè doit non seulement être régulée, mais il doit devenir plurielle". Food products have a strong cultural identity, at both the individual and the collective levels, which is inherently linked to food. This research will afford the cross-cultural marketing communication topic by using the SEM (structural equation model) approach for testing the influence of local language on the consumer behavior. Culture is assumed to be a multi-layered construct at different levels of territorial aggregation: nation, region, province or communal. The cultural background aggregates different cluster of individuals and communities of different size. Three major consequences of the culture are: 1. Perceptions of abstract or intangible elements such as values and belief systems to generate specific community groups; 2. Perceptions of concrete aspects of culture as artifacts, symbols and rituals that contribute to strengthen the relational links; 3. The perception of language as a communication tool binding and perpetuate the cultural system by giving meaning and symbols to physical goods purchased. At the same time, they act as a unifying force binding together the members and facilitate intra-group interaction, while at the same time are hindering interaction with members of other societies and cultures. The experimental part of this work was performed at the University of Udine, frequented by students most of them diglossic and speaking currently Italian Friulan and

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English or German languages. We tested their behavioral intention to purchase a virtual "sandwich" with a package reporting expressions in different languages. The test was performed by using conjoint analysis and SEM method. The results were similar but in this paper we will discuss only the results of the SEM method. The local language is dividing the sample in two clusters: the first one includes those who appreciate the local language (the majority) because it means inclusion and cultural link with the territory; the second one includes those who strongly reject the use of messages in local language.

Key-words. food choice, consumer behavior, local languages, communication strategy, SEM method.

1. Introduction. Considering the global character of today's food market contest and opportunities for sellers in a bigger market area, one important issue to be considered is how these cross-cultural differences among consumers can be captured by appropriate communication marketing strategies for a profitable demand segmentation. It is assumed that the description of sensory food attributes vary across cultures affecting the consumers' preferences ranking. Within this framework, cross-cultural studies focused on perception and verbalization of sensory properties about food attributes have contributed to improve the effectiveness of market communication strategies (Lotong et al. 2002; Handbook Union européenne 2011; Canale 2013; Pecchenino, Bonalumi 2002)[1]. The descriptors used in communicating sensory properties are becoming increasingly important to address the consumer's preferences toward specific food product attributes (Swahn et al. 2010). If the words or expressions describing the product quality are not properly mastered, the attributes of the quality construct, particularly those immaterial ones related to the territory, culture and identity are not sufficiently understood and perceived and as a consequence, the relationship between local food and consumer preferences is weakening. The market segmentation then incorporates the cultural identity in a more comprehensive approach explaining how those manifestations can affect the cognition, and behavior of consumers (Herleth 2013). An experimental scheme used to relate the product attributes to functional and psychosocial consequences and perhaps to higher level of perceived consumer values is the mean-chain model proposed to link those symbols as ethnicity, community, identity, group solidarity to the preferences for food product (Reynold et al. 1988; Grunnert et al. 1995; Sullivan et al. 2006). This approach suggests that the language used in marketing communication could change or reinforce the symbolic meaning related to food in different cultures (McCracken 1986) in a way that the product will represents a bundle of attributes related to expected benefits and values contributing to create niche or segment

markets targeted to specific consumer groups. (Luna, et al, 2001; Rosa et al., 2003; Rosa, 2007). The degree of consumer's involvement depends also on the intensity of emotional cues generated by sensory stimuli empowered by marketing communication strategies. (Grunnert et al., 1989; Brunsø, et al, 1999). In explaining the meanings of the food attributes in different languages there are two alternatives: the consumer is indifferent to the language used to describe the food attributes or there are different reaction to the word or expression to the language used: this means that the descriptive terms of the color attribute red: red, rosso, rot or rojo are different in optimizing the meanings of sensory properties and generate different emotional cues and associations (Fabbro 2002; Hersleth et al. 2013). According to Guidère (2008: 44-45), "multilingual communication uses différentes versions étrangères d'un même message" thus enabling us to "concilier les impératifs economiques et le respect des identités culturelles". Multilingual communication is a process that is elaborated following three steps: the identification of the recipient, the definition of a specific language, and, the establishment of relationship based on common knowledge. This provides a communicative perspective organized around two distinct structures that are reciprocally complementary: the mirror site, guarding the profound and «fossilized» identity of the enterprise, and the kaleidoscope site, projecting towards otherness through forms of cultural adaptation (Guidère 2008). Marketing strategies are then used as an instrument to transfer these meanings or values from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods (McCracken 1986, 1988). The market communication strategy may also affect a culture's manifestations through advertising: the culture influences the behavior through its manifestations: values, heroes, rituals, and symbols from one side and cognition affection, emotion from the other side (Hofstede et al. 2010). This interpretation suggests the consumer behavior as a result of his cultural background verbally or symbolically linked to the language that will activate the dynamic interaction between affect, cognition symbols and values. Symbols: represent a broad category of processes and objects that carry a meaning specific to a particular social contest (Geertz 1973: 89). Hence, a society's symbols may not exist in different cultures, or their meaning may be different. Several authors have examined the symbolic nature of products and product symbolism generated at the societal level and conclude that the language is a representative set of symbols, gestures, pictures, or objects applied to study cross cultural differences in food description (Sherry, Camargo 1987; Solomon 1983; Soika et al. 1995; Tu et al. 2010). Values: the ethnic group exhibit specific cultural traits coherent with values on which is built the solidity of the intergroup relations. A value is a centrally held, enduring belief guides actions and judgments across specific situations and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate end-states of existence.

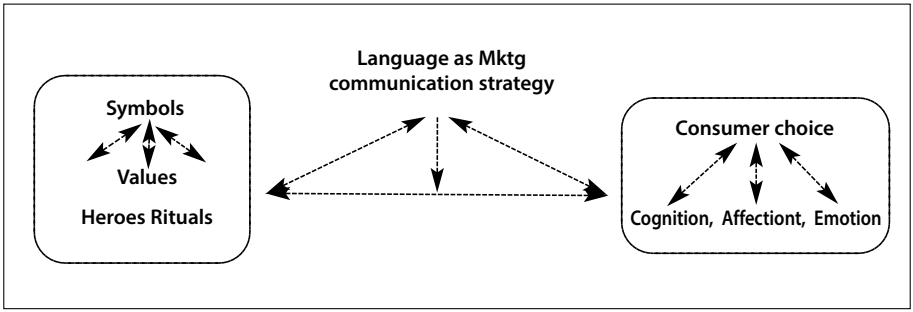

Figure 1. The cultural background affecting consumer's behavior through language in mktg communication strategy.

There are different taxonomies of values: the Rokeach's values implies a differentiation between preferred end states of being (terminal values) and preferred modes of behavior or means to achieve end states (instrumental values). Cultural values, expressed in society's perceptions of reality and beliefs of what is desirable, are transferred to products through advertising and communication (Belk 1985) and charged with cultural meaning. For example, a good wine can be elevated to a cultural symbol for the value "a sense of accomplishment" and consumers, in their efforts to define their social self, are moved to consume the wine of a specific region with the French "terroir" word (Durgee 1986). Cultural categories depend on culture: the anthropological view of culture also recognizes that cognitive constructs (i.e. categories) are influenced by cultural manifestations (i.e. values) (D'Andrade 1992; Tu et al. 2010). Affect. A number of studies have examined the role of cultural values on the attitude formation process. The research distinguish between advertising studies and consumer behavior studies. Affects toward the ad and/or product represent two of the most important gauges of success in advertising. Therefore, a number of advertising researchers have examined affective variables in cross-cultural advertising. In particular, several studies have attempted to ascertain the role of cultural values on ad-elicited attitudes. Hence, symbols generally express cultural values: with consumption rituals, goods become symbols of cultural values. At the same time, symbols reinforce values, or may even shift them. For example, if a specific cheese is seen as a symbol for wealth and repeated advertising associates wealth with a desirable end state, values may shift in certain societal groups toward wealth as a terminal value.

2. Methodology. A quantitative analysis was performed with the structural equation model SEM allowing to probe the intentions of the purchase with the use of appropriate indicators. This methodology was preferred because able to capture the needs and wishes for consumer satisfaction and

able to give suggestions to better formulate products suited to the market targeted as quality, safety, image, price, symbols, inclusion, security. Proceeding in reverse, on the level of satisfaction one can infer into the consumers' motivation to buy specific products and establish a hierarchy of various attributes, specifically the abstract and symbolic ones (services, image, ethnicity, identification), perceived in relation to a specific cultural background that is the scope of our research. These attributes by exciting explicit and unconscious desires and needs address the purchase to specific products and make decisions less responsive to the price or income changes of the traditional consumer demand model.

To explain the consequences of psycho-motivational consumer approach, it is developed a model of customer satisfaction based on the Path Modeling to evaluate the importance of desires and wishes of consumer, hedonic attitude, languages, belonging, identification according to his specific cultural, social and educational profile. Typically the satisfaction is related to the evaluation of the perceived quality of the product and measured with "latent" variables, to be quantified with some "manifest" variables, usually expressed on an ordinal scale of scores and related to the latent ones by justified causal nexus.

The link between manifest and latent variables is formalized with a rigorous causal model of customer satisfaction. Usually the consumers' behavior is referred to expectations about a product performance intended as the capacity to satisfy latent and expressed needs and desires. The expectations are based on cognitive elements, routed on past experience, external information and inference, while the wishes are based on motivational elements, as personal goals, education background, belonging to social class and ethnic context, demonstrative effects and others.

The consumer's motivational approach is traditionally elaborated in these phases:

1. Cognitive: is a state of dissatisfaction that drives the consumer to search for those products that will contribute to satisfy his needs. This explorative step is anterior to the search for a specific products. At this stage one can also explore the motivation through laddering, a psychological investigation technique based on increasingly detailed questions to investigate deeper inside the consumer's dissatisfaction. The laddering technique was born with the theory of personal constructs (Kelly 1955) which stated that cognitive contents have a positive or negative meaning according to the chains of implications, so-called constructs used in this type of research.
2. Affective: connecting the food exhibition to specific preference order and subjective evaluation of the product. At this stage the consumer orders the product's attributes according with his perceptions and preferences (*ex-ante* experimental food product).
3. Behavior: the acts of purchasing specific products.

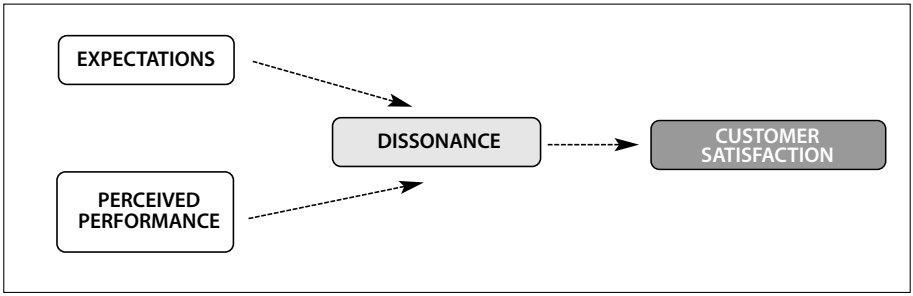

Figure 2. Behavioral model.

4. Post-purchase behavior (dissonance or selective discrepancy): the consumer try to check his actual satisfaction compared to the expected one (*ex post* experimented food product).

Finally, the Customer Satisfaction is the result of a comparative process between perception *ex ante* and the fulfilled expectations (assonance-dissonance experimented *ex post* after the food consumption). This model is based on expectations about the contribution of concrete and abstract product attributes to his personal satisfaction, and changes the traditional behavioral model approach giving more importance to the introspective evaluation (Rosa and Nassivera 2009, 2011, 2012).

Customer Satisfaction is defined as the attitude of satisfaction (not necessarily shown) by a user / client current, resulting from the use of a product/service and implemented by the communication strategy. A good level of satisfaction will result in a "repurchase" act; if protracted in time, it will reinforce the trust relationship with the manufacturer (customization). In this context, the study of consumer satisfaction is intended as the quality assessment against perceived symbols transmitted by the communication language used to transfer the symbolic meaning of the product to the consumer; these aspects, interpreted as manifestations of "latent" satisfaction, are quantified through variables, expressed on an ordinal scale of scores.

The links between manifest and latent variables can be formalized in theory and tested as a model of customer satisfaction; the model will represent the relationships or causality between variables addressed to check the following hypothesis: "Could the local language affect the purchasing decisions of consumers using the influence of socio-demographic variables?". The most popular model to evaluate the customer satisfaction is the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al. 1991) broadly used for measuring customer satisfaction about the quality of product/service (Rosa, Nassivera 2011). The theoretical foundation is the theory of the Gap i.e. the lag between perceptions and expectations

mediated by the weights assigned to the all material and immaterial product dimensions.

3. Measuring the customer satisfaction with scale of satisfaction. Measurement is the process of assigning quantitative dimensions to empirical and objective attributes of the product; in the real world these variables can "describe" and establish a measurable correspondence between a set of attributes and perceived quality. What is measured is not an object or an event, but his own characteristic or property. It is important at first to develop a procedure or a measuring scale, and formulate a concept or theoretical construct of the customer satisfaction that it is needed to analyze, through the examination of the possible manifestations of a set of objects and their empirical relationships with CS.

This approach is based on the following considerations:

- manifestations: is the set of product's dimensions and their relationships (relational empirical system);
- numerical values and relationship among the measures (numerical relational system);
- functional relationship (procedural relational system) linking the two sets (condition of representation); rules for the allocation of measures to objects;
- the condition of uniqueness of the measurement (statistical requirement).

The measurement of non-factual attitudes (i.e. satisfaction, brand loyalty, identity, ethnocentrism and others) or the opinions and attitudes do not have a reference with the true value underlying the information so the measurements can not be validated with the traditional survey approach. The basic idea is that the attitudes can be represented in a one-dimensional space (eg. a straight line) and respondents may rank their attitude linearly (Togerson 1967).

The simple scales or assessment drives to a direct measurement of the customer's attitude and its components through a single question: the respondent is asked to indicate his agreement/disagreement on a predetermined scale of values. For the object evaluation (i.e. the perception of quality of service, satisfaction with the delivery time etc.) it is adopted a non-comparative scale. The non comparative simple scales is discrete when the respondent is asked to provide his assessment about the product attribute with a score (rating) on a discrete scale with two extreme adjectives one opposite to the other (bipolar semantic scale). An example is: give your opinion about the color of the label reported on the sandwich. Your opinion is ranked in the interval between 1 to 7; with 1 you will express a total disagreement (negative opinion) while 7 will express a total agreement (positive opinion.

3.1. The structural equation modeling (SEM). The structural equation modeling (Bollen 1989) include a number of statistical methods that allow to estimate the causal relations, defined according to a theoretical model,

linking two or more latent complex concepts, each one measured by a variable number of observed variables according with its complexity. The idea is that the complexity within a system can be studied by taking into account the set of causal relationships between the latent variables, defined constructs measured with a set of observed variables defined manifest variables (item). The structural equation models represent a point of intersection between the path analysis (Alwin, Hauser 1975) and the confirmatory factor analysis.

Factor analysis is the well known technique known for the detection and study of latent variables, called factors, that are the "theoretical constructs" not directly observable and not directly measurable having relations with a set of observed variables. These last ones are measurable and related to the undiscovered construct by causal nexux. Factor analysis assumes that a number of factors (latent variables) inferior to the number of observed variables, are responsible for the structure of the variance-covariance generated by the observed variables. Statistical techniques that are included under the general name of factor analysis are targeted to make a set of observed variables linked with fewer latent variables, (factor or construct in SEM analysis). The starting point is the correlation matrix (covariance) between observed variables, that has the scope to explain these correlations with the unrevealed factors, assuming a linear relationship. So this is the process of reducing the complexity of reality, to simplify the models and clarify conceptual causal links that link the latent and observed variables.

In the confirmatory factor analysis, the researcher imposes on the pre-existing knowledge of the inferred system that a number of constraints for the number of underlying factors, the knowledge of their relationship and the relationships between these factors and variables, contribute to an initial configuration of the theoretical model to be proved with empirical data and simulations (Bollen 1989; Kaplan 2000; Jöreskog, Sörbom 1979; Fornell, Bookstein 1982). Developed in the social and psychological science contest, the structural equation models were introduced first by Jöreskog (1973) as confirmatory models to estimate cause-effect relationships between two or more sets of variables, using the maximum likelihood (ML-SEM) method. This approach known as LISREL (Linear Structural Relationship), was for many years the unique method to estimate the structural equation model (SEM).

LISREL is between the psychometric and econometric analysis: firstly it was elaborated the concept of latent variable; and second the causal relationships among constructs and items, to answer two of the most important questions of the social scientist. The first has to do with the problem of measuring and stems from the fact that in the social sciences, the variables can rarely be satisfactorily measured, for the reason that they rely to abstract concepts

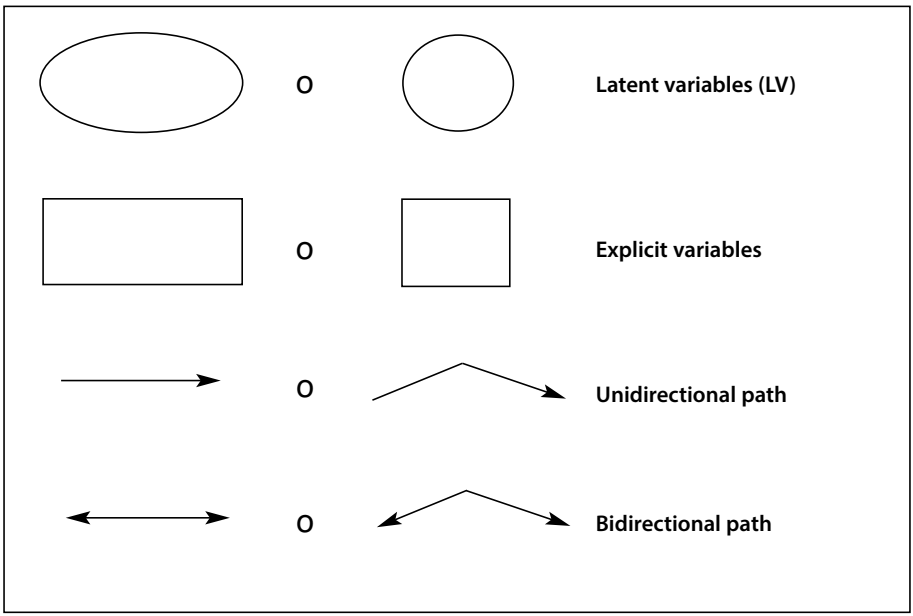

Figure 3. Symbols used in the description of SEM model.

(constructs) not observed directly, because latent. The second question is concerned with the problem of causality that is the ground of every scientific theory and methods to empirically test the existence of the relations postulated in the theoretical model. According to the psychometric approach of SEM, the theoretical constructs are latent variables (unobserved) detectable indirectly from measurements observed indicators, (items or manifest variables).

For the scope of our research, the linear structural equation modeling with latent variables allows to establish the link between latent variables contributing to customer satisfaction which encompass many latent construct related to the perception of different aspects of product quality. The system method of structural equation (SEM) will estimate iteratively (Bollen 1989), to quantify the causal relationships existing between tangible or intangible attributes of the product, and the perceptions (cues of intrinsic attributes or intangibles quality). The interest of this approach is to introduce in purchasing decisions the intangible attributes whose perceptions is magnified by a specific message formulated in Friulian language. The statistical inference is based on multiple measurement of latent variables (LV) related to items of the product quality using a multivariate approach. The analysis consists in formulating and dimensioning the structure of the model SEM, according to

relations which are handled simultaneously, starting from a set of constructs that are not observable but exist in the consumers' mind and are linearly combined with the items measured with appropriate scales of agreement. The estimation of the construct is performed by using latent variables not directly observed and indicators that imply a certain margin of error. As the exogenous condition of a variable in this modelling is not defined a priori, it is allowed to an endogenous variable to become exogenous in the next iteration step this process will continue until the stability of the parameters of the variables will be reached.

The analytical model is composed of two sub-models: the structural model or the internal (inner) and the measure external model (outer). The structural model specifies the relationship between the latent variables endogenous and exogenous, and the structure defines the causal relationships between latent variables of the causal model. In the internal model the parameters to be estimated are the path coefficients (βij), i.e. the regression coefficients connecting the latent variables (representing the relationships between the latent variables), and the error terms for each regression in the structural model. The structural model and structural equation models are reported below:

$$1)\ \eta = \mathbf{B}\,\eta + \Gamma\,\xi + \zeta$$

- η is the vector of the causal variable (m x 1); E (η) = 0; these are defined endogenous latent variables
- B is the m x n matrix of structural coefficients (βij), between the latent endogenous variables (unknowns) with null values on the main diagonal; it is a square matrix of dimension equal to the number of endogenous variables η. Its diagonal is reporting all 0 values, since they correspond to the regression coefficients of each variable with itself
- Γ is the matrix of structural coefficients m x q between latent exogenous and endogenous variables
- ξ is the vector of the causal variable (n x 1); E (ξ) = 0 the latent exogenous variables; $\mathbf{E}(\xi\xi э) = \mathbf{\Phi}$
- ζ identifies the vector of residuals, (m x 1), ie the random errors of estimation model. E (ζ) = 0
- The model conditions are: E (η) = 0; E(ξζ') = 0; E(ζ ζ') = **Ψ**; $\mathbf{E}(\xi\xi э) = \mathbf{\Phi}$
- The squared matrix **Φ** order n*n, with n is the number of latent exogenous variables ξ.
- The squared matrix **Ψ** is order m*m, with m being the number of endogenous variables η, and errors ζ.

It is obvious the need to include in the model the correlation between the exogenous variables ζ namely their covariance matrix **Φ** (ie it is included in the model relationships between variables in this explicitly present). It is less clear may be the function of the matrix **Ψ** that is the covariance between errors ζ that plays an important role because it allows to include in the model the effect of variables excluded but having an explicative function in explaining the relationships between variables. If the effects of endogenous variables on the right and side are not

relevant, the model is reduced to a simple representation of causal relationships with only exogenous variables without feedback effects:

$$2)\ \eta = \Gamma\ \xi + \zeta$$

The measurement model, defines the relationships between the latent variables and their indicators observed, ie the corresponding manifest variables since it is assumed that η and ξ are measured by indicators observed (MV), assumed to have a reasonable effect in explaining the behavior of the latent variable because causally related to them. The structural model of equation 2 are therefore associated with two models of measurement (outer) used to deal with errors of latent variables η endogenous and exogenous ζ as is reported here:

$$3)\ Y = \Lambda_y \eta + \varepsilon$$
$$4)\ X = \Lambda_x \xi + \delta$$

Equation 3 model of measurement underlines the relationship between the endogenous variables latent η and observed. In this equation are matrices and vectors: the three vectors of the endogenous variables observed, and endogenous latent errors, respectively the vectors Y, η, ε. Vector Y and ε contain p elements, corresponding to observed variables Y; the vector η contains m elements equivalent to the latent variable η. The matrix of structural coefficients between observed variables and latent variables, represented by the symbol Λy, contains p*q elements; the covariance matrix between the errors ε, which is indicated by the symbol Θε is a square matrix and symmetrical, of order p*p (p is the number of errors ε, equal to that of the observed variables Y).

The equation 4 of the measurement model, represents the relationship between latent and exogenous variables observed. In this equation are represented the three vectors of exogenous variables observed, exogenous latent errors, respectively: X, ξ and δ; X and δ of q elements (the number of observed variables X) and ξ of n items (as there are ξ the matrix of structural coefficients between observed and latent variables (the matrix of regression coefficients of ξ on X) call Λx of order q*n, the covariance matrix between the errors δ, indicated by the symbol Θδ, and symmetric square matrix of order q*q (q is the number of errors δ, equal to that of the observed variables X.

Empirical analysis: experimental design of the second survey. Starting from a theoretical framework on the use of local language as the focal point in the marketing of food products (O'Rourke 2007), the attitude towards the environment and sustainability of farms (Thomas et al. 2009) and all 'consumer behavior towards local products (Voon et al. 2011), it was framed a theoretical model based on the combination of the influence of these attributes in the consumer decisions to buy the agri-food product.

The following hypotheses concerning the analysis of the influence of the extrinsic attributes in the product choice were formulated:

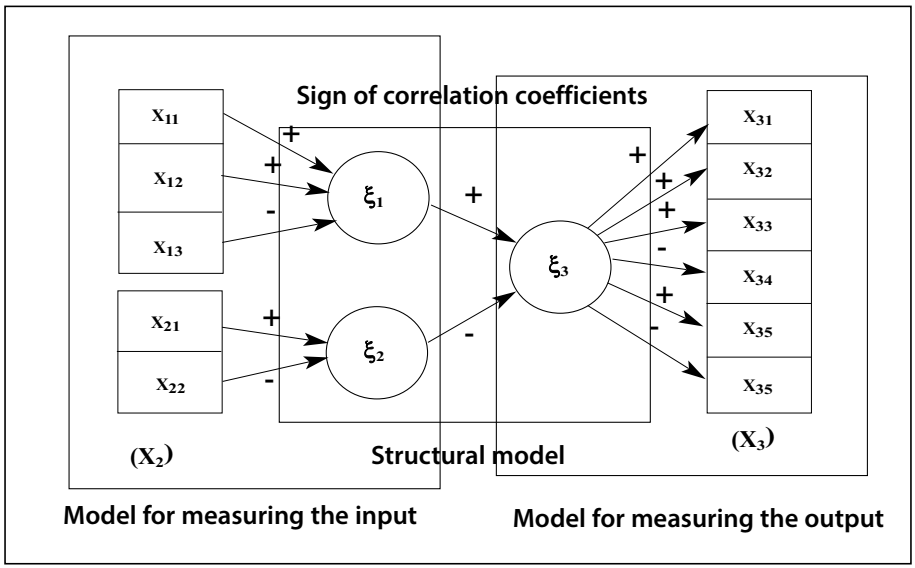

Figure 4. Scheme of the SEM model..

- Hypothesis 1 (H1): the local language (Friuli) (LF) has a significant impact on the purchasing intention of the local consumer for local food products (APL).
- Hypothesis 2 (H2): the attitude towards the environment (AAMB) has a significant impact on the attitude of the consumer for the local food products (APL).
- Hypothesis 3 (H3): the attitude towards the sustainability of farms (Aall) has a significant impact on the attitude of the consumer for local food products (APL). Moreover, the attitude of local products can have a positive influence towards behavioral intention (behavioral intention) that the willingness to pay more for a product with certain characteristics. In this case the model adopted aims to investigate the following hypothesis:
- Hypothesis 4 (H4): the attitude towards local products (APL) has a positive impact on consumer's behavioral intention (BI).

It is assumed, that attitudes towards the language, the environment and farming methods directly influence the intention to buy a product and conversely the consumer behavior. Therefore it solicits the following additional assumptions:

- Hypothesis 5 (H5): the attitude towards the minority language (Friuli) (LF) has a significantly positive behavioral intention (BI) consumer.
- Hypothesis 6 (H6): the attitude towards the environment (AAMB) has a significantly positive behavioral intention (BI) consumer.
- Hypothesis 7 (H7): the attitude to-

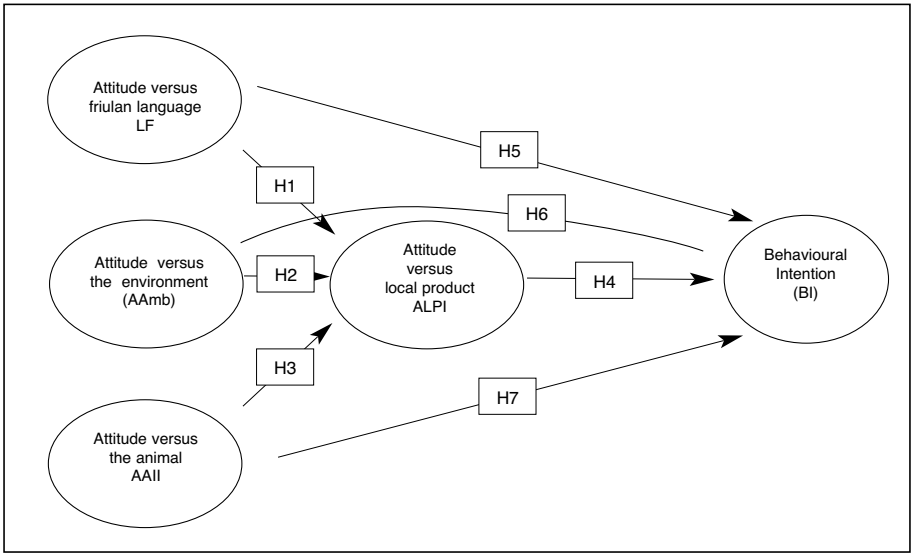

Figure 5. Representation of the causal model.

wards the sustainability of farms (Aall) has a significantly positive behavioral intention (BI) consumer.

The conceptual model developed on the basis of the hypotheses described above is presented in Figure 5. After having defined the determinants of consumer behavior in the frame of CS, related to the local food products (Friuli), the main objective of the second part of this work is to carry out the confirmative empirical analysis with respect to the theoretic model postulating causal relations between exogenous latent variables (ξ) and endogenous latent variables (η).

4. Results. The empirical results are obtained from a sample survey conducted In June 2015 "on line" with interviews administered with a structured questionnaire. Among the different sampling techniques it is chosen the simple random sampling without replacement made electronically.

In a period of two week period, 2.669 questionnaires were distributed by mail to the students of the University of Udine, resident in the provinces of Udine, Pordenone and Gorizia of the region FVG, were the Friulian is spoken or at least known at different levels of knowledge. This choice is dictated by the need to obtain a sample of sufficient magnitude to transfer the results to the population and ensure that all statistical units that composes the Friulian population have the same chance to enter into the sample. We collected 184 responses that were statistically sufficient to make the sample representative for the all Friulian population.

In the preparation of the survey an

important step was the preparation of the questionnaire that was structured taking into account other investigations aimed at verifying the effect of language on the choices of products and whose applications had already been validated.

The investigation was aimed at identifying whether for native consumer the local language had an active role in influencing their purchasing decisions. The object of the investigation was the simulation of selling a ham sandwich by a vendor machine located inside the space of the University campus. Actually this is one of the preferred places for students that in the lecture break, gather around the machine eat, drink and communicate in their own native language.

The questionnaire entitled "Role of the Friulian language in communication marketing strategies" is divided into the following sections (constructs):

- Reactiveness of the consumer for the local language (Friuli), consisting of 18 questions or items.
- Attitude and environmental sustainability of the farms, with 13 items.
- Reactivity of consumer to a local food products, with item 7.
- Willingness to pay, with 6 items.
- Attitude of the consumer to purchase a ham sandwich from the vending machine, with 9 items.
- The questionnaire reported a total of 53 items.

Every item reported in the questionnaire was dimensioned with Likert-type semantic scales in 7 divisions corresponding to seven response categories from 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 7 meaning "strongly agree" and intermediate categories. Respondents had to express their opinion on all items listed.

Finally, the questionnaire was accompanied by a section asking for socio-demographic characteristics of respondents finalized to investigate, the knowledge of the Friulian language and its use.

A preliminary factor analysis was used with varimax rotation to clear the dimensions needed to investigate (LF, AAMB, Aall, APL, BI). This has allowed to reduce the data in latent factors with a linear combination of the original variables with minimum loss of information. The items used to infer the consumer reaction to the Friulian language, the environment and sustainability of the farms are summarized in Table 6.2 together with the item of determining the attitude towards local products and behavioral intention. The relevance of each factor was tested with Cronbach's coefficient α.

The structural equation modeling (SEM) is able to test multiple simultaneous relationships between observed variables and / or latent variables. The most appropriate methodology seemed that the model latent structure with explicit causal relationships, estimated by the statistical package LISREL 8.51 (Jöreskog, Sörbom 2001).

The analysis was performed by using the LISREL and allowed to examine in deeper detail the assumptions made by validating the structural model suggested in this study, de-

Table 1. Sociodemographic feature of the sample.

Variable	*Attribute*	*Valôr*	*%*
Numerositat dal campion		184	
Sex	Male		56
	Female		44
Age		18-22	51.1
		23-27	41.8
		> 28	7.1
Province of birth	UD		76.6
	PN		17.4
	GO		5.4
	other		0.5
Province of residence	UD		72.8
	PN		17.9
	Go		7.1
	other		2.2
Mother language (First language learnt)	Italian		73.4
	Friulan		23.9
	Italian and friulan		1.6
	other		1.0
Knowledge aboutFriulan	none		5.4
	understand, no write, no speak, no read		35.3
	understand, speak, no read, no write		6.5
	understand, speak, read, no write		28.8
	understand, speak, read, write		23.9
Use of Friulan	never		41.8
	only in family		8.7
	in family and with friends		20.1
	in public		18.5
	in university		10.9

signed to explain the determinants of relations. The indices of general adaptation gave results rather discrete, respectively with 0.62 for the GFI, with 0.57 for AGFI. Incremental fit indexes gave an indication of a good adaptation of the conceptual model, respectively with 0.85 for the NFI, for NNFI 0.88, and 0.89 for the CFI. With the analysis of the indices of residuals it was possible to determine the attitude of the model to capture most of the observed data. In this regard the value of RMR, equal to 0.42, was an indicator of adaptation sufficiently good, as occurs for the RMSEA which is equal to 0.11, with a confidence interval of 90% between 12:10 and 00:12.

In Table 2 it is observed that the factor loadings (factor loadings) of latent constructs on average have very

Table 2. Construct and Items.

Construct and questions	Factor loading	α
Section 1 – Attitude towar friulan language (FL)		**.84**
The mother tongue has the same dignity of the official language	.843	
The region must invest in the diffusion of FL	.841	
The friulan must be taught at school	.841	
It is important to establish a link between mother tongue and local culture	.827	
The friulan must be taught at school starting at the primary level	.819	
The friulan is important for my relational life	.803	
The child must learn their mother tongue at home	.765	
Friulan could be used for food marketing communication	.717	
Friulan is important for my professional life	.666	
Follow with interest programs in friulan (Radio, TV, WEB9	.660	
There is a link between mother tongue and regional food products	.658	
Is a lost of time to maintain alive friulan	-.614	
People must speak friulan only at home	-.511	
In the last 10 years the friulan use has diminished in private	.852	
In the last 10 years the friulan use has diminished in public	.842	
In the last 10 years the friulan use has diminished art school	.736	
Young people do not speak friulan because is old fashioned	.394	
Section 2 – Attitude toward the environment (AAMB)		**.670**
Food produced with sustainable techniques must be available available at vendor machine	0.730	
Important to be informed about ecological questions regarding the environment	0.533	
Section 3 – Attitude toward animal rearing (AAII)		**.880**
I am sensitive to pig rearing conditions	.833	
The animal welfare affect my purchasing habits	.803	
It is important to know the origin of the pig before purchasing ham	.692	
It is important the product report a mark about the pig origin	.649	
I prefer the pig grown with biological method even if more expensive	.646	
It is important to know the pig processing method before purchasing	.625	
The pig in freedom are better that the pig grown with intensive methods	.495	
Section 4 – Preference for local products (APL)		**.810**
Local food products are fresher compared to products from outside	.710	
Local food products are obtained with less environmental impact compared to outside product	.654	
Local food products are qualitatively better respect the outside products	.606	
Prefer the meat of pig grown in FVG	.468	
The meat of friulan pig is better	.445	
It is important the label "Tipically friulan"	.444	
Section 5 – Behavioral intention (BI)		**0.860**
I prefer food products with label written in friulan	.688	
I prefer to purchase food products respecting the animal welfare even if more expensive	.847	
I am willing to pay more for food products obtained with eco-sustainable methods	.820	
I am willing to pay more for food products obtained with eco-sustainable methods and animal	.790	
I am willing to pay more for local food products	.775	

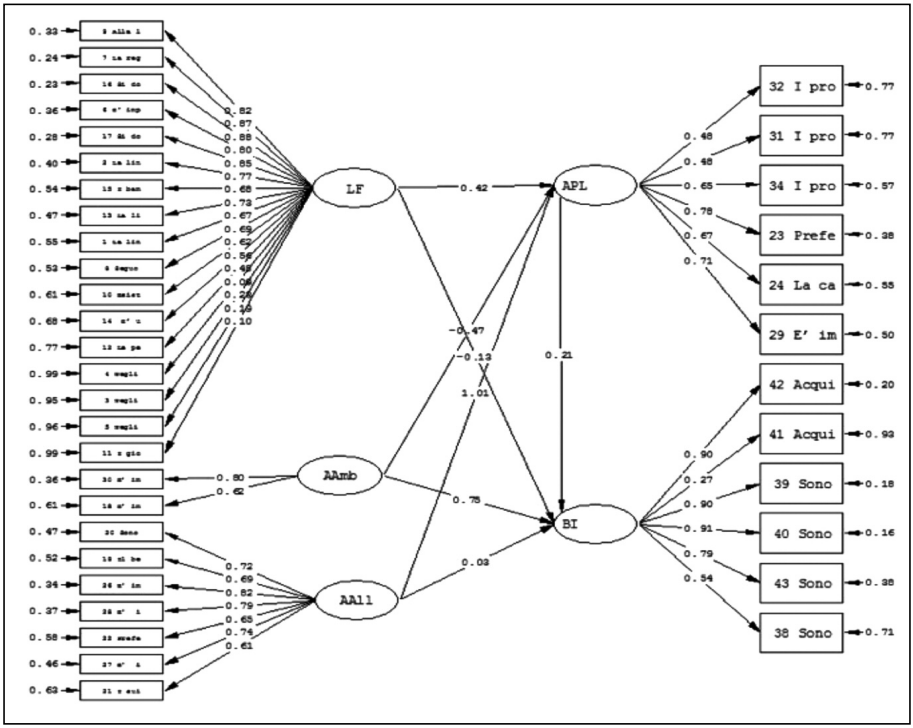

Figure 6. Path analysis.

high values meaning a good reliability of the constructs. Negative values are also registered the appropriate results as they relate to the reverse item.

The results obtained with the software LISREL allow us to empirically test the assumptions made in the theoretical model suggested. Figure 6.2 shows the path analisys with its estimates of standardized indicators and the causal relationships between variables.

As indicated in the path analysis, the results confirm the existence of direct, positive and simultaneous relations between the attitude towards the Friulian language (LF), the Attitude towards the sustainable farms (Aall) with the attitude of the consumer towards the local food products (APL) supporting further the hypothesis H1 and H3, while, as regards the extent of the causal relationship between the attitude towards the environment (AAMB) and APL, the 'analysis of the parameters that describe the proposed report in H2 gives output measurement that do not support this hypothesis.

Considering the direct effects of the relationship between the APL, to the behavioral intention (BI) consumer model results support the hypothesis H4. Figure 6.2 also shows

Table 3. Combination of attributes.

Characteristics	*Acronyms*
Brand CJASE DAL PERSUT / origin PERSUT FURLAN / ecolabel PERSUT TIRÂT SÙ COME DI USANCE	CjPe, PF, PPU
Marche CJASE DAL PERSUT / origin PERSUT FURLAN	CjPe, PF
Brand CJASE DAL PERSUT / ecolabel PERSUT DI PURCIT TIRÂT SÙ COME DI USANCE	CP, PPU
Origjin PERSUT FURLAN	PF
Brand CASA DEL PROSCIUTTO / origin PROSCIUTTO FRIULANO / ecolabel PROSCIUTTO DI SUINO ALLEVATO SECONDO TRADIZIONE	CaPr, PrFr, PST
Brand CASA DEL PROSCIUTTO / origin PROSCIUTTO NAZIONALE / ecolabel PROSCIUTTO DI SUINO ALLEVATO SECONDO TRADIZIONE	CaPr, PrN, PST
Brand CASA DEL PROSCIUTTO / origin PROSCIUTTO NAZIONALE	CaPr, PrN
Brand CASA DEL PROSCIUTTO / ecolabel PROSCIUTTO DI SUINO ALLEVATO SECONDO TRADIZIONE	CaPr, PST
Origjin PROSCIUTTO NAZIONALE / ecolabel PROSCIUTTO DI SUINO DA ALLEVAMENTO INTENSIVO	PrN, PSI

that the attitude towards the local language (Friuli) (LF) doesn't necessarily imply a positive effect on behavioral intention (BI) of the consumer to buy the local product; hence the H5 hypothesis is not confirmed.

The model, however, corroborates the considerations made for the formulation of the hypothesis H6, identifying therefore a direct influence of AAMB on the variable Behavioural Intention (BI), and supporting the hypothesis H7 in finding a direct causal relationship between the positive Aall variable and BI.

These results support the influence of different purchasing motivations represented by different constructs (LF, AAMB, Aall) having different significance and intensity in the causal relationship with the attitude of the consumer products tpward local food products and the willingness to purchase these products.

It is then investigated the attitude of the consumer to purchase a sandwich. The enquiry was based on the behavior of a student to buy a simulated ham sandwich distributed by the vendor machines placed inside the University, with the envelop reporting the same message in different languages referred to the brand, origin of the ham, Ecolabel. The languages used for the communication were Friulian and Italian.

It was asked to the respondents to express an opinion on a range from (1) minimum agreement up to 7 maximum arrangement for the attribues proposed by the product.

In Table 3 are reported the various

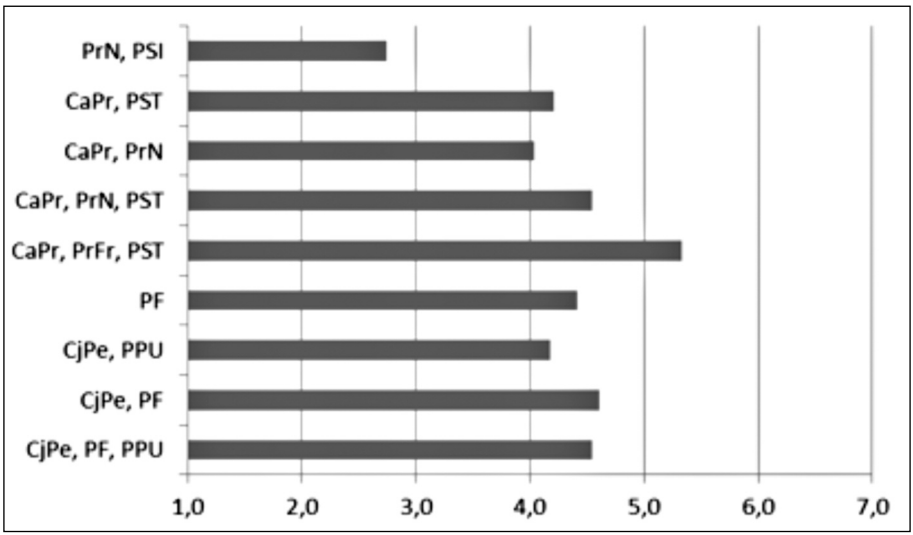

Figure 7. Full sample.

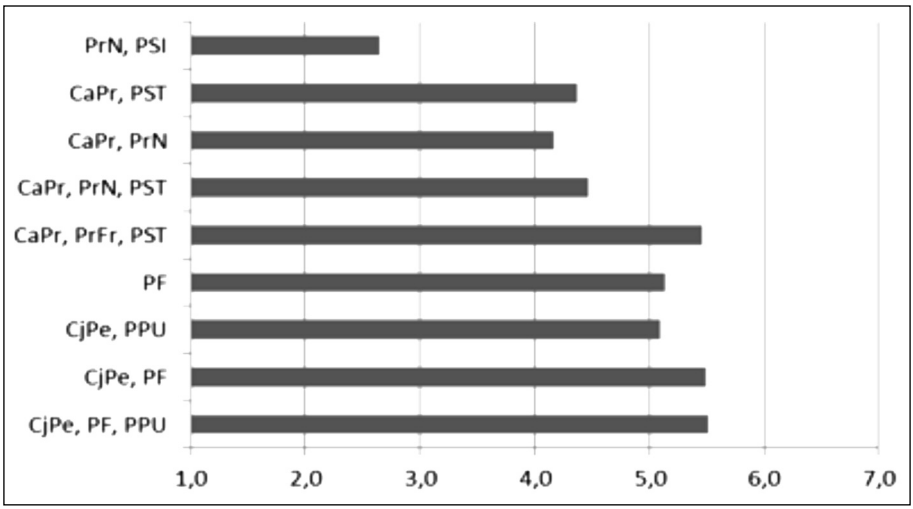

Figure 8. Use of the friulan in a public contest.

combinations of the sandwich atributes.

The highest agreement was for sandwich reporting the indication "Casa del prosciutto", containing the ham from Friuli with pigs reared according to tradition: the score value is on average 5.3. (see Figure 7). The less preferred sandwich is made with

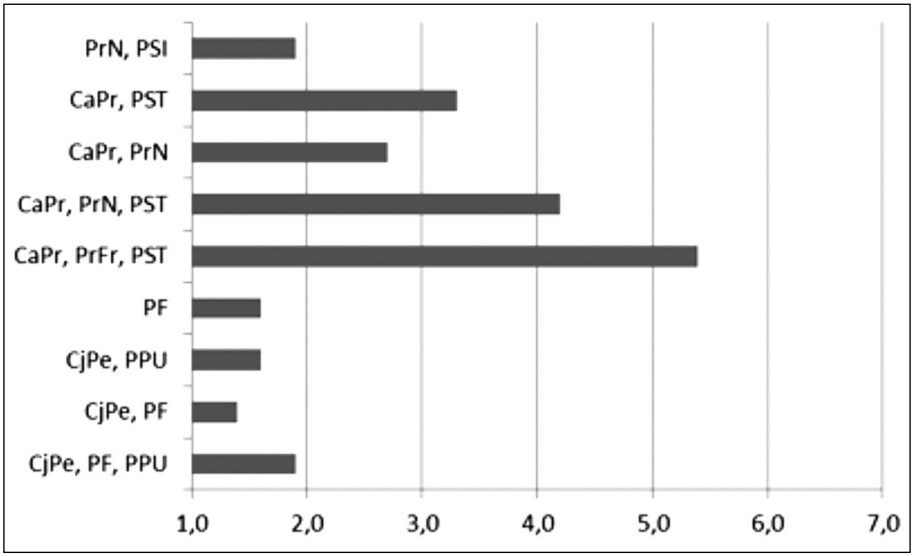

Figure 9. Absence of knowledge of Friulan language.

national ham obtained from pigs raised in intensive farming (2.7). All the other attributes scored values around 4 (Figure 8). With higher disaggregation and segmenting the sample with the knowledge of the Friulian language (Figure 8), the students more fluent in Friulian and who use it in all the life contexts, both private and public, preferred the sandwich with the higher sustainability and this preference increased when the package reported messages in local language (average of 5.5)[2].

5. Conclusions. This research was dedicated to explore the consumer's reaction to the use of local language in marketing communication by exploring i) a multi-dimensional construct of the cultural environment (ethnical, identity, values, symbols); ii) relate the consumer behavior to preferences expressed for the attributes described in different languages; iii) simulate the consumer behavior and test the reaction to price for consumer with different language knowledge assuming the price a discriminating factor of quality perception. Specifically, the Friulian language was used to observe its capacity to improve the transmission of physical and symbolic attributes of the food product image. The relevant conclusion is that this study requires further investigation especially with regard to the hypothesis H5. The justification that the Friulian language does not seem to greatly influence the students' decision to buy a ham sandwich reporting local language expressions beside there is a positive evidence of preference for pigs reared in Friuli seems to be more economic

than linguistic. The language positively influences the choice of local product for a large parte of the students but the budget restrictions, seems to limit the importance of ethnic motivations. Following this consideration, analyzing the indices of the preference scale, there is still a significant interest in the linguistic aspects that explain the construct "Attitude for the Friulian language". The attitude to buy local food product (IB) is, however influenced by the environment conservation (AAMB) and the higher quality perception for local food products (APL) and is also related to the Friulian language. The analyzes requires more investigations to test the nature of behaviors not been sufficiently explained by the current investigation, to improve the effectiveness of the communication message in local language. It is interesting to note in conclusion that the Friulian language is far from being "out of fashion" even in this highly acculturated contest were most of the students know at least one or two foreign languages, travel in different EU regions and outside, communicate with social network in different part of the world, have an international profile. These young people despite this "open mind education" still use the local language for conversation outside their home family contest (49.4%), the 11% use in the University, the 94.5% of them understand Friulian language and 23.6% understand, speak and read friulano. Since we are in a context of analysis of latent variables, for future investigation some items might be reallocated to better explain the role of the ethnic construct in market decisions. The interest of this research is the changing attitude of the big multinational companies toward the local languages. In our previous research (Rosa and Sillani 2001) we observed that the large distribution chain (Iper and supermarkets) were opposite to the use of local language in marketing communication, the justification was that the language could create a non desirable segmentation between local and foreign consumers causing a possible decline in number of customers' visits. Recently the local daily newspaper (see *Messaggero Veneto* 14 and 15 October, 2015) reported two articles that emphasized the communication strategy of the big multinational group Ferrero for Nutella, reporting on the jar the labels with nine expression in friulian.language (see Figure 10).

This has caused a number of positive and negative reactions from Friulians people: the most important critics concerned the idiomatic errors and mistakes due to a non officially recognized common writing standard. The local language need an institutional support to define the "correct" form of a language to be taught in schools; published grammars, dictionaries, diffused in public contest in economic relations and in textbooks that set forth a correct spoken and written form. This seems to justify the reluctance of the large distribution to refuse the use of local language as a communication strategy standing on the fact that there isn't an officially recognized standard language. The Ferrero's communication strategy can be summarized with

Figure 10.Nutella jars: labels reporting six expression in Friulian language.

the following expression: The distinguishing characteristic of Ferrero is a "glocal" approach to business (think globally, act locally), a company which is both global and local, focusing on international development, without losing sight of its relationship with local communities.

The intention of Ferrero is to create community and values with communication messages and constant attention towards consumers' needs that is the focus of the company policy, inspired by maximum transparency excellence in quality and relations. Our loyalty towards consumers and the trust they put in our products with their every day purchases are at the core of the long-lasting relation that we enjoy with them.

Our communications with consumers, including advertising, respect the values of human dignity, family and children, in line with our moral and ethical principles. They are based on proper use of our products and inspired by the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

[1] See the website *Il mestiere di scrivere*, http://www.mestierediscrivere.com.

[2] This appreciation has been recently supported by a promotion in Friulian of Nutella made by the great international Group Ferrero, a beginning of market segmentation with local language.

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