On the interpretation of an interrogative form in North-eastern Italian dialects

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In this paper I focus on a typical enclitic form (*-te/-nte*) that distinguishes singular and plural 1st person verbs in interrogative sentences, both in Trentino and in other North-eastern Italian varieties. After giving some examples to illustrate the phenomenon and the main studies done so far on it (§1), I discuss the origin of the form. Having compared some of the theories that have been advanced on this topic, I propose a derivation via inversion of a 1st person subject clitic (singular *e*, plural *e* or *ne*) and a verb ending with a nasal consonant followed by a plosive alveolar, analogous to the 3rd person plural of *essere* 'to be' *sont* (§2). The *-te/-nte* forms are most frequently found in interrogatives, although they also occur in other structures (see §3), and always express a non-assertive modality. Their interpretations are explored in §4, where they are ordered in a bi-parted hierarchy. In the last paragraph (§5), I present the results of a recent inquiry conducted with fifteen Trentino speakers of different ages, from different parts of the Non valley. The results seem to confirm the persistence of the form *-te/-nte* in only some of the structures of the proposed hierarchy.

1. INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES WITH *-TE* (*-NTE*): DIACHRONIC AND DIATOPIC VARIATIONS

Some Northeastern Italian dialects (spoken in the provinces of Verona, Vicenza, Trento[1]) show a particular interrogative verbal inflected form that ends with *-nte* in the 1st person singular and with *-te* in the 1st person plural.[2] Here we will focus on the forms that in the Trentino area distinguish 1st person verbs in interrogative sentences from 1st person verbs in declarative sentences, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1

DECLARATIVE I S.	INTERROGATIVE I S.	DECLARATIVE I PL.	INTERROGATIVE I PL.
Son a posto.	Sonte a posto?	Sem a posto.	Sente a posto?
am fine	am-te fine?	are Ipl. fine	are Ipl-te fine?
'I am fine.'	'Am I fine?'	'We are fine.'	'Are we fine?'
Ho fat ben.	Honte fat bèn?	Avem fat ben.	Avente fat ben?
have Is. done well	have Is.-nte done well?	have Ipl. done well	have Ipl-te done well?
'I have done well.'	'Have I done well?'	'We have done well.'	'Have we done well?'
Fago ben.	Fagonte ben?	Fem ben.	Fente ben?
do Is. well	Do I do-nte well?	do Ipl. well	do Ipl.-te well?
'I do well.'	'Do I do well?'	'We do well.'	'Do we do well?'
Narò a casa.	Ndo naronte?	Narem a casa.	Ndo narente?
shall go Is. home	where shall Is.go-nte?	shall go Ipl. home	where shall Ipl.go-te
'I shall go home.'	'Where shall I go?'	'We shall go home.'	'Where shall we go?'

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[1] Marchesini (2015) reports that in the dialects spoken in the provinces of Vicenza, Padova and Rovigo an ending *–onti* is only present for three verbs: *aver* 'to have', *essare* 'to be' and *fare* 'to do'. Other Venetan examples are given in Zamboni 1984.

[2] Various Trentino examples are reported in Rizzolatti (*Radiografia del dialetto cembrano*, introduction to Aneggi (1984).

The examples in figure 1 show that the Trentino verbal system does not present subject proclitic forms for either of the first person forms. The endings *-te/ -nte* appear in both yes-no direct interrogatives and in wh-direct interrogatives (1a). They can co-occur with negation (1b) and with the particle *po* (Hack (2014)), which is used in some Trentino dialects to mark interrogative sentences (1c): [3]

(1) (a) Sa ghe dironte adès ala Isa?
             what dat.cl shall say Is.-nte now to Isa
             'What shall I say to Isa now?'
      (b) No avente fat bèn a vender la casa?
             not have I pl.-te done well to sell the house
             'Haven't we done well to sell the house?'
      (c) *Che fante (po) ades?*
             what do I pl.-te (then) now
             'What do we do now?'

The same forms are attested in various old documents from the North East (see examples (2-4)):

(2)   Séu-ù capetan de sta Tor, o sonte-eo?
          are IIpl. you captain of this Tower, or am-te I
          'Are you captain of this Tower, or am I?'   (*Atti del Podestà di Lio Mazor*, 1312, in Levi (1904: 13, 10))

(3)   Oimè, meschino, per che ancoi son vignuto qui, per che non sonte andado alla mia vita,
          dear me, miserable, why today am come here,   why not am-te gone to my way
          perche ò io bevudo cum tal homo?
          why have I drunk with such a man
          'Dear me, miserable[me], why have I come here today, why didn't I follow my own path,
          why have I drunk with such a man?'   (*La Catinia* 1482, in Battisti (1882-1914: 194))

(4)   Què fassante pò?
          what do Ipl.-te then
          'What do we do then?'   (Ruzzante, Fiorina 10b, in Wendriner (1889))

Verbs ending with *-te* and similar 1st person singular and plural person interrogative forms (ending with *-ti, -tia,* rarely with *-e*) are also present in some XIX and XX century grammars and

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[3] Chinellato (2004) suggests that in Trentino *-te* marks a subset of 1st person interrogatives and imperative sentences. Also some areal differences regarding the use of the form for the 1st person singular and plural have been noted. A pragmatic restriction concerning similar forms in Veronese is proposed by Marchesini (2015). She notes that the *-enti* form is impossible in an "out of the blue" context. Following proposals by Obenauer (2004, 2006) and Garzonio (2004) concerning special questions, Marchesini identifies the following types of interrogative as preferring the *-enti* form: *can't find the value*; *surprise/disapproval; rhetorical; interrogative imperatives* and *interrogative exclamatives*. She goes on to add to this list a very general (yes/no) type of question, which does not seem to be pragmatically marked.

dictionaries for interrogatives in Lombard and Venetan dialects (5-6), and – to a greater extent - in Trentino dialects (7-12):

(5)   (a) Gonti? onti?
         have Is.-ti? am-ti
         'Do I have? am I?'   Vicentino (Ascoli (1873: 399))

(5)   (b) Ameonti?
          love Ipl.-ti
          'Do we love?'   Trevigiano (Ascoli (1873: 416-7))

(6)   Sontia?
          am-tia
          'Am I?'   Milanese (Rohlfs (1968, II: §453))

(7)   (a) Gonte? sonte?
          have Is.-te? am-te
          'Do I have? am I?   Trentino (Ascoli (1873: 399))
      (b) Funti?
           do Is.-nti
           'Do I do?'   Pinzolo (Gartner (1882: 29))
      (c) Sunti?
           am-ti
           'Am I?'   Pinzolo (Gartner (1882: 29))

(8)   (a) L'òti dito mi?
          it have Is.-ti I
          'Have I said it?'   Valsugana (Prati (1960: 56))
      (b) Sa fonti?
           what do Ipl.-nti
           'What do we do?'   Valsugana (Prati (1960: 62))

(9)   (a) Andonte? zonte?
          go Ipl.-te   am Is.-te
          'Do we go? am I?'   Predazzo (Rohlfs (1968: II, §608))
      (b) Ndone? sone?
          go Ipl.-e   am Is.-e
          'Do we go? am I?'   Cavalese (Rohlfs (1968: II, § 608))

(10) (a) Sónte?   ònte   sénte?   gavénte?   èronte? èrente?   sarònte?
          am-nte   have Is.-nte are Ipl.-te have Ipl.-te was-nte wereIpl.-te   shall be Is.-nte
          sarénte?   saréssente?
          shall be Ipl.-te   would be Ipl.-te
          'Am I? do I have? are we? do we have? was I? were we? shall I be? shall we be? should we
          be?'
                                                    Trento (Quaresima (1965: 250))
      (b) Saroite?   giaroite?

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            would be Is.-te    should have Is.-te
            'Should I be? should I have?'              Tuenno, Non valley (Quaresima (1965: 251))
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(11)   (a) Beorànte?
            shall drink Ipl.-te
            'Shall we drink?'
       (b) Che sònte mi? che sònte mi?
            what am-te I   what am-te I
            'What am I? what am I?'   Cembra (Aneggi (1984), CHE[4])
       (c) Sénte levadi?
            are Ipl.-te got up
            'Have we got up?'   Cembra (Aneggi (1984), LEVÀR)
       (d) Ma che volénte far?
            but what will Ipl.-te to do
            'But what will we do?'   Cembra (Aneggi (1984), MÒSCA)

Other more recent data is given for the Verona dialect in Manzini/Savoia (2005) and in Marchesini (2015); for Trentino in Zörner (1989); Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999); Adami (2003); Manzini, Savoia (2005); Pamelin (2015). Some of the examples reported by these authors are given here in (12-15):

(12)   (a) 'dɔrm- ɛnti? dɔr'm- ɛnti?
            sleep Is-enti? sleep Ipl.-enti
            'am I sleeping? are we sleeping?'   Velo Veronese (Manzini/Savoia (2005: 364))
       (b) 'dɔrm- ja? dor'min-te?
            sleep Is-ja? sleep Ipl.-te
            'am I sleeping? are we sleeping?'   Vermiglio (Manzini/Savoia (2005: 364))
       (c) 'dɔrmi- te? dor'min-te?
            sleep Is-te? sleep Ipl.-te
            'am I sleeping? are we sleeping?'   Livo and Tuenno, Non valley (Manzini/Savoia
                                                  (2005: 364-5))

(13)   (a) El coñọsete?
            him cl. know Is.-te
            'Do I know him?'
       (b) Te vẹdete doman?
            you cl. see Is.-te tomorrow
            'Shall I see you tomorrow?'
       (c) kwant kọñete nar via?
            when must Is.-te to go away
            'When must I leave?'
       (d) Mañante ensẹma?
            eat Ipl.-te together
            'Do we eat together?'
       (e) Ve avẹnte kapide ben?

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[4] The research on the different entries was done using the ALTR (see Cordin (2005)).

you cl.have Ipl.-te understood well

'Have we understood you well?'   Cembra (Zörner (1989: 233))

(14) (a) čantite?   védite?   pèrdite?   dòrmite?   vonte?

  sing Is.-te   see Is.-te   lose Is-te   sleep Is.-te   go Is-nte

  'Do I sing?' 'do I see?' 'do I lose?' 'do I sleep?'   'do I go?'

  (b) čantante?   vedente?   perdente?   dorminte?   nante?

  sing Ipl.-te   see Ipl.-te   lose Ipl-te   sleep Ipl.-te   go Ipl-te

  'Do we sing?' do w'e see?' 'do we lose?'   'do we sleep?' 'do we go?'

  (c) čantavite?   vedevite?   dormivite?   navite?

  sing Is.past-te   see Is.past-te   sleep Is.past-te   go Is.past-nte

  'Did I sing?'   'did I see?'   'did I sleep?'   'do I go?'

  (d) čantavente?   vedevente?   dormivente?   navente?[5]

  sing Ipl.past-te   see Ipl.past-te sleep Ipl.past-te go Is.past-nte

  'Did we sing?'   'did we see?'   'did we sleep?' 'did we go?'

  (e) čanteraite?   vedraite?   dormiraite?   naraite?

  sing Is.fut.-te   see Is.fut-te   sleep Is.fut-te   go Is.fut-nte

  'Shall I sing?'   'shall I see?'   'shall I sleep?' 'shall I go?'

  (f) čanterante?   vedrente?   dormirente?   narente?

  sing Ipl.fut.-te   see Ipl.fut-te   sleep Ipl.fut-te go Ipl.fut-nte

  'Shall we sing?'   'shall we see?' 'shall we sleep?' 'shall we go?'

                    Cavareno (Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999: 6))

(15) (a) Che fante (po) ades?

  what do Ipl.-te (then) now

  'What do we do now?'

  (b) (E) che saite po mi?

   (and) what know Is. then I

   'And what do I know about that?'   Non valley (Pamelin (2015: 59))

2. THE ORIGIN OF THE FORM - *TE/-NTE*

Several descriptions, and some partial explanations, have been proposed to account for the origin of the forms *-te/ -nte.*

Ascoli (1873: 416-7) noted that *-te, -ti* are used for the 1st persons singular and plural in interrogatives, imperatives and subjunctives. He proposes connecting the latter forms to the forms that used to be attested in the Ladin of the Badia valley: *magnun-de,* lit. eat 1pl.-de, 'let's eat', *stun-de,* lit. stay 1pl.-de 'let's stay'.[6] The origin of *-te/ -ti* would be the 1st person form of the verb *essere* 'to be' (*sunt*), where the final consonant is determined by "la potente attrazione delle infinite forme in *-ont*" (the powerful attraction of the infinite forms in *-ont*).

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[5] In the North-eastern dialectal varieties other than Trentino this is not possible: see, for instance, the Veronese examples with a past imperfective tense reported by Marchesini (2015): *magnaeneà, *magnaeneti/ *magnaenti* 'did we eat?'

[6] As noted in Ascoli (1873), in 1832 Haller had recorded 1st person plural imperative forms ending in - *de* in the Badia valley. In 1950 no trace of these forms was found.

Gartner (1882: 28-9) reported the *Inversionsformen* used in the Non valley and in Giudicarie (Pinzolo) and considers the 1st person singular and plural forms ending in *-e* (*font-e*, lit. do Is.-nte, 'do I do?'; *fant-e,* lit. do Ipl.-te, 'do we do?') to be enigmatic (*räthselhaft*). For Gartner, *-nte* was the result of *sum*, *sumus* and *sunt* into *sont* (which is attestated in Lombardy from S. Gottardo to Cremona). By analogy, the same ending was then generalized to all other verbs.

Meyer Lübke (1894: II, § 325) refined Gartner's proposal: the Trentino form *sonte* 'am I?' is the result of the inversion of the verb *sont* (<*sum*) and a pronoun. The same form expands to all other verbs. Moreover, because of the similarity between the 1st person singular and the 1st person plural, an analogous form also appears for the 1st person plural.[7]

Rohlfs (1968: 354) explained the ending *-te* in interrogative contexts as the result of an assimilation of the 1st person plural (*sem, som*) to the 3rd person plural (*sont*) before a clitic. According to this explanation, the process started from the 1st person plural of the verb *essere* 'to be', and then extended to other common verbs and to the 1st person singular: "Il punto di partenza pare essere l'interrogativo *sonte*, il cui *t* deriva da un'erronea generalizzazione seguita al confluire di *sumus* e *sunt* in *son* nella forma interrogativa dinanzi a un pronome enclitico incorporato." (The starting point seems to be the interrogative *sonte*, whose *-t-* derives from an incorrect generalization, resulting from the merging of *sumus* and *sunt* in *son* in the interrogative form, in front of a previously incorporated enclitic pronoun".)

Quaresima (1965: 267-8) proposed a different hypothesis: he noted that *sont* is not a typical Trentino form of the verb *essere*. He believes the forms *-te, -ti* to reflect the 2nd person singular pronoun (*eitu-tu*).[8]

Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999: 4-8), according to Ascoli and Rohlfs, suggested that the 3rd person plural SUNT influenced the forms of the 1st person singular, which has become *sunt > sunto* with an epitetic vowel *-o*, and *sonte* with an enclitic vowel that derives from *ego* (in a first phase the new forms appeared in free variation with *son*). According to the authors, in Trentino dialects we see a specialization of the form *sonte,* which became an interrogative mark, first for the singular, and then the plural, person.[9]

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[7] However, the form *sonze* 'am I?' is derived from *-m(u)s-(n)o(s)*.

[8] For different reasons, Marchesini (2015) also considers the *-enti* form in Veronese interrogatives to be an instance of a 2nd person singular strong pronoun "which has lost its phonological properties, but not its semantic [addressee] feature." At the morphological level, since in Veronese the inflected verb is always a 1st person plural, *–enti* can be read as a sort of inflectional morpheme and not as a pure enclitic form, as in Trentino. It must be noted that the Veronese 1st person interrogative form does not have the same properties as the corresponding Trentino form *-te/-nte* and the contexts where they occur are different. In Veronese the use of the form is much more restricted than in Trentino, since it can only appear with the present, or with a composed past in the indicative mode, with the first person plural and in special questions. In Trentino it can also appear with future and past tenses, with non-indicative modes, and with the 1st person singular; moreover, its use does not seem to be limited to special questions.

[9] For Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999) - *te* is a clitic analogous to *-el*, the 3rd person singular verbal enclitic form occurring in interrogative sentences. The authors prefer, however, to interpret *-te* as an inflectional morpheme, and not as the result of a syntactic inversion. This interpretation is largely based on the occurrence of *-te* as a mark for the imperative 1st person plural: the two authors recognize this imperative form as a verbal suffix. In § 4 I return to this choice, focusing in particular on the connection between imperative and interrogative forms with *-te.*

The hypothesis that we adopt proposes that the two interrogative forms used for the 1st persons singular and plural have a very similar derivation, both originating from a subject enclitic pronoun: *e* for the singular person, *ne* or *e* for the first person plural[10]. The verb to which the clitic joins initially is *sont* for both persons (singular and plural). The ending consonant -*t* of the verb is determined by the analogy of the 1st singular form of the verb *essere* 'to be' with the 3rd plural form of this verb. The analogy then extends to the 1st plural form of the same verb, eventually including all other verbs. We note that the ending -*nt* for the 1st person is also widely attested in assertive sentences in Venetan and Lombard areas, whereas in Trentino dialects it competes with the forms *son/ sen*.[11] The form ending in -*nt* is favoured in some contexts, where the consonant is followed by a vowel, or a liquid or nasal consonant, and this is precisely what happens when the verb is followed by a clitic, whose first phoneme is a vowel (*e* < EGO, *e* < E/NE).[12]

In a restricted number of 1st person singular forms the verbal modification and the occurrence of the enclitic are blocked. This happens with the 1st person singular in both the conditional and the subjunctive. The examples (16a-c) show the difference between the singular and plural conditional forms: only the latter can end in -*te*:

(16)   (a) Saria mi el pu' lento?
             would be Is. I the slowest
             'Would I be the slowest?'
       (b) *Sariate/sariante mi el pù lento?
             would be Is.-te/-nte I the slowest

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[10] The form *ne* for the 1st person plural clitic pronoun is attested in the interrogative conjugation in some areas of Trentino (see Quaresima (1965: 254)). Rohlfs (1968: §453) presents a 1st person plural subject clitic *ne* in Torino dialect. The 1st person plural clitic subject *e* is also attested in ancient Genovese (see Rohlfs (1968: § 447), in Lombard (see Vai (2014: 19, 22)), and in the variety spoken at Agordo (Munaro (2001: 155)).

[11] It is interesting to note the alternations (here reported in bold letters) of the three forms that are used for the 1st person singular of the verb *essere* 'to be' in the inscription under the image of Death in the famous fresco *Danza macabra* (macabre dance) by Simone Baschenis from Bergamo on the external wall of S. Vigilio church in Pinzolo: *Io **sont** la morte che porto corona/**sono** signora de ognia persona [...]. /et **son** quela che fa tremare el mondo* (I am the death that wears a crown/I am the owner of every person [...]/ and I am the one who makes the world tremble) .

[12] The sequence *sont* + *e* recalls another sequence of morphemes, where a plosive alveolar non-sound consonant must be introduced after the ending nasal consonant of the preposition *en* 'in' and before the initial vowel of an article. Since the plosive consonant derives from INTUS, it is etymological. Examples (i) and (ii) below demonstrate the correct contexts for the occurrence of *ent*, since the preposition precedes an article, whereas in examples (iii) and (iv), the preposition must be *en,* when it precedes the initial vowel of a noun rather than of an article:
(i)   Vago ent el volt / *Vago en el volt.
         'I go into the cellar.'
(ii)   Finisso ent en ora. / *Finisso en en ora.
         'I finish in a hour.'
(iii)   *Vago ent Egitto. / Vago en Egitto.
         'I go to Egypt.'
(iv)   *La se cambia ent erba. / La se cambia en erba.
         'It changes into grass.'
We note that, like the sequence *ent* + article, the sequence *sont* + clitic also presents an etymological consonant (although the etymology for *sont* is not true, but extended for analogy); moreover, in both cases the consonant precedes a functional element.

'Would I be the slowest?'
   (c) Saressente noi i pù lenti?[13]
      would be Ipl.-te we the slowest
      'Would we be the slowest?'

Note, also, that in sentences with subjunctive verbs the 1st person singular never shows the ending -*nte* (as examples (17a, b) show), whereas the 1st person plural admits this form, at least with some common verbs (*essere* 'to be', but not *avere* 'to have' in the example (17 c)):

(17) (a) El crede che giabia, sibia...
       he thinks that have Is., am
       'He thinks that I have, that I am...'
    (b) *El crede che giabiate,   sibiate...
        he thinks that have Is.-te,   am-te
        'He thinks that I have, that I am...'
    (c) El crede che gentien, sìbiente...
       he thinks that have Ipl., are Ipl.-te
       'He thinks that we have, that we are...'   (Quaresima (1965: 251))

The examples (16) and (17) seem to suggest that the verb ending vowel -*a* plays a central role in determining the impossibility of the enclitic form in interrogatives. Provisionally we propose a phonological constraint that blocks the interrogative enclitic when the verb ends with the vowel -*a*.

3. VERBS ENDING IN -*TE*/-*NTE* IN NON-INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES

As Ascoli (1873) has already noted, the particular form that distinguishes 1st person interrogative sentences in Trentino is also present in some non-interrogative sentences, i.e., "esortative" (exhortatives) and "soggiuntive" (subjunctives). Exhortatives, in fact, are attested in most of the studies and dictionaries mentioned in §1, and the current Trentino dialect conserves the form:

(18)   (a) Sperénte! Bevénte!
       hope Ipl.-te! drink Ipl. -te
       'Let's hope!' 'Let's drink!'   Trento e Rovereto (Quaresima (1965: 251-2))
    (b) Nante!
       go Ipl.-te
       'Let's go!'   Coredo (Quaresima (1965: 252))

(19) (a) Pensante!   Sentinte!   Nénte!
      let's think-te let's listen-te let's go-te
      'Let's think!' 'Let's listen!' 'Let's go!'   Trentino (Rohlfs (1968: §608))
    (b) Andónte!

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[13] Marchesini (2015) reports that in Veronese the conditional forms with the ending -*enti* are not possible: saréssimo/sarésseneà*saréssimo+ti>*saressìnti/*saréssene+ti> saressénti (*saréssenti) 'would we be'.

let's go-te

'Let's go!' Predazzo (Rohlfs (1968: §608))[14]

(20) Slongiante l pas, putèj, che si nò me bagnàn

let's lenghten-te the stride, guys, that if not us get Ipl. wet

'Lengthen our stride, guys, otherwise we'll get wet' Non valley (Quaresima (1964), ME)

(21) (a) Pensente ai pòpi!

let's think-te of the children

'Let's think of the children!'

(b) Pensenteghe![15]

let's think-te ghe

'Let's think of them!'

The same thing happens in sentences with a subjunctive verb,[16] which are introduced by the complementizer *che* and depend on verbs that introduce a command (22a), on causative verbs (22b), on epistemic verbs (22c-d), and on asking and willing verbs (22e-f):[17]

(22) (a) L'à dit che preparénte i ossi.

he cl. has said that prepare Ipl.-te the bones

'He said that we have to prepare the bones.' Trentino (Quaresima (1965: 252))

(b) La lassa che fénte quel che volém.

she cl. lets that do Ipl.-te that that want Ip.pl.

'She allows us to do what we want.'

(c) La crede che fénte quel che la dis éla.

she cl. thinks that do Ipl.-te that that she cl.says she

'She believes that we do what she says.'

(d) El crét che dorminte.

he cl. believes that sleep Ipl.-te

'He believes that we are sleeping.'[18] Non valley (Quaresima (1965: 271))

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[14] Quaresima (1965: 254, note 4) specifies that this form is used in the dialect spoken in Cavalese, but not in Predazzo, where the imperative form is *ndón* and the interrogative form is *ndóne*. Analogously, for the verb *essere* 'to be' the form found in Predazzo is *sóne* (am I?) and for the verb *avere* 'to have' is *òne* ('have I?').

[15] This example shows that *-te* always precedes other enclitics.

[16] For most verbs the subjunctive 1st person plural coincides with the same person in the present indicative.

[17] Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999: 11) report the same types of sentence, which are called "soggiuntive" by Ascoli. Another interesting example with a subjunctive verb ending in *-te* is reported in Nardelli (2014: 114), who found it in a text written some years ago by a group of bilingual Brazilian-Trentino speakers. The example (v) is of an argument clause, introduced by the complementizer *che*. It represents a different structure to that of the sentences given in (22):

v. Poc ghe manca che non fente sonar le campane per mandar en giro i omeni a zercarte.

Little dat.cl. lacks that not do Ipl.-te to ring the bells for to send around the men to look for you

'We nearly had the bells rung to send men to look for you.'

[18] Loporcaro/Vigolo (1999, 11) note the alternation of this form with the form *dormintie*. They highlight that the phonetic change, represented by the insertion of a stressed vowel *ì* before *e*, proves the complete integration of *-te* in the verbal inflection.

(e) La prega che fénte quel che la dis éla.
   she cl. asks that do Ipl.-te that that she cl.says she
   'She asks that we do what she says.'
(f) La vòl che fénte quel che la dis éla.
   she cl. wants that do Ipl.-te that that she cl.says she
   'She wants us to do what she says.'

The same happens with the past subjunctive:

(23)   (a) L'aveva dit che preparessente i ossi.
           he cl. had said that prepared Ipl.-te the bones
           'He had said that we had to prepare the bones.'
        (b) L'à lassà che fessente quel che volévem.
           she cl. has let that did Ipl.-te that that wanted Ip.pl
           'She has allowed us to do what we wanted.'
        (c) L'à credest che fessente quel che la disèva éla.
           she cl. has thought that did Ipl.-te that that she cl. said she
           'She thought that we did what she said.'
        (d) El credeva che dormissente.
           he cl. thought that slept Ipl.-te
           'He thought that we were asleep.'
        (e) La pregheva che fessénte quel che la diséva éla.
           she cl. asked that did Ipl.-te that that she cl. said she
           'She asked us to do what she said.'
        (f) La voleva che fessente quel che la diseva éla.
           she cl. wanted that did Ipl.-te that that she cl. said she
           'She wanted us to do what she said.'

Similarly, the *-te* form is present with the 1st persons singular and plural of subjunctive verbs after the conjunction *se* 'if', in sentences expressing an optative meaning:

(24)   Se giatàssente 'n bon sito!
        if got Ipl.-te a good place
        If only we *could we a good place!*   Non valley (Quaresima (1965: 252))

Analogously, *-te* also occurs in concessive sentences, with and without a complementizer:

(25)   (a) Pur che tasente e i altri i tasa!
           as long as are Ipl.-te silent and the others are silent
           'As long as we are silent and the others are silent!'   Trentino (Quaresima (1965: 251))

       (b) Disente che no l'è nada ben.
           say Ipl-te that not it cl. is gone well
           'Let's say that things have not gone well.'

(c) Meténte ...[19]
   admit Ipl.-te
   'Let's admit...'   Cembra (Aneggi (1984), MÉTER)

4. -*TE/-NTE* AS A MARK OF THE SPEAKER'S ATTITUDE TO THE PROPOSITIONAL CONTENT OF SENTENCES

The examples presented in §3 show that the sentences with -*te/-nte* always express a subjective propositional content. There is a strong coincidence between the types of structure where -*te/-nte* forms occur and the structures that Benincà 1989 considers relevant for pronominal subject inversion. According to the list that Benincà proposes for interrogatives with inversion (mostly with 2nd and 3rd person clitics), under the following points a-e (illustrated in examples (26-30)) we can see five main structure types, in addition to direct interrogatives, that require the form -*te/-nte*:

a) exhortative sentences (like the ones illustrated in (18-21); in (26) I repeat the example already given in (18a)):

(26)   Sperénte! Bevénte!
        hope Ipl.-te! drink Ipl.-te
        'Let's hope! Let's drink!'

b) pseudo-interrogatives with exclamatory value:

(27)   Sa gònte da veder!   Sa gavénte da veder!
        what have Is.-te to see   what have Ipl.-te to see
        'What have I to see!'   'What have we to see!'

c) negative sentences that express a speaker's negative presupposition concerning the propositional content:

(28)   No gonte da pagar la multa!
        not have Is.-te to pay the penalty
        'I must even pay the penalty!'

d) sentences introduced by a hypothetical *se* 'if' (examples (24) and (28) are the same):

(29)   Se giatàssente 'n bon sito!
        if got Ipl.-te a good place
        'If only we could get a good place!'   Non valley (Quaresima (1965: 252))

e) disjunctive structures, where two alternative possibilities are given as non-relevant to the event expressed in the main clause:

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[19] Quaresima (1965, 253, note 1) highlights the frequency of the verbal form *meténte* in a Ladin document from the Fassa valley.

(30)   Che nén**te** o stén**te**, l'è istes per mi.
        that go Ipl.-te or stay Ipl.-te, it is the same for me
        'Whether we go or stay, it is the same to me.'

Munaro (2001: 165) situates the structures which Benincà (1989) considered relevant for pronominal subject inversion on an implicational hierarchy composed of six structural types of sentence.[20] The hierarchy represents different types of structure corresponding to the different "mental attitude of the speaker with respect to the propositional content expressed". The hierarchy, read from right to left, reflects "a decreasing degree of salience of the event's truth value for the speaker"[21]

(31)   *disjunctive - hypothetical - optative > presuppositional - exclamative - interrogative*

I propose that the same hierarchy holds for forms in *-te/-nte*. As the examples I have given show, in Trentino we find these forms in all the interrogatives where the speaker asks the addressee to assign a truth value to the event expressed by the sentence (see examples in §1); moreover, these forms occur in exhortative sentences (26) and in sentences with a presuppositional interpretation, both in cases where the referent of the wh- element is already known and in cases where the event truth value in a negative sentence contradicts the speaker's expectations (such as (27) and (28)); in sentences with a counterfactual reading, such as hypothetical contexts, where the speaker considers some potential consequences of a truth value assigned to the event expressed in the main sentence (29); finally, in the disjunctive interpretation of a sentence, where the speaker considers two alternative truth values for the same event, none of which is relevant to what the main sentence expresses (30).

Trentino examples with *-te/-nte* both confirm the hierarchy proposed for pronominal 2nd and 3rd person inverted subjects, and also contribute to a better articulation of the proposal, since the forms *-te/-nte* occur in two other types of structure. The first is represented by dependent clauses introduced by the complementizer *che* with a subjunctive verb, where *-te/-nte* mark a [- real] modality, such as (32a) which corresponds to (22a) and (32b) which corresponds to (22d):

(32)   (a) L'à dit che preparénte i ossi.
            he cl. has said that prepare Ipl.-te the bones
            'He said that we have to prepare the bones.'   Trentino (Quaresima (1965: 252))
        (b) El crét che dorminte.
             he cl. believes that sleep Ipl.-te
            'He believes that we are sleeping.'   Non valley (Quaresima (1965: 271))

The same form occurs in concessive clauses too, expressing the speaker's subjective point of view (see (33a-c) =(25a-c)):

(33)   (a) Pur che tasente e i altri i tasa!
            as long as are Ipl.-te silent and the others are silent

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[20] Munaro (2001:170) reduces the structures involved in the hierarchy to four main types. For the purpose of this paper, I prefer to propose the more complete/detailed version of the hierarchy.
[21] Munaro (2001: 170).

'As long as we are silent and the others are silent!'   Trentino (Quaresima (1965: 251))
(b) Disente che no l'è nada ben.
    say Ipl-te that not it cl. is gone well
    'Let's say that things have not gone well.'
(c) Meténte ...[22]
    admit Ipl.-te
    'Let's admit...'   Cembra (Aneggi (1984), MÉTER)

In all the structures given in the hierarchy (31) the *-te* form is only attested for 1st person plurals. The occurrence of the singular *-nte* is restricted to interrogatives and presuppositional sentences, those furthest to the right in the hierarchy. Exhortatives (illustrated by examples such as (26)) rarely present the 1st person singular: this restriction is based on the fact that exhortation requires more than one participant in the speech act. We never find singular *-nte* forms in any of the other sentence types (disjunctives, hypotheticals, sentences with [-real] modality, concessives, such as the sentences illustrated in (29), (30), (32), (33)). In § 2 we suggested the existence of a phonetic constraint, which could prevent the *-nte* form from joining a verb ending with the vowel *-a.* [23] This constraint also explains the lack of *-nte* 1st person singular forms in examples (29), (30), (32), (33).

5. A RECENT INQUIRY ON THE USE OF *-TE/-NTE* FORMS

A recent inquiry conducted by Pamelin (2015) with fifteen speakers of different ages, from five localities in the Non valley,[24] shows that interrogative sentences are homogeneously realized with the *-te/-nte* forms: there are no differences between the forms used by young and old speakers; moreover, the forms produced by the speakers from the five different localities are similar, as illustrated in (34a-e) for wh-questions with a 1st person plural verb, in (35a-e) for yes/no questions with a 1st person plural verb and in (36a-e) for wh-questions with a 1st person singular verb:

(34)   (a) Che fante (po) ades? (J., A., S.)[25]
            what do Ipl.-te (then) now
            'What do we do now?'   Seio
        (b) Che fente (po) ades? (J., S.)
            what do Ipl.-te (then) now
            'What do we do now?   '   Livo
        (c) Che fante (po) ades? (J., A., S.)
            what do Ipl.-te (then) now
            'What do we do now?'   Tassullo
        (d) Che fente (po) ades? (J., A., S.)
            what do Ipl.-te (then) now
            'What do we do now?'   Vervò

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[22] Quaresima (1965, 253, note 1) highlights the frequency of the verbal form *meténte* in a Ladin document from the Fassa valley.
[23] Munaro (2001:163, note 6) suggests that 3rd person subject enclitics are non-compatible with the subjunctive.
[24] The localities are in the upper, middle and lower areas of the Non valley.
[25] J.= younger than 35; A.= between 35-65; S.= older than 65.

(e) Che fente po ades? (J., A.)
    what do Ipl.-te (then) now
    'What do we do now?'   Ton

(35) (a) Nante? (J., A., S.)
            go Ipl.-te
            'Do we go?'   Seio
      (b) Nente? (J., S.) nante? (A.)
            go Ipl.-te   go Ipl.-te
            'Do we go?'   Livo
      (c) Nante? (J., S.) nente? (A.)
            go Ipl.-te   go Ipl.-te
            'Do we go?'   Tassullo
      (d) Nente? (J., S.) nante? (A.)
            go Ipl.-te   go Ipl.-te
            'Do we go?'   Vervò
      (e) Nente? (J., A., S.)
            go Ipl.-te
            'Do we go?'   Ton

(36) (a) (E) che saite po mi? (J., A.)
            (and) what know Is.-te then I
            'What do I know?'   Seio
      (b) e mi che'n saite (po)? (J., A., S.)
            and I what n cl. know Is.-te then I
            'What do I know of this?'   Livo
      (c) Che'n saite po mi?   e mi che saite po? (J., A.)
            what 'n know Is.-te then I   and I what 'n know Is.-te then
            'What do I know of this?'   Tassullo
      (d) Che saite (po) mi?   e mi che'n saite? (J., A., S.)
            what know Is.-te (then) I   and I what 'n know Is.-te
            'What do I know?'   Vervò
      (e) che saite po mi?   che saite mi po? (J., A., S.)
            what know Is.-te then I   what know Is.-te I then
            'What do I know?'   Ton

The inquiry also presents fairly homogeneous results for the use of the *-te/-nte* forms in optative sentences: these forms are always expressed (37a-d), other than by two speakers (J. and S.) in Ton (37e):

(37) (a) (Dai) sperante! (J., A., S.)
            (dai) let's hope-te
            'Let's hope!'   Seio
      (b) (Dai) sperante! (J., A., S.)
             (dai) let's hope-te
            'Let's hope!'   Livo

14

(c) Sperante! (J., A.)

   let's hope-te

   'Let's hope!'   Tassullo

  (d) Dai sperante! (J., A., S.)

    Dai let's hope-te

   'Let's hope!'   Vervò

  (e) Dai sperante! (A.) (dai) speran! (J., S.)

    Dai let's hope-te   (dai) let's hope

   'Let's hope!'   Ton

More heterogeneous results are found for the subjunctive verbs in a hypothetic interrogative construction (38a-e):

(38) (a) E se mi stesite ci fin a doman, te daruesi fastidi? (J.)

      and if I stayed-te here until tomorrow, you dat. would give Is. annoyance

     E se mi staruesi ci fin doman, te daruesel fastidi? (A.)

      and if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. would it give annoyance

     Se staruesi ci fin doman, te donte brigia? (S.)

      and if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. would Is. give-te annoyance

     'And if I stayed here until tomorrow, would I bother you?'   Seio

   (b) E se mi ston ci fin doman, te donte fastidi? (J.)

      and if I stay here until tomorrow, you dat. would Is. give-te annoyance

     Se mi staresi ci fin doman, te donte brighja? (A.)

      and if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

     E se mi ston ci fin a doman, te donte fastidi? (S.)

      and if I stay here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

     'And if I stayed here until tomorrow, would I bother you?'   Livo

   (c) E se mi stesite ci fin a doman, te donte fastidi? (J.)

      and if I stayed-te here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

     Se mi ston ci fin a doman, te donte da dir? (A.)

      if I stay here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te to say

     E se mi ston ci fin doman, te donte fastidi? (S.)

     and if I stay here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

     'And if I stayed here until tomorrow, would I bother you?'   Tassullo

   (d) E se mi stesi ci fin doman, te don fastidio? (J.)

      and if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is. annoyance

     Se mi stesi ci fin doman, te daruesi da dir? (A.)

      if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. would Is.give Is.to say

     E se mi steste ci fin doman, te donte fastidi? (S.)

      and if I stayed-te here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

     'And if I stayed here until tomorrow, would I bother you?'   Vervò

   (e) Se mi ston ci fin doman, te donte fastidi? (J.)

      if I stayed here until tomorrow, you dat. give Is.-te annoyance

E se mi stesite ci fin doman, te darosite fastidi? (A.) [26]
and if I stayed-te here until tomorrow, you dat. would Is-te give annoyance
'And if I stayed here until tomorrow, would I bother you?'   Ton

In the first clause of the period, six speakers realize a subjunctive: four of them present the verb with -te (*stesite, steste*), two realize the verb without -te; five speakers choose the indicative verb without -te (*ston*); three use the conditional without -te (*staresi, staruesi*).[27]

In the second clause, which is interrogative, nine speakers use the present indicative with the -te form (*donte*); one speaker uses the present without -te (*don*); two speakers use the conditional without -te (*darosi, daruesi*);[28] one speaker uses the conditional verb with -te (*darosite*).

The results of this recent field research show that interrogatives are generally realized with the -te form, but the form is less frequently considered obligatory in exhortative sentences, or – even more notably - in subjunctives and hypothetical constructions, where many alternations between -te and non -te forms are produced. This seems to confirm the bipartition of the hierarchy proposed in (31), and the persistence of -te/-nte forms in the constructions at the rightmost end of the hierarchy, where the salience of the event's truth value for the speaker is stronger.

CONCLUSIONS

New subject clitics (*e, ne*) have been proposed as the original, core elements from which the structures under examination derive. This proposal may help to give greater precision to the general framework of Northern subject clitics. More specifically, for the Trentino dialect, we have shown that -te/-nte forms, deriving from the realization of 1st person subject enclitics (although now they are non-transparent), express the speaker's subjective representation of an event. We have confirmed that the non-assertive modality requires a richer system of pronominal subjects than the assertive modality (see Renzi/Vanelli (1983: 139)). We have strengthened the implicational hierarchy proposed for the 2nd and 3rd person clitic inversion in non-assertive sentences (Benincà (1989) and Munaro (2001)), providing new examples with forms involving 1st person inverted clitics. The following aspects, however, deserve further investigation: the morphological alternation of the forms corresponding to -te -(*nte, -ne, -tie*), which seems to depend on different verbs and areas; the impossibility of occurrence for -nte in both the 1st person singular subjunctive and conditional; the cross-linguistic variation associated with the structures we have been considering.

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[26] The example (38e) seems to confirm the phonetic constraint suggested in § 4, since in this sentence the -te form occurs with a 1st person singular conditional verb which does not end in -a (*darosite*). However, only one speaker realizes this form.

[27] The S. speaker from Ton does not produce a sentence.

[28] One speaker changes the 1st person subject in the second clause into an impersonal 3rd person subject.

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