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Meteorological Pronouns and Partial Subject Paradigms in Northern Occitan Dialects

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'Null Subject Parameter'

Partial 'null subject':

stage n: full paradigm (French)

stage 0: no Subject clitic (Latin)

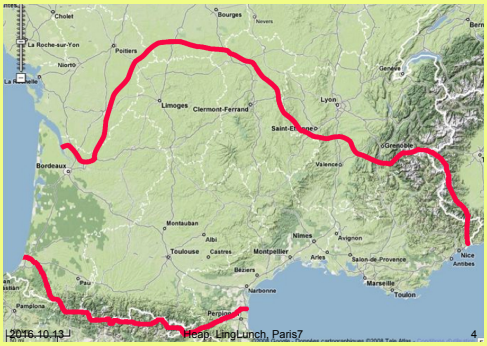
Postulate: The diachronic change is revealed by diatopic variation.

Null Subject

[L]anguages that split ... pro-drop systems are not abundant, but they are sufficiently common to pose a very real and interesting problem for the structural treatment of pro-drop. [...] **The place at which systems split also invites attention.** Are the restrictions on which subjects may be phonetically null predictable cross-linguistically, or are the constraints always going to be idiosyncratic to each language?

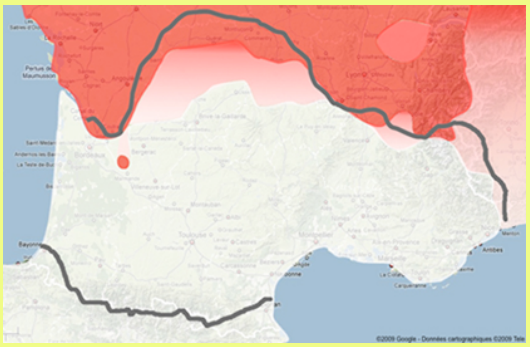
(Meyerhoff 1997: 97)

OCCITANIA



Occitan Dialects

	LECTOURE (Gers)	LES MATELLES (Hérault)	VILLELAURE (Vaucluse)	LES TERNES (Cantal)
	to be	*to be*	*to be*	*to be*
P1	suj	suj	sjɛw	ʃu
P2	ɛs	sjɛs	sjɛs	ʃɔʃ
P3	ɛs	ɛz	ɛz	ej
P4	ɛ̃n	sjẽ	sjẽ	ʃẽ
P5	ɛts	sjɛz	sjas	ʃɛʃ
P6	sũⁿ	su	sũ	ʃũ
it rains	plˈaɔ	plˈɔw	plˈɔw	plˈɛw



 Thanks to Guylaine Brun-Trigaud

Northern Occitan Dialects (NODs)

	Le Mont-Dore (1705)	Chamalières-sur-Loire (1815)	Vélines (1634)	Eymoutiers (1604)	Coussac-Bonneval (1608)	Tayac (338)	St-Pardoux-la-Rivière (1612)
	to be	*to have*	*to be*	*to be*	*to be*	*to be*	*to be*
P1	se	ju ɛj	sej	jo se	se	sɛj	sø
P2	t se	ɒ	te ʃeʲ	te se	ty se	tœ se	ty se
P3	e	a	ej	ej	w e	ew 'ej	w / l e
P4	sã	avɛ^{m}	sɔ̃	nu sũ	nu ʃũ	sõ^{n}	nu sũ
P5	sɛ	ave	bu ʃej	vu se	vu se	vuzaw se	vu se
P6	sɔ̃	ɒ̃	sɔ̃	sũ	sũ	zi sõ^{n}	i / la sũ

Northern Italian Dialects (NIDs)

	BREIL-SUR-ROYA	AIROLE	ROCHETTA NERVINA	TENDE	SAORGE
	to leave	*to sleep*	*to sleep*	*to sing*	*to understand*
P1	p'aʀti	d'ɔrmu	d'ɔrmu	k'antu	e kap'iʃɔ
P2	ti p'aʀte	ti d'ɔrmi	ti d'ɔrmi	ti k'anta	ti kap'iʃɔ
P3	aʀ p'aart	a d'ɔrme	**u / a** d'ɔrme	aɻ / a k'anta	ə / a kap'iʃɔ
P4	paʀt'imà	durm'emu	dorm'emu	kant'amu	e kapiʃ'emɔ
P5	paʀt'i	durm'ei	dorm'ei	kant'ai	e kapiʃ'ei
P6	p'aʀtu	in d'ɔrme	i d'ɔrme	li / le k'anta^{n}	e kap'iʃuŋ
it rains	tʃ'ɔu	tʃ'ø:ve	tʃ'ø:ve	aɻ tʃ'ou	ə tʃ'ɔu

Previous analyses 1

Going around the 'block' (of pronouns)

	Renzi & Vanelli (1983)	Heap (2000)	Cabredo Hofherr (2004)	Oliviéri (2009)
stage 0				ø
stage 1	**P2**		**P2**	**P2**
stage 2	P3	**P2,** P6, P3	P3	P3
stage 3	P6		P6	P6
stage 4	P5			Expletive
stage 5	P4	P4, P1, P5	P1	P1
stage 6	P1		P4 and P5	P4 and P5

Previous analyses 2

Heap 2002b

Generalisation 1:

In grammars with split subject pronoun paradigms (having from 1 to 5 persons used regularly), Block A pronouns (2sg, 3sg & 3pl) will be favoured, while block B pronouns (1pl, 1sg & 2pl) will be disfavoured.

Generalisation 2:

In a grammar which uses more than one subject pronoun (near-) categorically, the 2sg must be present.

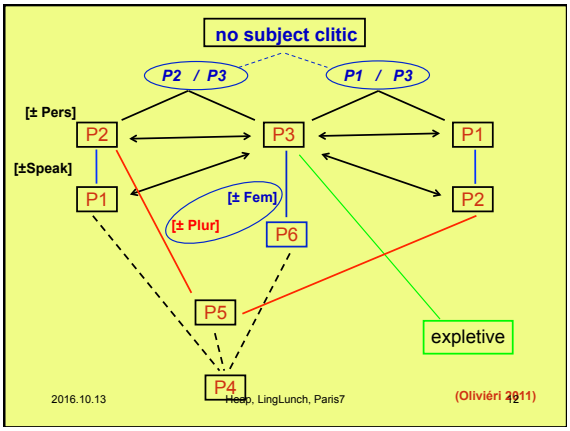
→ **P2 : among the first SCI to appear**

Previous analyses 3

Oliviéri 2011

As the trigger is the necessity to distinguish different persons, what needs to be considered are not the actual markers, but rather **what is distinguished and how it is distinguished**. Thus, what needs to be parameterized is this distinction, not the emergence of the clitic itself: when a dialect has to distinguish P2 from P3, one or the other, or both, can be expressed first by a clitic, hence the observed diversity.

(Oliviéri 2011: 248)



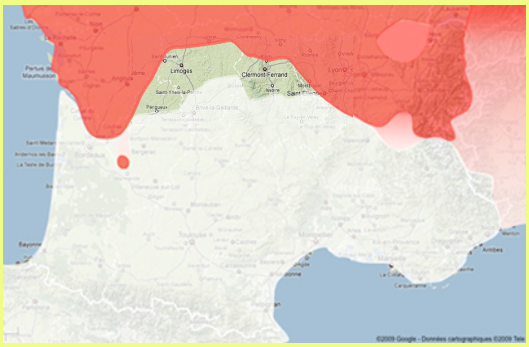
(Oliviéri 2011)

Previous analyses 3

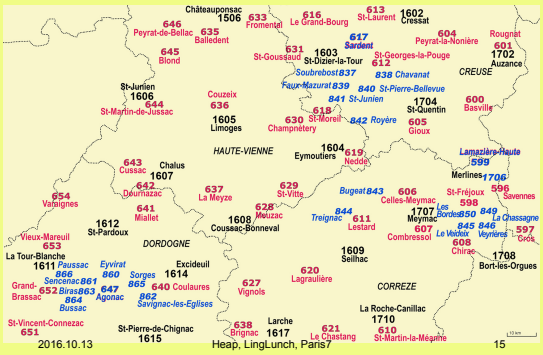
Oliviéri 2011

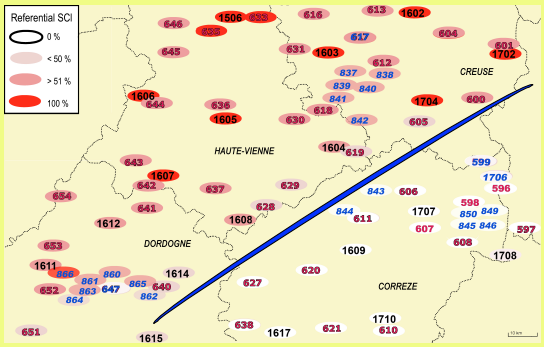
Some constraints exist: P4, P5, and P6 clitics never emerge first; P2 clitic is never the last SCl to appear; P5 and P6 never occur before P2 and P3.
So it is *not* the case that 'everything is possible'.

(Oliviéri 2011: 248)



ALF + ALAL + NEC





Thanks to Guylaine Brun-Trigaud

ko : a different subject pronoun

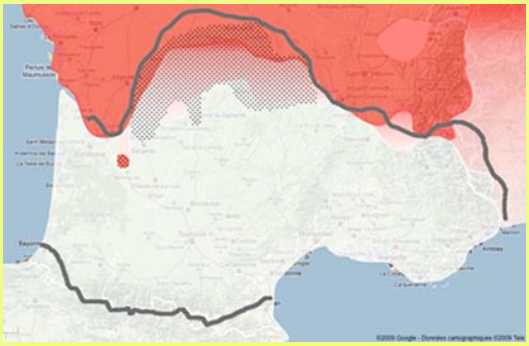
ko emerges in the dialect of Corrèze as the **first subject pronoun** which starts to be obligatorily used. Our speculation is that it is the first element to introduce the change of this dialect from a null subject language to a non-null subject language. In other words, **it triggers the change with respect to the pro-drop status of the dialect**.

(Kaiser, Oliviéri, Palasis 2013: 19)

Meteorological subjects are the first subject pronouns to appear

Meteorological *ko* (NODs)

	TREIGNAC	SAINT-EXUPÉRY-LES-ROCHES	MERLINES
"to go"			
Pe1	vɔw	vɔw	e
Pe2	va	va	a
Pe3	vaj	vaj	aj
Pe4	anã	anɛ̃	avæ̃
Pe5	ana	ana	ave
Pe6	vɔ̃	vɔ̃	ũ
"it is raining"	ka pløw	kɔ pløj	kɔ pløj
"it is hailing"	ka grɛlø	kɔ gʁɛlə	kɔ gʁɛlɔ



Presence of *ko*

Meteorological verbs : frequencies

	Corrèze	Dordogne	Creuse	Type	Stat	Mood-Tense
Oui, ça pleut bien.	100%	100%	100%	root		Ind Prst
Il pleut ?	100%	100%	93%	root	interr	Ind Prst
Il pleut.	88%	100%	100%	root		Ind Prst
Moi ça me plaît pas quand il grêle.	100%	75%	86%	circ		Ind Prst
Il fait froid ***et pleut.***	81%	75%	100%	coord		Ind Prst
Il ne pleut plus maintenant.	57%	63%	100%	root	neg	Ind Prst
Il a beaucoup plu hier.	50%	56%	100%	root		pc (+aux)
Avant il neigeait tous les ans.	29%	75%	86%	root		Impft
Non, il ne pleut pas.	50%	50%	86%	root	neg	Ind Prst
J'aimerais qu'il pleuve !	0%	50%	64%	embedded		Subj Impft
Il faut qu'il pleuve !!!	0%	25%	79%	embedded		Subj Prst
Il faudrait qu'il ne pleuve plus.	14%	13%	71%	embedded		Subj Impft
Espérons qu'il ne pleuve pas !	0%	25%	64%	embedded		Subj Prst
Tu crois qu'il pleuvra demain ?	0%	13%	50%	embedded		Fut

Meteorological expressions : frequencies

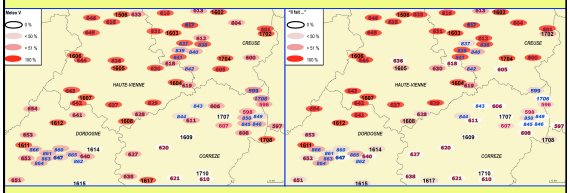
	Corrèze	Dordogne	Creuse	Type	Stat	Mood-Tense
Oui, ça pleut bien.	100%	100%	100%	root		Ind Prst
Il pleut ?	100%	100%	93%	root	interr	Ind Prst
Il pleut.	88%	100%	100%	root		Ind Prst
Moi ça me plaît pas quand il grêle.	100%	75%	86%	circ		Ind Prst
Il fait froid ***et pleut.***	81%	75%	100%	coord		Ind Prst
Il ne pleut plus maintenant.	57%	63%	100%	root	neg	Ind Prst
Il a beaucoup plu hier.	50%	56%	100%	root		pc (+aux)
Avant il neigeait tous les ans.	29%	75%	86%	root		Impft
Non, il ne pleut pas.	50%	50%	86%	root	neg	Ind Prst
J'aimerais qu'il pleuve !	0%	50%	64%	embedded		Subj Impft
Il faut qu'il pleuve !!!	0%	25%	79%	embedded		Subj Prst
Il faudrait qu'il ne pleuve plus.	14%	13%	71%	embedded		Subj Impft
Espérons qu'il ne pleuve pas !	0%	25%	64%	embedded		Subj Prst
Tu crois qu'il pleuvra demain ?	0%	13%	50%	embedded		Fut
Il fait froid et pleut.	25%	75%	86%	root		Ind Prst
Il fait nuit.	11%	63%	83%	root		Ind Prst
Quel temps il fait ?	13%	25%	86%	root	interr	Ind Prst
S'il fait beau demain,	0%	25%	50%	circ		Ind Prst

ko in meteorological expressions

Question	846 Veyrières (Corrèze)	599 Lamazière-Hte (Corrèze)	865 Sorges (Dordogne)	863 Biras (Dordogne)	617 Sardent (Creuse)	839 Faux-Mazurat (Creuse)	
Il pleut.	kɔ plø	ka plø	ko plo	ko pl'ou	ka plo	ko ploː	*"it is raining"*
Il fait froid.	faj fʁɛ	ka fe fʁɛ	ko faj fʁɛ	ko faj frɛ	ka fe frɛ	ko fe fʁɛ	*"it is cold"*
Il fait nuit.	faj njøj	fa niː	ko faj ne	ko faj ne	o ka fe nœj	ko faj ne	*"it is dark"*
Quel temps il fait ?	ka tẽ fe	kˈɔw tẽ fe	kˈaw tũ faj ko	k'aw tẽ faj	k'aw tẽ k fe	k'au tẽ faj ko k'au tẽ ko fɛj	*"what is the weather ?"*
S'il fait beau…	ʃi fe be tẽ	ʃi faj bu	si faj bʁ'ave tẽ	ʃi ko faj bũ	si ka fe bu	si ko fe bu	*"if the weather is good"*

ko in meteorological expressions

Meteorological Verbs **Other meteorological expressions**



Meteorological verbs > Meteorological expressions

ko with impersonal verbs

	Corrèze	Dordogne	Creuse	Type	
Il se peut qu'Antoine l'accompagne.	71%	63%	50%	il se peut	"it is possible that…"
Il est tard.	0%	38%	67%	il est	"it is late"
Il paraît qu'il est fatigué.	17%	13%	0%	paraître	"it appears that…"
Il me semble qu'ils sont bons amis.	0%	0%	17%	sembler	"it seems that…"
Il me semble qu'elles vivent toujours ensemble.	0%	0%	0%		
Il me semble qu'elle dit …	0%	0%	0%		

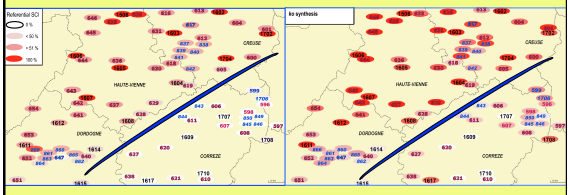
Question	843 Bugeat (Corrèze)	599 Lamazière-Hte (Corrèze)	866 Paussac et St V. (Dordogne)	865 Sorges (Dordogne)	842 Royère-de-Vass. (Creuse)	
Il se peut que…	ka s pˈɔ kɔ…	ka sə pɔ kə…	ko ʃø pɔ k…	ko ʃø po k…	ka s po ke…	*"it is possible that…"*
Il est tard.	ɛ taʁ	ɛ tˈaʁə	k ɛj ter	ke l teʁ	k ɛ tˈæʁə	*"it is late"*
Il paraît qu'il est fatigué.	paʁˈɛ k ɛ gytʃˈi	ka paʁˈɛ k…	perˈe k…	ko peʁˈe k…	paʁˈe k…	*"it seems that he is tired"*
Il me semble qu'ils sont bons amis.	mə ʃˈɑ̃blə k…	i mo sˈɑ̃blɔ kə…	me ʃˈɛ̃ble ke…	mə ʃˈɛ̃blə kə…	ka mo sˈɛ̃blə ke…	*It seems to me that they are good friends*
Il me semble qu'elle dit que…	mə ʃˈɑ̃blə ke…	mə sˈɑ̃blə ke…	me ʃˈɛ̃ble ke…	me ʃˈɛ̃blo k…	i m sɛ̃blə k…	*"it seems to me that she says that…"*

Progression of ko

stage 1 : Meteorological Verbs
stage 2 : Meteorological expressions
stage 3 : Impersonal Verbs 1 *(it is possible)*
stage 4 : Impersonal Verbs 2 *(it seems)*

Referential subject clitics vs. ko in NODs

Referential Subject Clitics ***ko***



Corrèze	Dordogne	Creuse
33,56%	46,61%	67,36%

Corrèze > Dordogne > Creuse

Getting beyond binary features

	[± Pers]	[± Speak]	[± Fem]	[± Plur]
Pe1	+	+	0	-
Pe2	+	-	0	-
Pe3 masc	-	0	-	-
Pe3 fem	-	0	+	-
Pe4	+	+	0	+
Pe5	+	-	0	+
Pe6 masc	-	0	-	+
Pe6 fem	-	0	+	+
Expletive	0	0	0	0

Feature geometries

Heap 2002b

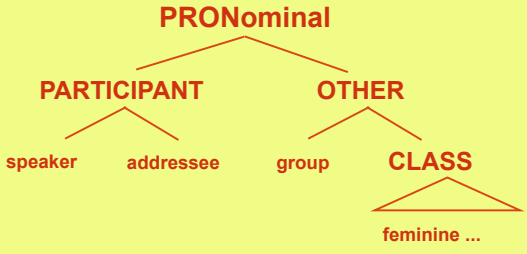
Generalisation 1 and 2 reformulated

→ **underspecification**

In split paradigms, subject pronouns appear first among Referring Expressions which are **not underlyingly specified as including Participant**.
(Heap 2002: 141)

→ **P2 = the least marked (i.e. least specified) subject person**

Feature geometries

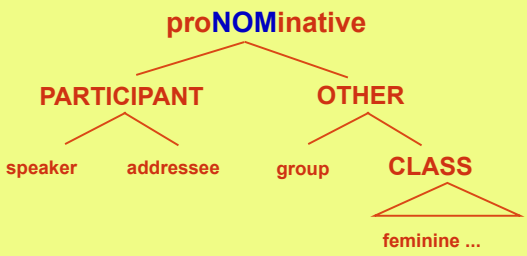


(adapted from Harley & Ritter 2000, 2002)

ako > ko

	Question	846 Veyrières (Corrèze)	863 Biras (Dordogne)	841 La Chassagne (Creuse)	
Subject	Ça te plaît?	kɔ tø plɛ:	ka tø pla:	ka tœ pla	*"Do you like that?"*
	Ça ne fait rien.	kɔ nø faj rø	ko faj re	ka nø fɛj ʁɛ	*"Never mind"*
Object	Pourquoi tu fais ça?	pɐʁkˈe fa kɔ	pɐrkˈe fa: ko	pɐʁ dɐ kɐ tœ fa akˈɔ	*"why are you doing that?"*
	Je veux ça et ça!	vˈɔlo ko ɛ ko	vˈɔle ko d aki e kɔ d aki	i vˈœle kɔ ɛ kɔ	*"I want that and that"*

Feature geometries



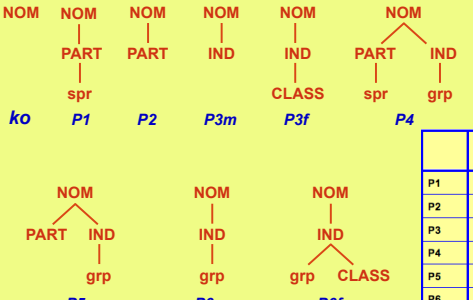
(adapted from Harley & Ritter 2000, 2002)

1SCL = bare NOM

NOM

ko *(generic P3)*

Nine SCL paradigm



	617 Les Chiers (Sardent)
P1	i
P2	ty
P3	o / la
P4	nu
P5	o
P6	j / la
meteo	ka

Conclusions

- **Heap & Oliviéri 2013: Principle of hierarchical dependency relationships between privative features (as opposed free combination of binary features) as a possible property of UG**
- **Parameters: details of which features are expressed and which may be underspecified or default values could be (micro-) parametric choices that vary between grammars that determine the precise shape of each paradigm.**
- **A different starting point in the sequence: KO, a bare NOM clitic, means that the underspecified feature geometry can model the differences in progression in NODs (vs. NIDs)**

Status of *ko*?

Three types of pronouns (Chomsky 1981:325)

	referential	argumental
argument	yes	yes
quasi-argument	no	yes
non-argument	no	no

Cf. Cabredo Hofherr (2000:16)

In other words, Chomsky's distinction between quasi-argument and non-argument pronouns serves as a basis for the explanation of the distribution of *ko* in impersonal constructions in the Occitan dialects of Corrèze.

(Kaiser, Oliviéri, Palasis 2013: 19)

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