

Q Ring Relay Text

Christophe Grandsire

September 12, 2004

1 Narbonese Text

ATTENCEAM, PETIN MÂOU !

Nouem de Diou ! Qu'avvim ?

Nũ, alhère cierte linde vim â nouêtre case, pra cantâre ae pêque petin. Fî tod cue podêvt fêre pra jouiâre coe petin : Fî maidums joucs lecom, li cantó : “deure, meu pêque, deure”, é ajdó. Mas apouès, e petin l’attacó é la lacéro ! La comé puis pierdé as sâoudes apêre fenêstre. Que podêvams fêre ? Ouc, vêremente errâvams prêoutemente na miêrde ! Que feroms ? Nũ, apouès de cuêoucue tiems dovvrms gouardâre e silencie sus o cué avvim. Em mais, mei ne vol cas îre ai policie ! St’êt seïur, lorrs quesceams ne stariom reim biemvenîtes.

2 Pronunciation (IPA)

atã'sã, pə'tẽ 'mau !

'nwẽ də 'dju ! ka'vẽ ?

'nõ, a'ɫer 'sjert 'lẽd 'vẽ a 'nwetr 'kaz, pra kã'tar e 'pek pə'tẽ. 'fi tɔ kə po'de 'fer pra ʒu'jar kə pə'tẽ : 'fi 'mɛdõ 'ʒu lə'kɔ, li kã'to : “'dør, mø 'pek, 'dør”, e aʒ'do. maz a'pwe, ə pə'tẽ lata'ko e la lase'ro ! la co'me pɥi pir'de a 'saudz a'per fə'nestr. kə po'devã 'fer ? 'u, vɛr'mẽt ɛ'ravã prɛut'mãt na mʝerd ! kə fə'rɔ ? 'nõ, a'pwe də 'kɛuk 'tjã dɔ'vrɔ gwar'dar ə si'lãsi syz o ke a'vẽ. ã 'mɛ, 'mɛ nə 'vɔ 'kaz 'ir ɛ po'lisi ! 'stɛ sə'jy, lɔr kɛ'sã nə 'starjɔ 'rẽ bjẽvə'nit.

3 Smooth English Translation

BEWARE OF CHILD!

Oh my God! What happened?

Well, yesterday some good-looking girl came at our place, to sing to the little child. She did everything she could to play with him: she played various games with him, she sang to him: “Sleep, little boy, sleep”, and it did help. But afterwards, the child attacked her and tore her into pieces! He ate her, then threw the remains away through the window. What could we do? Yep, we really were deeply in the shit! What will we do? Well, after some time we’ll just have to stay silent about all this. Moreover, I don’t want to go to the police! Their questions would certainly be unwelcome.

4 Notes on the English Translation

First, a disclaimer: this is not my best translation ever (I mean from Narbonese to English). But it does the job and doesn’t look downright alien, while staying close to the original text.

Then, a small cultural note: the title of the text is chosen as a pun reminding people of “beware of dog” signs. This is because the Narbonese title does just that too. But actually, “beware of dog” signs in Francie and Gaulhe (just like in France *here*) don’t say this anymore. They used to say “attention, chien méchant”, or in Narbonese “attenceam, cam mâou”, but people kept complaining (with some reason) that if the dog was really that naughty, it shouldn’t be allowed roaming freely in a garden, from which it could potentially escape. So today the usual signs are “attention au chien” and “attenceam ae cam”. However, in this case I felt using the old version made better sense, and made the pun nicer, despite the fact that the Limciela text gave a title closer to the newer version. It fits better in the culture, and I would have done the same had the translation to be done in French.

Finally, another cultural note, about the Narbonese word “linde”. This word means “good-looking girl, young woman” and is an obvious borrowing from Spanish “linda”, with the difference that it is only used as noun in Narbonese. This word illustrates perfectly the peculiarities of the evolution of the Narbonese lexicon. This word originally appeared in poems and songs of a single “trouvour” (a modern version of the troubadour, one of the main artistic occupations among the Gaulhóscs). It was found nice enough to be adopted by other trouvours, and eventually found its way into the common spoken and written language. Unlike French which is controlled by a centralising power, the French Academy, which most people ignore most of the time, leading to innovations in lexicon coming usually from the people on the street themselves and having to fight their way up to ever appear in a dictionary, in Narbonese innovations (both lexical and grammatical) come usually from the trouvours, the “poets”, who form a sort of decentralised Academy, without official sanction, but very effective (attending poetry recitals in Gaulhe is as common as going to the cinema *here*). As a result, innovations often end up in the common spoken language last rather than appearing there (the spoken

language is also a source of innovations, but word-play and neologism-making is what *trouvours* mostly do, which is what separates them from poets and singers in other countries and cultures. It means that a single *trouvour* invents new words all the time, usually at least one or two per song or poem. Most are quickly forgotten, but out of all this there are always a few that stick out and come and enrich the vocabulary of everyone). Since innovations are mostly individual rather than group inventions, it explains the numerous quirks in the Narbonese lexicon, and the strange paths semantic shifts have often taken in this language.

5 Grammatical Notes

Narbonese (“Narbonósc” /narbo'nos/ in the language) is a rather run-of-the-mill Romance language when it comes to grammar. Most of its grammatical features can be found in French, Spanish and Portuguese too. Its peculiarities are more to find in the vocabulary. For this reason, this section will be rather short.

Indefinite articles	singular	plural
masculine	um	uns
feminine	une	unes
Definite articles	singular	plural
masculine	e (l' before vowel)	ès
feminine	a (l' before vowel)	as
neuter	o (l' before vowel)	

Table 1: Narbonese articles

Narbonese features:

- Two genders: masculine and feminine. As in French, gender is not always deductible from the form of the word, although words ending in -e are more often than not feminine.
- Two numbers: singular and plural. Plurals can be marked by an ending -s, -es, -x or -z, generally. However, those endings are usually not pronounced, unless phenomenon of liaison.
- Adjectival agreement: adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they complete. They usually follow the noun they complete, but sometimes precede it, especially when they describe a typical characteristic of the noun.
- Adverbs derived from adjectives formed by adding -mente to the feminine form of the adjective: there is another construction adding -é to the root, but you won't see it in this text.

Articles	â	de	em, im	com	père
e	ae	dé	ne	coe	epère
a	ai	da	na	coa	apère
o	au	do	no	co	opère
l'	al'	del'	nel'	col'	pêl'
ès	ais	dès	nès	coes	èpères
as	ais	das	nas	coas	apères
um	aum	dum	num	coem	umpère
une	aune	dune	nune	coene	umpère
ums	aums	dums	nums	coems	umpères
unes	aunes	dunes	nunes	coenes	umpères
Pronouns	â	de	em, im	com	père
mei	ame	dème	nème	mecom	mepère
tei	ate	dête	nête	tecom	tepère
lui	â lui	de lui	nelui	lecom	lepère
lei	â lei	de lei	nelei	lacom	lapère
nós	anes	dênes	nênes	nocom	nopère
vós	aves	dêves	nêves	vocom	vopère
lorr	â lorr	de lorr	nelorr	locom	lopère
sei	asse	desse	nesse	secom	sepère

Table 2: Mergings of articles and pronouns with prepositions

	subject	direct object	indirect object	emphatic
1st singular	iou	me (m' before vowel)	mi (m' before vowel)	mei
2nd singular	tu	te (t' before vowel)	ti (t' before vowel)	tei
3rd sing. masc.	ile	le (l' before vowel)	li (l' before vowel)	lui
3rd sing. fem.	êle	la (l' before vowel)	li (l' before vowel)	lei
3rd sing. neuter		lo (l' before vowel)	li (l' before vowel)	sei
1st plural	nos	nos	noi	nós
2nd plural	vos	vos	voi	vós
3rd pl. masc.	iles	lès	lorr	lorr
3rd pl. fem.	êles	las	lorr	lorr
3rd reflexive		se (s' before vowel)	si (s' before vowel)	sei

Table 3: Narbonese personal pronouns

	sing. masc.	sing. fem.	pl. masc.	pl. fem.
1st sing.	meu	ma	mès	mas
2nd sing.	to	ta	tous	tas
3rd sing.	so	sa	sous	sas
1st pl.	nouêtre	nouêtre	nouès	nouès
2nd pl.	vouêtre	vouêtre	vouès	vouès
3rd pl.	lorr	lorr	lorrs	lorrs

Table 4: Narbonese possessive adjectives

- Articles: as in French, nouns hardly ever appear without article. Narbonese has full sets of indefinite and definite articles, as well as partitive articles that don't appear in this text and thus will be left alone. See Table 1 for a list of those articles.
- Merging of articles and prepositions: this phenomenon, which appears to various degrees in various Romance tongues, is particularly strong in Narbonese. Both the indefinite and definite articles merge with the prepositions â (to), de (of, from), em (at), im (in, into), com (with) and père (by, in, on, through). Check Table 2 for a list of those mergings (check it carefully: the text is full of them).
- Personal pronouns and adjectives: Narbonese has full sets of subject, direct object, indirect object, emphatic and possessive pronouns, as well as possessive adjectives (which agree in gender and number with the noun they complete). They are pretty similar to the French pronominal system. They also merge with prepositions (making Narbonese a Romance tongue with “conjugated” prepositions), but fortunately only with the same prepositions as with the articles (see Table 2 for the list). Note that unlike French, verbs aren't often accompanied with a subject pronoun. However, strangely enough you cannot just omit the subject pronoun when you want to make an impersonal construction (i.e. a construction where the verb has no true subject, like for verbs like plouvîre: to rain). For those constructions, you are obliged to use the pronoun *ste* (st' before vowels) as placeholder for the subject (giving thus *ste pleuvet*: it rains). An absent subject *always* marks a personal subject. See Table 3 for the personal pronouns and Table 4 for the possessive adjectives (they contain all you need).
- Verbs: The Narbonese verbal system is pretty similar to the one in every Western Romance language: four definite moods (indicative, subjunctive, conditional, imperative), four simple tenses (present, imperfect, simple past, future), and the usual corresponding compound tenses formed with the auxiliary *avôre* (to have) with the past participle of the verb, as well as the possible passive voice formed with *stêre*

(to be) with the past participle. Note though that Narbonese features a subjunctive *future* (but then Portuguese has it too), which can be used in main clauses to indicate potentiality (it can mean “maybe”, but also indicate a possible future action —rather than a certain future action— and as such is usually translated by a conditional). Tense and mood use is otherwise pretty similar to what can be found in Portuguese and Spanish. Of course, verbs also feature the usual impersonal forms: infinitive, present and past participle, and the gerund. In this text though, you’ll meet only a few infinitives and past participles.

- Verbal negation: As in French, the negation in Narbonese is discontinuous, formed with the unstressed *ne* (n’ in front of a vowel) in front of the verb, and a second, stressed, word after it. But unlike in French, the second word is variable, depending on the meaning of the verb. The default term is *reim*, but verbs of movement commonly use *pas*, verbs of speech use *palavre*, and verbs indicating will, ability, possibility, desire, etc. . . often use *cas*.
- Written accents: as you probably have noticed, Narbonese uses a wealth of written accents: besides the acute, grave and circumflex accent, it uses also the tilde and the trema, and you’re lucky enough to receive a text where all those accents are represented! You needn’t know why they are there: accents only give pronunciation indications. The thing you *need* to know, however, is that except in some commonly used words (mainly prepositions), the grave and circumflex accents indicate the same thing, but the grave accent is used on the last (written) syllable of the word, while the circumflex is used otherwise. So if a noun, adjective or verb has a grave accent on its last syllable and through some grammatical feature, something is added (like the feminine suffix *-e*) that adds a new syllable at the end, the grave accent must become a circumflex accent. For instance: *avèv*: I had, *avêvams*: we had.

6 Lexicon

General note: unless complex unguessable derivation, nouns will be given here in the singular, and adjectives in the singular masculine. Derived adverbs won’t be given, only the adjective they derive from. Verbs will be listed in the infinitive, but the forms appearing in the text will be given in their descriptions. Words that have already been translated in the previous section are not repeated here.

ajdâre /aʒ'dar/ verb. From Latin ADIUTARE. **ajdó**: third person singular indicative simple past.

alhêre /a'λer/ adverb. Ultimately from Latin HERI.

apouès /a'pwe/ adverb. Ultimately from Latin POST.

attacâre /ata'kar/ verb. Ultimately from Latin ATTINGERE. **attacó**: third person singular indicative simple past.

attemceam /atã'sã/ fem. noun. From Latin ATTENTIO. Used mostly like its French cognate.

avvenîre /avə'nir/ verb. From Latin ADVENIRE. **avvim**: third person singular indicative simple past.

biemvenît /bjēvə'ni/ adj. (derived from a past participle). From Latin BENE + VENIRE. I don't think this one will be a problem for you.

cantâre /kã'tar/ verb. From Latin CANTARE. **cantó**: third person singular indicative simple past.

case /'kaz/ fem. noun. From Latin CASA.

cierte /'sjert/ indefinite adj. From Latin CERTUS. Often used instead of the indefinite article.

comêre /ko'mer/ verb. Cognate to Spanish “comer”. **comé**: third person singular indicative simple past.

cue /kə/ relative pronoun. From Latin QUIS. Only used when the antecedent is present and it has object function in the relative clause.

cué /ke/ relative pronoun. From Latin QUOD. The o used in front of it is just a placeholder due to the fact that a relative pronoun needs an antecedent. The neuter article is used, indicating that the antecedent is actually the whole situation.

cuêoucue /'kɛuk/ indefinite adj. From Latin QUALISQUAM. Very similar to its French cognate.

Diou /'dju/ masc. noun. From Latin DEUS.

dourmîre /dur'mir/ verb. From Latin DORMIRE. **deure**: second person singular imperative present.

dovve /'dɔv/ verb. From Latin DEBERE. **dovvroms**: first person plural indicative future.

é /e/ conjunction. From Latin ET.

fenêstre /fə'nɛstr/ fem. noun. From Latin FENESTRA.

fêre /'fɛr/ verb. From Latin FACERE. **fi**: third person singular indicative simple past. **feroms**: first person plural indicative future.

gouardâre /gwar'dar/ verb. Germanic loanword, cognate to French “garder”.

îre /'ir/ verb. From Latin IRE.

jouc /'ʒu/ masc. noun. From Latin IOCUS.

jouiâre /ʒu'jar/ verb. From Latin IOCARE. Went through the same meaning shifts as in French, Spanish and Portuguese.

lacérâre /lase'rar/ verb. Learned borrowing from Latin LACERARE that found its way in the common speech. **lacéró**: third person singular indicative simple past.

linde /'lɛd/ fem. noun. Borrowing from Spanish “linda”, but as a noun instead of an adjective.

maidums /'mɛdœ/ indefinite adj. Quite transparently “mais dums”. See the entry for **mais**.

mais /'mɛ/ adverb. Either from Latin MAGIS or MAIUS (adverb form of MAIOR).

mâou /'mau/ adj. From Latin MALUS.

mas /ma(z)/ conjunction. From Latin MAGIS.

miêrde /'mjerd/ fem. noun. From Latin MERDA. Probably not a problem for you to understand!

nouem /'nwê/ masc. noun. From Latin NOMEN. Only used when referring to God.

nũ /'nœ/ interjection. From Latin NUNC. Used much like Dutch “nou” or French “eh bien”.

ouc /'u/ particle. From Latin HOC. Its meaning should be clear if you remember that Narbonese is a Langue d’Oc.

pêque /'pɛk/ adj. Uncertain etymology, probably cognate with Spanish “pequeño”.

perdêre /per'dɛr/ verb. From Latin PERDERE. **pierdé**: third person singular indicative simple past.

petin /pə'tɛ/ masc. noun. Uncertain etymology. Might be from PITINUS, and might be cognate from French “petit”, but is used only as a noun with a meaning close to French “enfant”.

policie /**po'lisi**/ fem. noun. From Latin POLITIA.

pôre /**'por**/ verb. From Latin POSSE. **podèvt**: third person singular indicative imperfect. **podêvams**: first person plural indicative imperfect.

pra /**pra**/ preposition. Probably from PER AD, and cognate to Spanish “para”.

prêout /**'prœu**/ adj. Probably from Latin PRAEALTUS. Opposite of “âout” (from ALTUS).

puis /**pui**/ conjunction. Probably from Latin POST.

que /**kə**/ interrogative pronoun. From Latin QUID. Becomes qu’ in front of a vowel.

quesceam /**kɛ'sã**/ fem. noun. From Latin QUAESTIO.

sâoude /**'saud**/ fem. noun. Maybe from Latin SOLIDA. The context should make the meaning of the word clear.

seïur /**sə'jy**/ adj. From Latin SECURUS.

silencie /**si'lãsi**/ masc. noun. From Latin SILENTIUM.

stêre /**'ster**/ verb. From the conflation of Latin ESSE and STARE. **er-râvams**: first person plural indicative imperfect. **êt**: third person singular indicative present. **starïom**: third person plural subjunctive future.

sus /**sy(z)**/ preposition. Probably from Latin SUPER.

tiems /**'tjã**/ masc. noun. From Latin TEMPUS.

tod /**'tɔ**/ indefinite pronoun. From Latin TOTUS.

venîre /**və'nir**/ verb. From Latin VENIRE. **vim**: third person singular indicative simple past.

vèr /**'vɛ**/ adj. From Latin VERUS.

volle /**'vɔl**/ verb. From Vulgar Latin VOLERE, although the form makes it look like it comes directly from Classical Latin VELLE. **vol**: first person singular indicative present.

7 Disclaimer

Due to lack of time for checking, there may still be spelling mistakes, both in the Narbonese text and the rest of this document. However, the grammatical and lexical descriptions I gave are definitely correct, and should thus be what you must trust, if you find apparently contradictory things (you shouldn't, but one never knows...).

In any case, don't hesitate to contact me if you have problems.