

Lyonnais (Francoprovençal)

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Francoprovençal (known locally as *patois*) is the glottonym used as a cover term for a highly fragmented Romance dialect-grouping. These varieties are spoken in south-eastern France, and neighbouring parts of Switzerland and Italy; diasporic communities are also reported to maintain the use of Francoprovençal in Germany, Canada, and the United States (see Nagy 2011). Francoprovençal enjoys varying levels of official status across these regions. In France, for example, Francoprovençal was only recognised by the Ministry for Culture and Communication in 1999 as a ‘language of France’, but it does not constitute one of the handful of regional languages protected by law that are permitted in the education system. Conversely, in the Aosta Valley (Italy), which enjoys an autonomous status, Francoprovençal is protected under Federal law, and is taught in schools (see Josserand 2003).

The varieties of Francoprovençal are collectively classified as ‘severely endangered’ (Salminen 2007). There is no consensus on remaining speaker numbers, but between 50,000 and 60,000 are thought to remain in France, with roughly 16,000 in Switzerland, and 28,000 in Italy, where the vast majority reside in the Aosta Valley. Generally, estimates range from 120,000 to 200,000 speakers (see Martin 1990, 2002; Tuailon 1993). Intergenerational mother-tongue transmission is no longer reported in all but a minority of cases (see Bert, Costa & Martin 2009 in France; Nagy 1996 and Pannatier 1999 in Switzerland and Italy).

A great deal of highly localised phonological variation is characteristic of Francoprovençal, and mutual intelligibility is reported as being problematic (see Burger 1979: 262, and, for an opposing view, Tuailon 1988: 191). Owing to the isolation of certain speech communities, mutual intelligibility is often lacking even between Francoprovençal speakers separated by only a few kilometres. For precision, the following description is, therefore, based on a single, Lyonnais variety of Francoprovençal spoken in St. Martin-en-Haut, the largest peri-urban town located in the mountainous region west of the conurbation of Lyons; this region is known locally as *les monts du Lyonnais* (‘the Lyonnais mountains’). The data presented below come from both conversation and word list styles, and were collected during two fieldwork visits in 2010 and 2012.

Consonants

The consonants of the Lyonnais variety spoken in St. Martin-en-Haut are provided in the following table. Allophones are omitted here and discussed in detail below.

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular
Plosive	p b		t d			k g	
Nasal	m		n		ɲ		
Trill							
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ			ʁ
Lateral			l				
Approximant	w				j		

PHONEME	PHONETIC FORM	ORTHOGRAPHIC FORM ¹	ENGLISH GLOSS
/t/	[¹ tu]	tôs	‘all’
/d/	[¹ du]	doux	‘two’
/n/	[¹ nɔvo]	novo	‘new’
/ʒ/	[¹ ʒɔʁno]	jorno	‘day’
/m/	[¹ mɔðə]	mâre	‘mother’
/f/	[¹ fʁɔðə]	frâre	‘brother’
/s/	[¹ søʁ]	seror	‘sister’
/j/	[¹ jø]	lièt	‘bed’
/w/	[¹ wa]	ouè	‘yes’
/l/	[¹ la]	la	‘the (SG.FEM)’
/v/	[¹ vaʃi]	vache	‘cow’
/b/	[¹ bɔʃi]	boche	‘mouth’
/ʁ/	[¹ ʁɔnə]	Rôno	‘Rhône’
/ʃ/	[¹ ʃɔnə]	châno	‘chain’
/ɲ/	[¹ ɲolə]	niol	‘clouds’
/z/	[¹ zi]	zuéli	‘eyes’
/p/	[¹ pi]	pi	‘foot’
/k/	[¹ kjɔ]	cllâf	‘key’
/g/	[¹ gʝɔ]	gllâr	‘tolling bell’

The variety of Francoprovençal spoken in St. Martin-en-Haut has a similar consonantal inventory to that of Standard French (henceforth SF), unlike several varieties spoken east of Lyons. This is not surprising, as scholars have reported that Lyons traditionally functioned as the approximate limit of diffusion for linguistic innovations emanating from Paris (Chambon & Greub 2000). Some remarks are, however, necessary.

Via intermediary stages of palatalisation, Latin G + A ultimately gave rise in SF to the voiced post-alveolar fricative, while in Francoprovençal, the resulting phones differ markedly depending on the region. In many areas, /dʒ/ is a common reflex of word-initial G + A. In St. Martin-en-Haut, however, G + A maintains the reflex /ʃ/ in a small number of lexical items where Latin G remained unvoiced, e.g. CMBAM > GAMBAM > *jamba* [¹ʃäba] ‘leg’. The voiced post-alveolar fricative is maintained word-initially in G + E/I clusters, and is also maintained word-medially, just as in SF, for C + A clusters that underwent subsequent palatalisation, e.g. MANDUCARE > *mangier* [¹māʒi] ‘eaten’.² The palatalisation of Latin C + A > /ʃ/ in SF is equally a feature of Francoprovençal in *les monts du Lyonnais*, e.g. BUCCAM > *boche* [¹bɔʃi] ‘mouth’. However, in Eastern Lyonnais, for example, the post-alveolar fricative shifts to a voiceless interdental fricative (see Tuailon 2007 on variation in other regions).

¹ Orthographic forms can be dissimilar to transcribed forms; see section ‘Phonetic transcription’.

² Historically, Latin C intervocalically voiced to G in Gallo-Romance, i.e. MANDUCARE > *mangier*.

While in SF the affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] only occur in lexical borrowings, in *les monts du Lyonnais* these allophones result from the tendency to palatalise the stops /t/ and /d/ before /i/ and /e/, e.g. *charcutièr* [ʃaʁky'tʃi] 'pork butcher', *demârs* [dɛ̃mɑ̃s] 'Tuesday'.

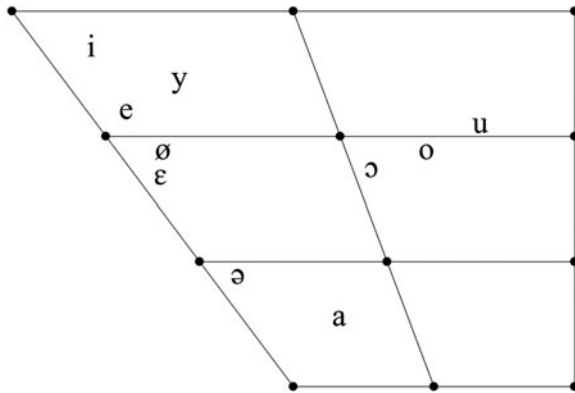
In most varieties of Francoprovençal, /l/-palatalisation in obstruent + lateral onset clusters gives a number of differing reflexes (including [j], [ʎ] and [ʎ]), typically without a palatalising trigger (i.e. where the quality of the following vowel is not a factor in palatalisation). While certain varieties of Francoprovençal palatalise in both velar + lateral and labial + lateral clusters, in the Lyonnais variety of St. Martin-en-Haut, /l/-palatalisation to [j] occurs variably, and only with velars, e.g. *clloche* ['kʎoʃi] 'bell', *gllar* ['gʎo] 'tolling bell'.

Deletion of intervocalic liquid consonants is common in Francoprovençal, e.g. *orâjo* [o'aʒo] 'storm'. Moreover, the phone /ʁ/ can shift word-medially to [ø], which only exists as a result of assibilation: *vouètura* [wa'tyðɑ] 'car', *orâjo* [o'ðɑʒo] 'storm'. This feature is reported in other Romance varieties, such as Jèrriais (see Jones 2001).

Vowels

The variety of Francoprovençal spoken in St. Martin-en-Haut has an inventory of fourteen monophthongs, [i ɨ y e ε ẽ a ã ø ə u o ɔ ɔ̃] and several diphthongs.

Monophthongs



PHONEME	PHONETIC FORM	ORTHOGRAPHIC FORM	ENGLISH GLOSS
/ĩ/	[sĩ]	cinq	'five'
/ã/	[sã]	cent	'hundred'
/ð̃/	[ʒð̃]	J'ò	'I have'
/ẽ/	[ʒẽ]	gent	'people'
/i/	[pi]	pied	'foot'
/o/	[po]	pas	'not'
/ɛ/	[dɛ]	dêt	'finger'
/e/	[de]	dé	'said' (3SG)
/a/	[paji]	payér	'pay' (INF)
/y/	[pyzi]	puge	'flea'
/u/	[nu]	nôf	'nine'
/ɔ/	[nɔ]	nâs	'nose'
/ə/	[sə'la]	cela	'that'
/ø/	[søla]	sela	'chair'

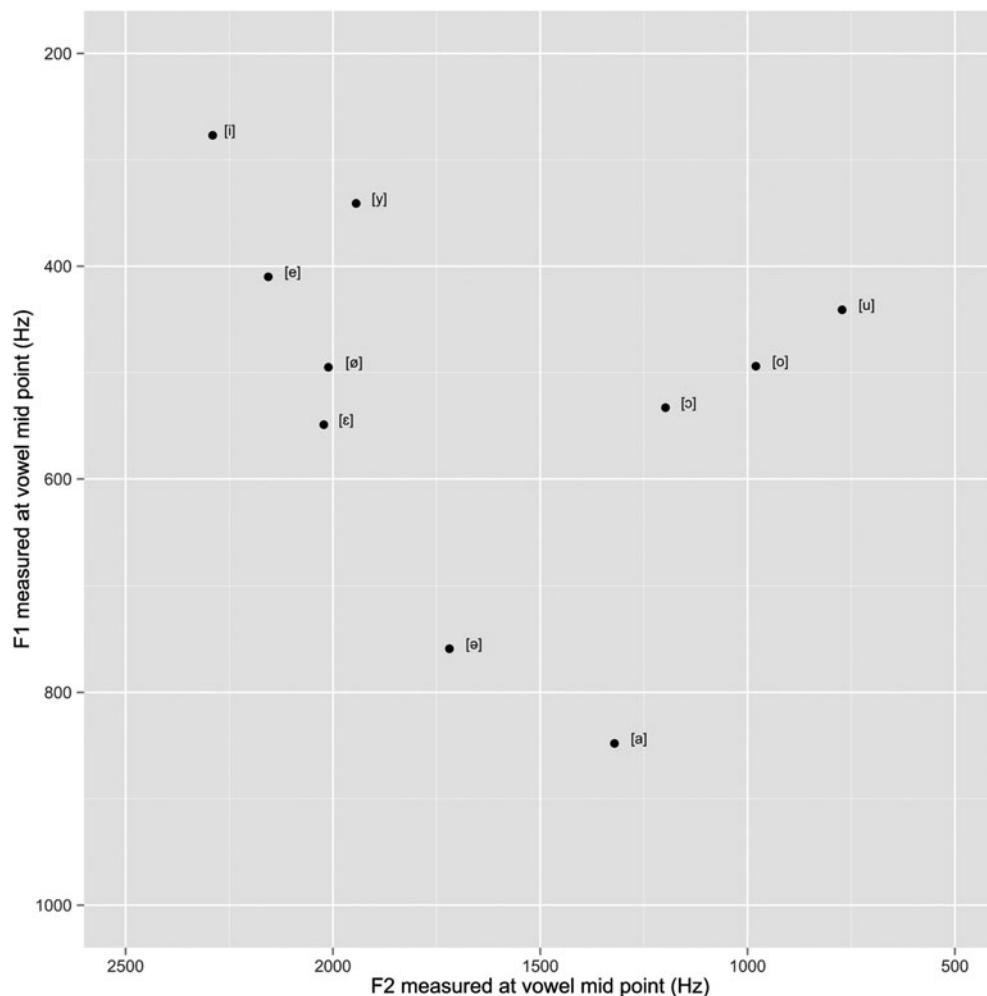


Figure 1 Mean F1-F2 plot of monophthongs from a combination of lexical items.

An acoustic chart of the monophthongs for Saint-Martin-en-Haut is shown in Figure 1. This figure is based on the speech of one native male speaker. Mean F1 and F2 measurements were taken at the vowel mid point from a combination of lexical items.

Latin tonic free A is retained as /a/ in Francoprovençal, which in SF became /e/ in open syllables, and /ɛ/ in closed syllables. However, in St. Martin-en-Haut, a later development took place, whereby /a/ is typically realised as [ɔ] in tonic free syllables, e.g. NASUM > *nās* [nɔ] ‘nose’: this feature is unique to *les monts du Lyonnais*. Moreover, when Latin tonic free A is preceded by a palatal consonant, in these varieties of Francoprovençal, it is raised to [i], e.g. MANDUCARE > *mangier* [mɪ̃ʒi]. Additionally, this lexical item illustrates the presence of nasal /ĩ/ in Francoprovençal generally, which was a feature of Old French, but which lowered to /ɛ̃/ in Middle French.

Francoprovençal preserves a number of unstressed final vowels. For example, unstressed Latin atonic A is maintained as /a/, e.g. TABULAM > *trâbla* [tʁɔbla] ‘table’, which also undergoes raising to [i] when preceded by a palatal, e.g. VACCAM > *vache* [vaʃi] ‘cow’. A number of Lyonnais varieties have preserved Latin masculine atonic U as /ɔ/, and, moreover,

it is common for this to be generalised as a masculine marker to other nouns, e.g. *avoglo* [a'vygjo] 'blind person'. Despite the variability in final vowels present in Francoprovençal, there is often a reduced vocalic quality in connected speech, and so schwa is also common in unstressed syllables.³

Diphthongs

Diphthongs in St. Martin-en-Haut, as in *les monts du Lyonnais* generally, are formed by the glides /w/ and /j/ + a syllabic nucleus.⁴ Both rising and falling diphthongs are permissible, e.g. *ouè* ['wa] 'yes', *bouètar* [bwe'tajə] 'limp'. However, certain Latin vowels that became rising diphthongs in SF, such as Ē, Ī and Ĕ, typically maintain their medieval monophthongal qualities in *les monts du Lyonnais* (see Duraffour 1932 for details). For example, Ē, Ī > /wa/ and Ĕ > /je/ in SF are realised in St. Martin-en-Haut as /ɛ/ and /i/, respectively, e.g. *pèsson* ['pɛsɔ̃] 'fish' and *pi* ['pi] 'foot'.

Stress

Owing to the fact that Francoprovençal retains a number of Latin atonic vowels, the stress pattern can vary and can fall on either paroxytonic or oxytonic syllables (compare *cela* [sə'la] 'that' and *sela* ['səla] 'chair'). As with the Occitan varieties, this feature differentiates these Lyonnais varieties of Francoprovençal markedly from SF.

Recorded passage

The following reading passage comes from the 18th-century Lyonnais story *Le sonneur d'Albigny* ('The Bell Ringer of Albigny', Villefranche 1891: 204), and was read by an older male speaker, native to St. Martin-en-Haut. In reciting the text, the informant produced some false starts, and these are marked in that transcription with '[...]'.

Phonetic transcription

- 1 [ɔ̃ fy yna 'takɪbla ʒək'no [...] pa 'ljɔ̃ 'kə səla kə dy 'nu ək'təbɛə | 'mil
- 2 set sã [...] nɔ'nãta tɛə | asje'zi 'pɛ ləkmo də la kɔ̃vɛs'jɔ̃ | səla 'bila 'ajə
- 3 bata'jo | 'du mɛ 'tɔta sə'lətə | 'nɔ pa la ɛɔjɔ'to [...] 'mɛ pa la ɛɛpɪ'blika
- 4 le'gala 'kɔ̃tɛa la mɔ̃tɛni [...] 'kajə bətə [...] | 'dɛjɔ̃ la 'lwe lə ʒɪkɔ̃'dɛ e
- 5 tu lə mɔ̃de'do e 'kə ɔ̃vɛk'novə pa la 'tɛkɛk | la 'dɛfɛsa 'nɛfʃjə [...] 'ply
- 6 'pɔsɪbla | pa ɛpa'ʃi lə myska'dɛ | nɔ [...] ki ba'jɪvɔ̃ [...] yzasje'zi də
- 7 ɛk'kɛyto də sɔ'dokə | [...] du vazi'naʒɔ̃ la kɔ̃vɔ̃'sjɔ̃ 'ajə 'fɛ əna ɛɔ'so |
- 8 də 'tu lu ʒwɛ'no də [...] diz'wi a vɛt 'jã | e pa ka'so 'tə ljɛ | ɛtɛkə 'mi lə
- 9 lijɔ̃'ne e lə fœ'e'zjɛ | [...] 'kə vɔ̃'jã 'ju | ba'ʃi la 'mã | lajə kə'po pa lə mi
- 10 'tũ lə dəpɛk'təmɛ [...] də 'ɛɔn e 'lwaɛ | 'lə nan a'jə fa 'du | 'lə ɛɔnə
- 11 dina 'pɔɛ e la 'lɛdi də lɔ'tɛa

Francoprovençal has no written standard, and most speakers in *les monts du Lyonnais* who do produce dialectal written texts will opt for their own individual phonetic spelling system (see Tuailleon 2004). The orthographic transcription presented below and throughout is, therefore, based on a proposed multidialectal orthography, termed *Orthographe de référence B* or 'Reference Orthography B' (ORB) (Stich, Gouvert & Favre 2003). As a result, orthographic forms can be different from transcribed forms. However, while speakers are now beginning to produce texts in ORB, it should be stressed that this orthography is yet to be accepted by the majority of dialect-speaking communities (see Matthey & Meune 2012, Kasstan 2014). As it would be impossible to transcribe recordings using every available phonetic-spelling

³ In the Lyonnais varieties of Francoprovençal, the final vowel is reduced to [ə] in the plurals of feminine singular nouns where a singular ends in /i/ (e.g. *clloche* ['kjoʃi] 'bell' and *clloches* ['kjoʃə] 'bells').

⁴ The author acknowledges that these are CV units, strictly speaking, but adheres to the tradition that they are considered diphthongs in the Romance linguistics literature.

system, ORB has been chosen here in line with Martin's (2006) dialect reference manual for the Lyonnais region. The speaker who provided the recording of the story was familiar with ORB, and was able to read the passage without any problems.

Orthographic transcription with free translation

1 O fut 'na tèrribla jornâ por Liyon que cela-que du nôf octobro mile
 2 sèpt cent nonanta trèze. Assiègiêe per l'armâ de la Convèncion, ceta vela aviève
 3 batalyê doux mês tota solèta, nan por la Royôtât, mas por la Rèpublica
 4 légâle, contra la Montagne qu'aviève betâ dehôr la louè los Girondins et
 5 tôs los moderâs, et que govèrnâve per la tèrror. La dèfensa n'étâve ples
 6 possibla. Por empachiér los Muscadins (niom qu'ils balyèvent ux assiègiês) de
 7 recrutar des sordâts de lo vesinâjo, la Convèncion aviève fêt 'na rossâ
 8 de tôs los jouens de dix-et-huét a vengt ans, et por cassar tôs liems entre-mié los
 9 Liyonês et los Forèziens que volièvent lyors y balyér la man, el aviève copâ
 10 per lo méten lo dèpartement de Rhône-et-Loire; el nen aviève fât doux: Lo Rôno
 11 d'una pârt et la Lêre de l'ôtra.

1 It was a terrible day for Lyons the ninth of October
 2 seventeen hundred and ninety three. Besieged by the Convention army, this city had
 3 fought alone for two months, not for the Monarchy, but for the lawful
 4 Republic, against The Mountain who had placed beyond the law the Girondists and
 5 all moderates, and who governed through terror. Defending the city was no longer
 6 possible. To stop the Muscadins (the name given to the besieged) from
 7 recruiting soldiers in the vicinity, the Convention ordered a draft
 8 of all young men between eighteen and twenty years old and to cut all ties between
 9 the Lyonnais, and the Foréziens who wanted to help, the Convention divided right
 10 down the middle the department of Rhône-et-Loire, forming two: the Rhône
 11 on one side and the Loire on the other.

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