

Syncretism Variation in Gallo-Romance

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Structure of the talk

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- 2) Person and number syncretism Western Romance
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1. Introduction: syncretism and suppletion

Deviations of the strict one-to-one correspondence (isomorphism)

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|--|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) deviation of isomorphism in lexical morphology | one meaning → many forms | one form → many meanings |
| in inflectional morphology | synonymy | homonymy |
| | stem allomorphy / suppletion | syncretism |
| | French 'to go' {aller}: | French 'to speak' {parler}: |
| | [v-]: {v-ais} ¹ , [al-]: {all-ons} | [paʁ]: 1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3PL |
| | [ir-]: {ir-ai} | PRES.IND = PRES.SUBJ |
| | | (1 st conjugation) |

2. Person and number syncretism Western Romance

2.1. Person syncretism in Ibero-Romance

(2) <i>beber / beure</i> 'to drink'	Galician	Portuguese	Spanish	Catalan
1SG = 3SG IMPF.IND	bebia	bebia	bebía	bevia
1SG = 3SG PLQPF.IND	bebera	bebera		
1SG = 3SG COND	beberia	beberia	bebería	beuria
1SG = 3SG PRES.SUBJ	beba	beba	beba	begui
1SG = 3SG IMPF.SUBJ	bebese	bebesse	bebiera / bebiese	begués
1SG = 3SG FUT.SUBJ	beber	beber	(bebiera)	

No syncretism at all in the PRES.IND partial paradigm.

¹ The segmentation of the forms [ve], [va] et [vō] into stem and desinence is problematic. The distribution of stems beginning with *v-* and *al-* respectively is not affected by this.

2.2. Syncretism in Gallo-Romance

(3) <i>parler</i> / 'sing' / <i>prêdzê</i> 'speak' / <i>eimâ</i> 'love'	Standard French	Oïl: Lorrain (Kl.-Rb.)	Franco- provençal: Valdôtain	Occitan: ² Haut- Limousin	Romansh: Sursilvan (AIS 10)
PRES.IND	[paʁ]	[ʃât]	prêdze	eimâ	['la.ve]
	1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3PL	1SG = 2SG = 3SG	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 2PL	1SG = 3SG ³
		[ʃâ 'tâ]		aimen	
		1PL = 3PL		1PL = 3PL	
IMPF.IND	[paʁ 'lɛ]	[ʃâ 'tɛ]	prêdzae	eimavo	[no forms given]
	1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3PL	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 3SG	1SG = 3SG	
		[ʃâ 'ten]	prêdzaon	eimôvâ	
		1PL = 3PL	1PL = 3PL	2SG = 2PL	
				eimôvan	
				1PL = 3PL	

Other person / number syncretisms exist, e.g. French [paʁlɔ 'ʁɛ] 1SG = 2PL FUT.IND, [paʁlɔ 'ʁa] 2SG = 3SG FUT.IND, [paʁlɔ 'ʁø] 1PL = 3PL FUT.IND, [paʁlɔ 'ʁɛ] 1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3PL COND.

1st hypothesis:

- **Syncretism is the paradigm structuring principle in Gallo-Romance verb morphology organising the distribution of stems in suppletive paradigms.**

3. Theoretical hypotheses on the operation of syncretism

Carstairs-McCarthy (1984): distinction between 'true' syncretism / neutralisation and take-over.

Take-over in Latin future

(4) <i>regere</i>	aspect	imperfective			
	tense / mood	FUT.IND		PRES.SUBJ	
	voice	active	passive	active	passive
	1SG	regam	regar	regam	regar
	2SG	reges	regeris	regas	regaris
	3SG	reget	regetur	regat	regatur
	1PL	regemus	regemur	regamus	regamur
	2PL	regetis	regemini	regatis	regamini
	3PL	regent	regentur	regant	regantur

- (5) *laudabo* and *monebo* realise the properties {1SG FUT.IND} and *laudem* and *moneam* realise the properties {1SG PRES.SUBJ}.

Neutralisation ('true' syncretism)

(6)		2 nd declension, M	3 rd declension, M	1 st declension, F	3 rd declension, N
	SG NOM	dominus	cōsul	cūra	fulgur
	DAT	dominō	cōsulī	cūrāe	fulgurī
	ABL	dominō	cōnsule	cūrā	fulgure
	PL DAT	dominīs	cōnsulibus	cūrīs	fulguribus
	ABL	dominīs	cōnsulibus	cūrīs	fulguribus

2nd hypothesis:

- **Syncretism in the Gallo-Romance verb paradigm emerges as a result of a take-over process and not as morphology-driven neutralisation.** (Though phonology-driven neutralisation through sound change exists causing syncretism by e.g. the loss of a consonant, cf. Spanish 1SG = 3SG IMPF.IND and PRES.SUBJ syncretisms.)

² Languedocian shows no syncretism at all in the PRES.IND partial paradigm.

³ Most varieties show no syncretism at all in the PRES.IND partial paradigm, the 1SG desinence being [-ɛ].

4. Suppletion in Gallo-Romance

Suppletion in the verb 'to go' < IRE x VADERE x AMBULARE / *AMBITARE / *AMNARE in PRES.IND

(7) <i>aller</i> / [na'le] / <i>allé</i> / (ò)nâ / <i>ir</i>	Standard French	Oïl: Lorrain (Kl.-Rb.)	Franco- provençal: Valdôtain	Occitan: Haut- Limousin	Romansh: Sursilvan (DRG S 70-74)
1SG	vais [vɛ]	[ve:]	(v)ó	vau / vò	[vɔn] ⁴
2SG	vas [va]	[ve:]	va(t)	vâ	[vas]
3SG	va [va]	[ve:]	va(t)	vai	[vɔ]
1PL	allons [a'lø]	[võ]	allèn	van	[máin]
2PL	allez [a'le]	[a'le:]	allade	vâ	[máis]
3PL	vont [võ]	[võ]	van	van	[vɔn]
syncretism	2SG = 3SG	1SG = 2SG = 3SG, 1PL = 3PL	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 2PL, 1PL = 3PL	1SG = 3PL
syncretism in 1 st conjugation	1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3 PL	1SG = 2SG = 3SG, 1PL = 3PL	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 2PL, 1PL = 3PL	1SG = 3SG
imperative	va, allons, allez	[no forms given]	va, allèn, allade	vai, nan, nâ	[vɔ, mái]

Other Lorrain varieties (e.g. Altweier/Aubure) use [a'lø] for both 1PL = 3PL, i.e. different suppletive patterns may evolve from the same syncretic constraints.

Suppletion in the verb 'to be' < (*)ESSE(RE) in PRES.IND

(8) <i>être</i> / [e:t] / <i>être</i> / <i>eisse</i> / <i>esser</i>	Standard French	Oïl: Lorrain (Kl.-Rb.)	Franco- provençal: Valdôtain	Occitan: Haut- Limousin	Romansh: Sursilvan (DRG S 72)
1SG	suis [sui]	[sø]	si(t)	sai	[sun]
2SG	es [ɛ]	[a]	é(t)	sei	[áis]
3SG	est [ɛ]	[a]	è(t)	ei	[ɛ (ái)]
1PL	sommes [sɔm]	[sɔ]	sèn	soun	[ésɛn]
2PL	êtes [ɛt]	[ɔʷ]	éte	sei	[ésɛs]
3PL	sont [sɔ]	[sɔ]	són	soun	[ɛn (áin)]
syncretism	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 3SG, 1PL = 3PL	-	2SG = 2PL, 1PL = 3PL	-
syncretism in 1 st conjugation	1SG = 2SG = 3SG = 3 PL	1SG = 2SG = 3SG, 1PL = 3PL	2SG = 3SG	2SG = 2PL, 1PL = 3PL	1SG = 3SG
imperative	sois, soyez, soyez	[no forms given]	[no forms given]	ch(i)â / siâ, sian / ch(i)an, siâ / ch(i)â	[no forms given]

Results:

- **The different syncretic patterns existing in Gallo-Romance seem to affect suppletive patterns:**
- In Lorrain, the syncretism 1PL = 3PL requires the presence of the *v*-stem in the 1PL of 'to go'; in Haut-Limousin, the syncretisms 2SG = 2PL and 1PL = 3PL require the presence of the *v*-stem in the 2PL and 1PL of 'to go' (in Haut-Limousin the *s*-stem is used in 2SG and 2PL of 'to be'). (But neither Romansh Sursilvan (both verbs) nor Francoprovençal Valdôtain (verb 'to be') provide evidence for any influence in their respective partial paradigms.)
- **Suppletion seems to be constrained by syncretism, which exerts pressure throughout the morphological system. There is evidence for take-over of the *v*-stem.**
- **Take-over and not neutralisation seems to prevail in Gallo-Romance verb morphology.**

⁴ Most varieties have [món] (S 75-76) or [món(dal)] (S 1-6), thus no syncretism.

5. Diachronic development, analysis, and discussion

- (9) Standard Modern French
 [ale]: 1SG [vɛ], 2SG = 3SG [va]
 [avvaɔ]: 1SG [e / ɛ], 2SG = 3SG [a]
 [ɛtɔ]: 1SG [sɔ], 2SG = 3SG [ɛ]
- (10) [paɛle]: 1SG = 2SG = 3SG PRES.IND: [paɛl]
- (11) Old French (up to the end of the 12th century)
acoler: 1SG *acol*, 2SG *acoles*, 3SG *acole* (cf. Joly 2002: 113ff.)
- (12) From the 14th century onwards
 a. je mande, il mande (La Queste, Villehardouin)
 b. je demande, il demande (Joinville, early 14th century)
 c. je deffent, il deffent (La Queste)
 d. je rent, il rent (La Queste)

In the *QLR* (1175), we can find 1SG *mand* vs. 3SG *mande* and 1SG *rend* vs. 3SG *rende*. In *Sebourc* (1350), we can find *tu laisse* and *il laisse* which sustains our hypothesis.

- (13) a. <je deffent> (Queste), without desinence
 b. <je combate> (Queste), with desinence {-e}
 c. <il rent> (Queste), without desinence
 d. <il aporte> (Queste), with desinence {-e}
- (14) a. comander: je comant (Queste)
 b. mander: je mande (Queste)
- (15) a. mettre: je met, il met (Chronique de Morée, 1322)
 b. demander: je demande, il demande (Sebourc, 1350)
 c. prier: je prie, il prie (Sebourc, 1350)
 d. jurer: je jure, il jure (Sebourc, 1350)
 e. donner: je donne, il donne (Sebourc, 1350)
 f. garder: je gart, il gart (Roman de Thèbes, 1150)
 g. rendre: je rent, il rent (Roman de Thèbes, 1150)
 h. parler: je parle, il parle (Chart, Q inv., 1422 ; Compl., 1424)
 i. aidier: je aide, il aide (Berinus, 1350)

- (16) Variation in the 1SG and the 3SG PRES.IND
 a. je pri, je prie (Sebourc, 1350)
 b. je jur, je jure (Sebourc, 1350)
 c. je demant, je demande (Sebourc, 1350)
 d. il entent, il endend (La Queste, 1225)
 e. il rent, il rend (La Queste 1225)

- (17) PRES.IND mander deffendre cuidier
 1SG mande deffent cuit
 2SG mandes deffendes cuides
 3SG mande deffent cuide
 1PL mandons deffendons cuidons
 2PL mandez deffendez cuidiez
 3PL mandent deffendent cuident

6. Conclusion

- We have adduced some arguments that in Gallo-Romance person syncretism is one predominant pattern structuring inflectional paradigms.
- In some Gallo-Romance varieties, suppletive stem allomorphs are distributed in accordance with the respective predominant syncretic pattern(s). Thus, the distribution of stem allomorphy is constrained by syncretism.
- The third person can spread its form to the first and also the other way round.
- The syncretic patterns in the Gallo-Romance suppletive verbal paradigms result from a take-over process, rather than from a true morphological neutralisation.
- The diachronic development of the French singular present indicative person syncretism does not result from a single and simple sound change. Again, it is the effect of a take-over process.
- We do not question that phonological processes create inflectional homonymy. But at least as far as the development of the Gallo-Romance verbal systems is concerned, there is no indication that inflectional homonymies have emerged as the result of a process of purely morphology-induced neutralisation.
- The analysis of Gallo-Romance syncretic patterns does not confirm any morphological markedness hypotheses.

Dialectal sources

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 Limousin: Pays du Haut-Limousin, Haute-Vienne (87) – Ruben (1866).
 Lorrain: K[ein]-R[um]b[ach] = Petit-Rombach & Altweier = Aubure, Sainte-Croix-aux-Mines, Vallées vosgiennes d'Alsace, Haut-Rhin (68) – Urtel (1902).
 Romansh, Sursilvan: DRG S 70-74 = Sedrun, Camischolas, Rueras, Selva, Tschamut – DRG s.v. *esser I, ir*; AIS 10 = [Camischollas](#); Tavetsch (Tuietsch) – AIS Map 1683.

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