

The pronominal system of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost

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Abstract

This paper identifies several phonological and morphological issues raised by the pronominal system of the variety of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost of the French “linguistic Croissant”. An account is proposed within Strict CV (Lowenstamm 1996, Scheer 2004).

Keywords: Croissant, Strict CV, Morphology, Phonology, Pronouns.

1. Introduction

This paper analyzes several aspects of the pronominal system of the variety spoken in Saint-Pierre-le-Bost (SPLB), a village situated in the administrative department of the Creuse in the center of France. This variety is part of a group of many vernaculars that make up the Croissant region, a linguistic region that constitutes a contact area between the two main language areas of France, Oïl and Oc. Modern French, for instance, is an Oïl language, whereas Occitan is an Oc language.

The pronominal system is quite similar to that of French, yet with several interesting differences. A slightly incomplete overview is provided in (1). Segments in superscript occur only before vowels; those in subscript occur only before consonants.

(1) Pronouns and determiners of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost

		<i>unaccented</i>				<i>accented</i>	<i>possessed</i>				<i>def</i> <i>dem</i>		
		<i>nom</i>	<i>acc</i>	<i>dat</i>	<i>ref</i>		<i>msg</i>	<i>fmsg</i>	<i>mpl</i>	<i>fmpl</i>			
<i>sg</i>	<i>1</i>	e ^j	m	m	m	mø	m _ø ^{un}	m _a ^{un}	m _o ^z	m _a ^z			
	<i>2</i>	t	t	t	t	tø	t _ø ^{un}	t _a ^{un}	t _o ^z	t _a ^z			
	<i>3</i>	<i>neut</i>	k	z _o	-	s	ku	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	s _o ^z	s _a ^z		
		<i>imp</i>	ã ⁿ	-	-	s	sø	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	s _o ^z	s _a ^z		
		<i>m</i>	o ^l	l	j _i	s	sø	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	s _o ^z	s _a ^z	l	ko
<i>f</i>	al	l _a	j _i	s	jɛl	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	s _o ^z	s _a ^z	l _a	kœl		
<i>pl</i>	<i>1</i>	n	n _u ^z			nzot	nut	nut	nute ^z	nute ^z			
	<i>2</i>	v _u ^z	v _u ^z			vuzot	vut	vut	vute ^z	vute ^z			
	<i>3</i>	<i>m</i>	e ^z	l _o ^z	j _i	s	jyzot	lu _z	lu _z	lu _z e ^z	lu _z e ^z	l _o ^z	ke ^z
		<i>f</i>	al ^z	l _a ^z	j _i	s	jɛlzot	lu _z	lu _z	lu _z e ^z	lu _z e ^z	l _a ^z	ke ^z

Several aspects of the data in (1) will be elaborated upon in due course below. The next section provides more information on the Croissant and on this specific variety. After that section, the paper is divided in two parts: one for phonology and one for morphology.

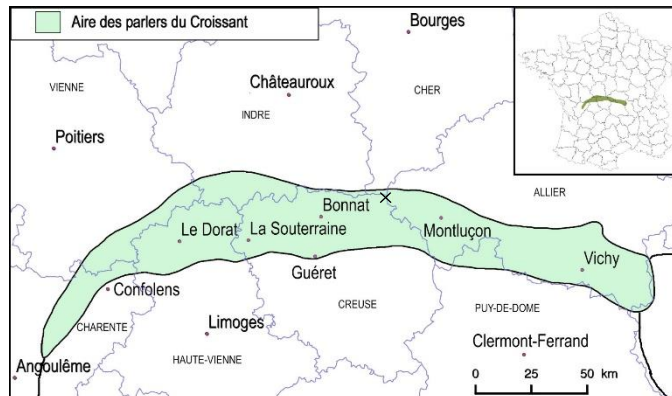
Section 3 includes the phonological formalization of two issues presented by the system. The first issue is the various realizations of the 1PL pronoun, and the asymmetry between 1PL and 2PL (in light orange in (1)). The second issue is that of the formation of accented forms (principally those in light blue) which are less syncretic with the unaccented nominative forms than in French. Both of these analyses are couched within the phonological approach of Strict CV (Lowenstamm 1996, Scheer 2004). It is claimed that the principles of this approach elegantly account for the range of realizations of the 1PL without the need for allomorphic statements; the accented pronouns in light blue are shown to be bimorphemic, based on the general dative marker /j_i/, to which the nominative form is added.

Section 4 then moves to the purely morphological concern of the distribution of markers within the system. It targets two markers: the PL /e^z/ (in dark green) and the singular /sø/ (in light green). It is proposed that /sø/ has been “recruited” to fill an empty slot in the paradigm; and that /e^z/ can be regarded as a general plural marker, whose vowel surfaces only when gender features are deleted. Section 5 concludes the paper with some open issues.

2. Background

The map in Figure 1 delimits the linguistic area of the Croissant (and clarifies the reason for this name, coined by Ronjat 1913). The × situates the village of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost in the Croissant. As can be seen, the village is close to the border with Oil varieties to the north.

Figure 1. SPLB within the Croissant area. **Source:** <https://parlersducroissant.huma-num.fr/projet.html>



The specific variety spoken in Saint-Pierre-le-Bost does not have a name; I will call it SPLB. It is moribond: I was only able to locate a single speaker. However, it shares much with other Croissant varieties. In my investigations, I also consulted a speaker from Nouzerines (14 kilometers to the west) and Treignat (10 kilometers to the south-east).

To illustrate how Croissant varieties are halfway between Oil and Oc ones, consider the facts in (2). Like Occitan¹, and unlike French, SPLB uses [-a] for infinitives of the first group (2a), and distinguishes genders in the inflection of the matching past participle. But unlike Occitan, and like French, SPLB and all Croissant varieties are by and large stress-final. In addition, the verbal stem is quite different from the Occitan one but identical to that of French, with full spirantization into [ʃ] of the historical /k/ and nasalization of the historical /an/.²

(2) Typical features of the croissant

	French	SPLB	Occitan (Limousin)
a. INF	ʃã't-e	ʃãt-a	ʃan't-a
b. PST.PRT.SG M	ʃã't-e	ʃã't-a	ʃan't-a
F	ʃã't-e	ʃã't-a-d	ʃan't-ad-ə

The variety of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost is mentioned in much recent comparative works, published by members of the documentation projects *Les Parlers du Croissant*³ and *Oc/Oil*⁴. These projects have already accumulated an impressive comparative corpus of inflections,

¹ The occitan forms in this paper are taken from Tintou (1983).

² The extent of *k spirantization in SPLB is identical to that in French. As for nasal vowels, it seemed to me that those of SPLB, unlike those of Standard French, have a slight nasal closure (though I have not verified this impression through acoustic analysis). This property is also typical of the French spoken by the SPLB and Nouzerines speakers.

³ <https://parlersducroissant.huma-num.fr/index.html>

⁴ <https://oc-oil.huma-num.fr/>

conjugations and lexical items. That said, to the best of my knowledge, there are no in-depth, *formal* accounts of any aspect of the phonology or morphology of any Croissant variety.⁵

Since general phonological and morphological aspects of SPLB are not of immediate relevance to the topic of this paper, I will be brief about them. The phonemic system of SPLB is by and large that of French and, unlike other Croissant varieties, the phonological phenomenon of liaison is very common. Three interesting, salient differences from French are the following. First, there is no neutralization between /ɔ/ and /o/ in positions other than the unstressed closed syllable. Except for that position, /o/ is freely distributed and always faithfully realized. /ɔ/ is faithfully realized in unstressed open syllable [ɔ̃fu] ‘gosling’; word-finally and before [ʁ] it is lowered to [ɔ̃], e.g. [nɔ̃ʁityʁ] ‘food’, [sɔ̃ʁ] ‘go.out.IND.SG’ [vɔ̃] ‘calf’. Second, the /ə/ vowel – i.e., the central vowel realized as [œ] or [ø] which alternates with zero – is allowed in closed (stressed or stressless) syllables, e.g. [aʃœt] ‘buy.IND.SG’, [aʃt-a] ‘buy-INF’. It is very much dispreferred in open syllables, resulting in sonority violations such as [ʁnœʁ] ‘fox’, which cannot be pronounced [ʁøʁnœʁ]. Finally, and most importantly for the present purpose, the phoneme /v/ is often pronounced as an approximant [ʋ] or [w].

As for its morphology, SPLB is closer to Occitan than to French in the extent to which verbs and particles exhibit overt inflection. This can already be noted in the plural determiners in yellow in (1) above, where SPLB, unlike French, shows gender distinctions in the plural forms. In (3) below, the same tendency can be seen in the verbal system. Interestingly, SPLB is even richer in its inflection than Occitan (in these paradigms), possibly due to the tendency to zero-mark the 3SG.⁶

(3) French, SPLB and Occitan verbal inflection

		French	SPLB	Occitan (Limousin)
a. COND.SG	1	ʃāt-əʁ-ε	ʃāt-øʁj-o	ʃant-a'ʁj-ɔ
	3		ʃāt-ʁi	
	2		ʃāt-øʁj-a	
a. FUT.SG	1	ʃāt-əʁ-ε	ʃāt-ʁ-e	ʃant-a'ʁ-aj
	3	ʃāt-əʁ-a	ʃāt-œʁ	ʃant-a'ʁ-ɔ
	2		ʃāt-ʁ-ɔ	ʃant-a'ʁ-a
a. IMPRF.SG	1	ʃāt-ε	ʃāt-av-o	ʃan't-a-v-ɔ
	3		ʃāt-εv	
	2		ʃāt-av-a	

The tendency to zero-mark the most frequent cell in the paradigm is also apparent in the pronominal system, a fact we will return to below.

⁵ The many publications listed in the following URL (<https://parlersducroissant.humanum.fr/bibliographie.html>) are mostly descriptive and comparative. Guérin et al. (2021) discuss paradigm shapes and their distribution in the Croissant from a dialectological perspective.

⁶ The persons have been reordered in order to emphasize the higher extent of syncretism in Limousin Occitan than in SPLB. The sequence [av] in Limousin Occitan is morphologically segmented as /a-v/ in (3) because it can be analyzed in this variety of Occitan as a theme vowel /a/ followed by a conjugation-specific /v/. In SPLB, all imperfectives, regardless of conjugation, involve [av]. The zero-marking typical of SPLB is shared by the varieties of Treignat and Nouzerines, but in the latter it spread to all IMPRF.SG forms. SPLB is the only documented Croissant variety to mark the IMPRF.3SG – as opposed to the other forms in the paradigm – with ablaut (p.c. Nicolas Quint).

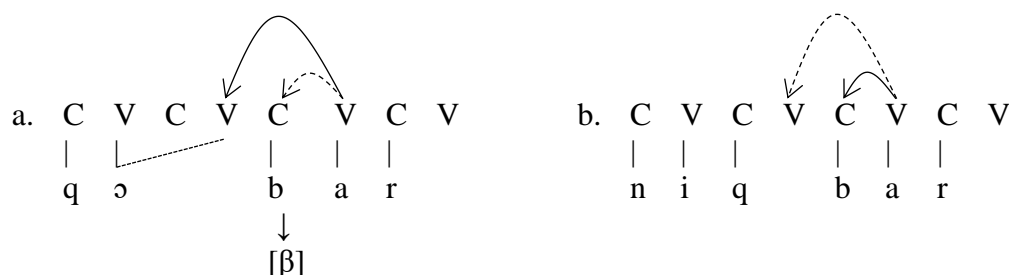
3. Phonological alternations in the pronominal system

3.1. Strict CV

Strict CV is a theory of phonological representation. It adopts the widely-held assumption that phonological representations in the lexicon involve not only strings of phonemes, but also information about the syllabic positioning of these phonemes. The approach distinguishes itself in its view of how this syllabic positioning is established. It uses a skeletal tier with a single constituent: the CV unit.⁷ Thus, words like Biblical Hebrew [qɔːβar] ‘he buried’ in (4a) end in an empty V-slot; the passive [niqbar] ‘he was buried’ in (4b) involves two empty V-slots: one at the right edge and another between the two phonetically adjacent consonants.

Phenomena like syncope, epenthesis, lengthening/shortening and fortition/lenition are accounted for using the lateral relations between V-slots (see, for instance, Ségéral & Scheer 2008, Ziková & Scheer 2010, as well as examples below). There are two lateral relations emanating from contentful V-slots leftwards: government and licensing. Government is an inhibitory force. It is represented in) with the broken arrow. In (4a) it motivates the lenition of /b/ into [β], and in (4b) it accounts for the non-realization of the preceding empty nucleus. Licensing, represented by the unbroken arrow, facilitates realization. In (4a) it legitimizes the length of the vowel, and in (4b) it is responsible for the fortis realization [b] of onset /b/.⁸

(4) Strict CV, government and licensing



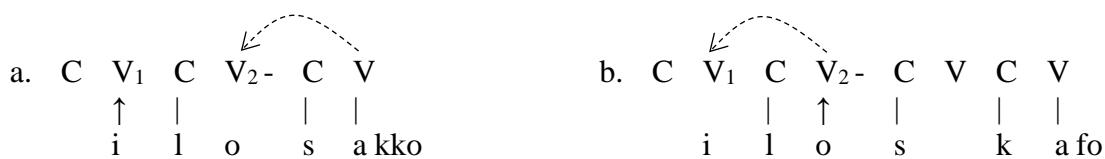
In order to deal with vowel-zero alternations in which the vowel is not epenthetic, Larsen (1998) proposed that some vowels are lexically unassociated to their position, and become associated to it only if it is ungoverned. This is his analysis for the alternation in the Italian definite article [il sak:o] ‘the bag’ but [lo ska:fo] ‘the hull’. It derives both realizations from the same underlying representation, /ⁱɔ/, with the superscript here standing for underlyingly unassociated vowels. In (5a), V₂ is governed from the stem, and therefore V₁ is filled by the floating /ⁱ/. In (5b), V₂ is not governed from the stem; it is thus associated with the floating /^o/. As a result, the floating /i/ of V₁ remains afloat.⁹

⁷ The need to restrict the skeletal level is motivated, among other things, by the non-existence of seven-consonant sequences (for instance). If any sequence of Cs and Vs can exist at the skeletal level, such sequences would have to be ruled out by another mechanism. The strong hypothesis is then that only the most basic “syllable” CV is allowed at the skeletal level, and all other configurations are constrained by this fact in the manner made explicit in the main text.

⁸ Stress lengthens the final vowels in these forms, a fact I abstract away from in these representations.

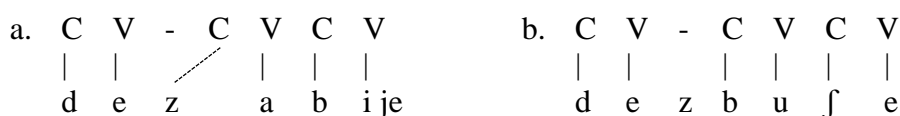
⁹ For a full account, see Faust et al. (2018).

(5) V-zero alternations in non-epenthetic vowels: Italian DEF /i⁰/



A similar account is provided in this framework for consonant-zero alternations. Take, for instance, the allomorphy in the French inversive prefix in the words [dez-abije] ‘undressed’ and [de-bufe] ‘unclogged’. One may represent the prefix as involving a floating /z/ with no position of its own. When the following word begins with an empty C-slot, as it must in this framework, the /z/ is associated to that position (6(6)a); if it doesn’t, the /z/ remains afloat (6b).

(6) C-zero alternations in non-epenthetic consonants: French inversive /de^z/



I have shown cases of empty Vs and empty Cs. In some cases, two consecutive skeletal slots are empty or unassociated. Specifically for empty VC sequences, it is common since Gussmann and Kaye (1993) to assume that such sequences are “reduced”. For instance, in Modern Hebrew VC?V may be reduced to VCV: /nas?-u/ ‘travel.PST-3PL’ can be pronounced [nas?u] or [nasu]. Enguehard & Faust (2018) argue that the optional [?] is epenthetic, inserted to occupy a templatic C-slot (cf. /nask-u/ => [nasku] ‘take.off.PST-3PL’, which uses the same template). If it is realized, as in (7)a, then the preceding V-slot is governed and there is little to say about the form. But if epenthesis does not occur, an empty VC sequence results; such a sequence is reduced, as signaled by the grey script in (7b).

(7) VC-reduction



The next two subsections provide an analysis of SPLB facts that combines all of the tools presented.

3.2. The realization of 1/2PL

The table in (8) repeats the facts to be discussed in this section.

(8) 1/2PL in the pronominal system of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost

		<i>unaccented</i>				<i>accented</i>
		<i>nom</i>	<i>acc</i>	<i>dat</i>	<i>ref</i>	
<i>pl</i>	<i>1</i>	n	n ^u ^z		nzot	
	<i>2</i>	vu ^z	vu ^z		vuzot	

1PL and 2PL exhibit dissimilar behavior. The otherwise ubiquitous floating /^z/ of the plural is missing from the nominative 1PL, regardless of whether the next word begins with a vowel or a consonant. Indeed, even the /u/ is absent from the nominative 1PL.¹⁰

(9) 1/2PL in context – nominative

	1PL	2PL	
a. buy.IND	n aʃt-ã	vuʒ aʃt-e	‘we/you buy’
b. sing.IND	n ʃãt-ã	vu ʃãt-e	‘we/you sing’

Both /u/ and /^z/ do surface in non-nominative forms of both the 1PL and the 2PL. Yet here there is another asymmetry: in the 1PL, [u] and [z] are in complementary distribution, whereas for the 2PL they *do* co-occur (underlined):¹¹

(10) 1/2PL in context – non-nominative

	1PL	2PL	
a. 1SG INDIR.OBJ+buy.SG	e nz aʃœt	e vu <u>z</u> aʃœt	‘I buy for us/you _{pl} ’
b. 1SG INDIR.OBJ+sing.IND	e nu ʃãt	e vu ʃãt	‘I sing for us/you _{pl} ’
c. neg+OBJ	pa nzot	pa vu <u>z</u> ot	‘not us/you _{pl} ’

The facts above from 1/2PL pronouns can be regarded as allomorphy. Such a view would hold that there are different underlying representations for 1PL.NOM and 1PL.NON-NOM pronouns; as well as for plurality in 1PL and 2PL. According to such a view, there is nothing to explain: speakers learn as many allomorphs as necessary. I would like to suggest the opposite view, namely that all 1PL pronouns are underlyingly identical, and that plurality is identically expounded for 1PL a 2PL pronouns.

Let us begin with the liaison /^z/. We have already encountered a possible formalization for it: a consonant afloat at the right edge of its lexical item, with no position. We have also encountered a formalization of lexical vowels that alternate with zero, like the /u/ under examination: a vowel *with* a lexical position to which it is not associated. The representation of the 1PL should therefore be /n^{uz}/, as in (11):

(11) Underlying representation of 1PL

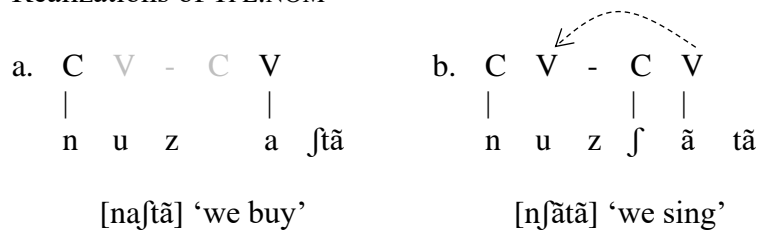
C	V	
n	u	z

This representation suffices in order to account for the realization of 1PL.NOM in the following manner. Before a V-initial stem (12a), an empty VC sequence is created and VC deletion applies, leaving the /^{uz}/ sequence with no skeletal support. In (12b), before a C-initial stem, VC deletion does not apply, but the only V-slot of the prefix is governed. The lexically unassociated vowel remains afloat, and the /^z/ does not have a position to associate to.

¹⁰ As in French, nominative pronouns are by and large obligatory with all verbs.

¹¹ [nu] is also the post-verbal realization of 1PL.NON-NOM, e.g. [aʃœt nu] ‘buy us/for us’.

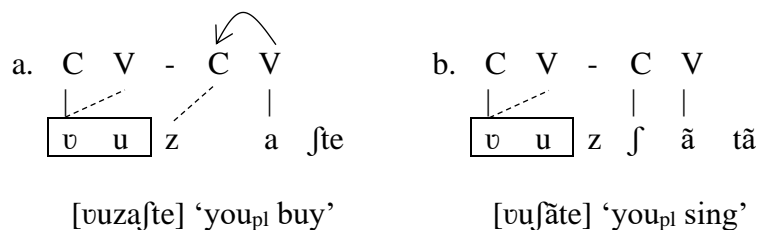
(12) Realizations of 1PL.NOM



This raises the question of why the /^u/ is realized in the 2PL.NOM. One may assume that in the 2PL, the /^u/ is in fact /u/, that is, it is lexically associated. While this assumption gives the right result, it seems ad-hoc, as it assumes that the same semantic information is expounded differently in the context of 1PL and 2PL *in exactly the way necessary to get the facts right*. Instead, I would like to suggest that the /^u/ is afloat in this marker, too; but the labial quality of the preceding consonant leads to its association to its position irrespective of government.

The idea is represented graphically in (13). The consonant and vowel are merged because they share the labial feature. Therefore, the /u/ cannot be inhibited through government – its existence is accounted for otherwise. As a result, the V-slot of the pronoun is always realized, regardless of it being potentially governed. In (13a), therefore, there is no VC-reduction, and the /^z/ does associate to the initial empty C-slot of the stem; while in (13b) it again remains afloat. Note, that the empty C-slot in (13) is both available and licensed; this will become important below.

(13) Realizations of 2PL.NOM



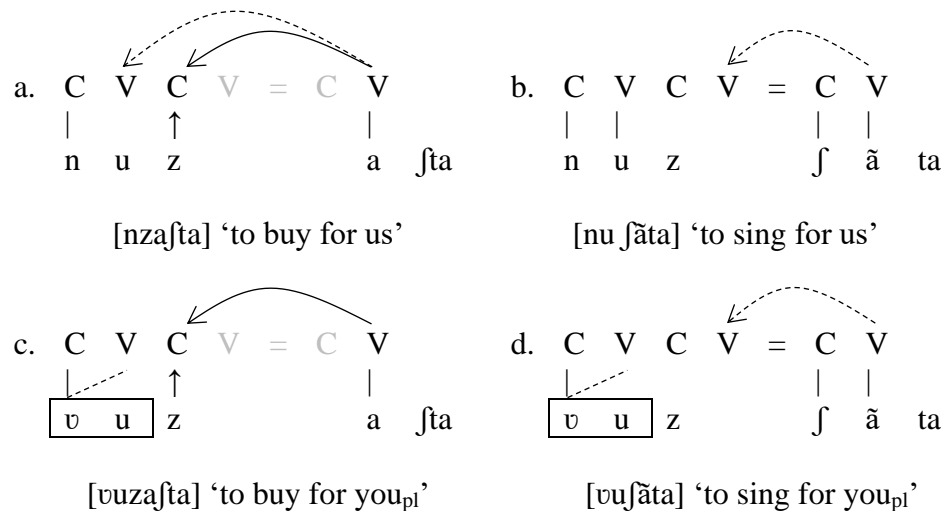
The behavior of the floating /^u/ is reminiscent of that of unaccented round vowels in Coratine, as reported in Bucci (2013). In this language, unaccented round vowels are regularly reduced to /ə/, e.g. [ˈrotə] ‘wheel’ → [rəˈteddə] ‘DIM’; but the process is blocked when an adjacent consonant is labial, e.g. [ˈmollə] ‘rubberband’ → [mɒlˈlettə] ‘DIM’. Bucci, inspired by Honeybone (2005), also proposes that the shared feature renders the segment resistant to reduction.

Recall, however, that the asymmetry between 1PL and 2PL is slightly different in non-nominative pronouns. In these, a vowel [u] is realized in the 1PL, though only if the PL /^z/ is not realized; whereas the 2PL behaves as in the nominative. In order to account for this minimal difference, I propose that these clitics are slightly bigger than their nominative counterparts: they carry an additional CV. In (14a), an empty VC sequence is reduced, yet the /^z/ still has a position to attach to; and it may attach to that position because it is licensed. In addition, the preceding V-slot is governed, and so the /^u/ remains afloat.¹² But for the parallel 2PL in (14c), as we have seen, government does not exclude the realization of the floating /^u/, because of feature sharing. In (14b,d), we see the importance of licensing: even though in both

¹² It is assumed here that VC Reduction occurs once, and preferably between morphemes. If it were iterative, the empty VC of the clitic would also disappear, and there would be no difference between the nominative and non-nominative clitics.

configurations the /z/ does have a position to attach to, that position is not licensed – the licensing potential of the first stem vowel is spent on its own onset. The /z/ therefore remains afloat. The vowel of the 1PL in (14b) is not governed, and therefore it is associated, unlike in the nominative configuration in (12) above.

(14) Realizations of 1/2PL.NON-NOM



Two aspects of the analysis are worth dwelling on. First, it seems that for a floating consonant to be associated it is not enough for the position to be available; its C-slot must also be licensed (in more general terms, it should not be a coda). Second, the analysis suggests that the difference between nominative and non-nominative pronouns is minimal: the latter are further away from the verb by a single CV unit. This view is in line with the facts from many other languages, in which subject agreement markers belong to the same cycle as their stem, whereas object markers belong to a subsequent cycle.^{13,14}

To summarize this subsection, I was able to reduce the asymmetry between 1PL and 2PL to the nature of their initial consonant. Assuming that these consonants express the different persons, the pronouns are otherwise identical, with a PL exponent /^{uz}/, whose realization is determined by well-attested phonological principles.¹⁵

¹³ A famous example comes from Palestinian Arabic. Bases with object clitics such as [fi'him=na] ‘he understood us’ do not show the typical syncope of the /i/ of the first syllable, which does occur before a homophonous subject agreement suffix [f'him-na] ‘we understood’. Presumably, this is because only the former is based on a previous cycle [fihim] ‘he understood’, where that vowel is stressed (Brame 1974)

Nominative pronouns in SPLB may be regarded as clitics, just like non-nominative ones, in which case the motivation for the greater distance of the latter from their base is lost. Nevertheless, there *is* [italics?] reason to think that nominative pronouns are more like inflectional affixes than non-nominative pronouns. In this language, as in some spoken registers of French, nominative pronouns are on the whole obligatory even with overt non-pronominal subject, e.g. [mõ desẽ ol avpvesãtev pa ã ʃap] ‘my drawing did not show a hat’, lit. ‘my drawing, it did not...’. (From Dubac & Quint 2021).

¹⁴ It may well be, as suggested to me by Ora Matushansky (p.c.), that the additional CV of non-nominative clitics is the exponent of a “non-nominative” formal feature (however formalized). I leave this issue for future consideration.

¹⁵ In this context it is interesting to evoke the more symmetric system of nearby Treignat. In this system, both 1PL and 2PL always lack the /u/ in the nominative. In addition, both exhibit the complementary distribution of /u/ and /z/ in both nominative and non-nominative pronouns:

A final touch will be added to this analysis in the end of the paper. In the next subsection I turn to the second phonological issue of this paper.

3.3. Phonology of the accented pronouns

The table in (15) recalls the data to be discussed in this subsection, with one addition. There are three types of accented paradigms: the post-verbal ACC, the post-verbal DAT and the more general paradigm.

(15) Non-possessive pronouns of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost

		<i>unaccented</i>				<i>accented</i>			
		<i>nom</i>	<i>acc</i>	<i>dat</i>	<i>ref</i>	<i>general</i>	<i>post v acc</i>	<i>post v dat</i>	
<i>sg</i>	1	e ^j	m	m	m	mø	mø	mø	
	2	t	t	t	t	tø	tø	tø	
	3	<i>imp</i>	ã ⁿ	-	-	s	sø	-	-
	<i>m</i>	o ^l	l	ji	s	sø	lø	ji	
	<i>f</i>	al	la	ji	s	jɛl	la	ji	
<i>pl</i>	1	n	nu ^z			nzot	nu		
	2	vu ^z	vu ^z			vuzot	vu		
	3	<i>m</i>	e ^z	lo ^z	ji	s	jyzot	lo	ji
		<i>f</i>	al ^z	la ^z	ji	s	jɛlzot	la	ji

The post-verbal accented pronouns, as the coloring highlights, are merely accented, slightly fuller versions of their respective preverbal versions. In this section I focus on the general accented paradigm. These forms occur in a variety of positions, such as in topic position and after prepositions. Here are examples of the two environments, with the accented pronoun in bold and the nominative subject underlined.¹⁶

(16) Examples of general accented pronouns

- a. *nzot* n not-ã pa l-a flœk
 FOC.1PL 1PL.NOM write.down-1PL NEG DEF-FPL flower
 ‘we do not write down the names of flowers’
- b. me a *jɛl* tut sul al e pyz ěpuktât
 but PREP 3FSG all.F alone 3FSG.NOM be more important.F
 ‘But she alone is more important...’

From Dubac & Quint (2021)

(i)	NOM		NON-NOM	
	<u>_C</u>	<u>_V</u>	<u>_C</u>	<u>_V</u>
1PL	n	nz	nu	nz
2PL	v	vz	vu	vz

The system can be described like that of SPLB in the main text, with two differences. First, there is no merger of the vowel with the 2P marker /v/; and second, the association of /z/ in the nominative prevails over VC reduction.

¹⁶ The impersonal pronoun /ã^p/ cannot be topicalized, so it does not have a topicalized counterpart, but it does have a post prepositional one. Please provide an example

There is an interesting contrast between French and SPLB regarding such accented pronouns. As shown in (17), in French there are four forms that are syncretic between the nominative and the accented (in light blue): 1/2PL and 3FSG/PL. In SPLB, in contrast, there is not one case of nominative-accented syncretism (the case of [sø] will be discussed in subsection 4.1 below). Instead, one finds other intriguing exponents. First, there is an ending /*(u)zot*/ for all three PL pronouns; and second, a glide [j] occurs and is followed by an unexpected vowel, [ɛ] for the 3F exponents and [y] for the 3MPL.

(17) SPLB vs French nominative and accented pronouns

		SPLB		French		
		<i>nom</i>	<i>accented</i>	<i>nom</i>	<i>accented</i>	
<i>sg</i>	1	e ^j	mø	ʒə	mwa	
	2	t	tø	ty	twa	
	3	<i>imp</i>	ã ⁿ	sø	ð ⁿ	swa
	<i>m</i>	o ^l	sø	il	luɣi	
	<i>f</i>	al	jɛl	ɛl		
<i>pl</i>	1	n	nzot	nu		
	2	vu ^z	vuzot	vu		
	3	<i>m</i>	e ^z	il ^z	ø	
	<i>f</i>	al ^z	jɛlzot	ɛl ^z		

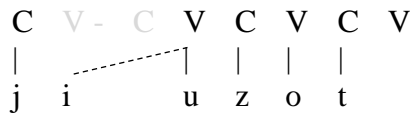
I propose to consider the glide as originating in the dative marker /*ji*/. The accented 3FSG is then formed by the concatenation of this marker and the nominative 3FSG. The dative marker, with its syncopatable lexical vowel, is represented accordingly as in (18). When this marker is fused with the F as in (18b), VC reduction applies. The floating vowel then merges with the following vowel, resulting in [jɛl] (the fusion of a high /*i*/ and a low /*a*/ into mid [ɛ] is unsurprising).

(18) Formation of accented 3FSG /*ji-al*/ → [jɛl]

a.	C	V	b.	C	V	-	C	V	C	V
	j	i		j	i	-----	a	l		

The question is immediately raised as to why the vowel of the dative /*ji*/ is not simply deleted, as it is before a vowel initial verb (/j_i aʃte/ ‘to buy for him/her/them’ => [jaʃte], *[jɛʃte]), or as was proposed for the /^u/ of the 1PL does in (12) above. I do not have a satisfactory answer to this question. It might be that there is an arbitrary asymmetry between /*u*/ and /*i*/, or that the two exponents in (18) are closer, in some sense, than in those other examples. However that distance can be formalized, this proposal carries the advantage of accounting for both the [j] and the vowel change in one fell swoop.

Another advantage of the proposal is that it carries over to the 3MPL. As shown above, all accented plural pronouns, including 3P ones, carry the same ending [(u)zot]. Assuming that the generalized suffix is /^uzot/, the high front rounded vowel of 3MPL [jyzot] can be accounted for by the same process of fusion as the 3F pronouns. The frontness of /*i*/ fuses with the rounding of /*u*/ to produce the front rounded [y]:

(19) Formation of accented 3MPL /j_i-^uzot/ → [jyzot]

To summarize, by assuming that the 3P accented pronouns of SPLB are constructed using the dative /j_i/, I have accounted for the appearance of the glide and the quality of the vowel in these forms. Of course, one does not expect to find [j] in the 1/2P, since this marker does not exist in the dative paradigm of these persons (more on morphological realization in the next section). It emerges that in SPLB the 3P forms in question are bimorphemic, unlike in French. This fact will be important in the next section, where I discuss the reason for the use of 3MSG accented [sø].

4. Two notable morphological issues

4.1. /sø/ recruitment

SPLB does not have a designated accented 3MSG pronoun, like French [lqi]. Instead, it uses for this role the same pronoun that is used for the impersonal, namely [sø]. This property is mentioned by Quint et al (to appear) as typical of the more southern varieties of the Croissant; here it is found in a northern variety. It is also shared by the variety of Treignat to the south-east. Nouzerines, to the west, does not share it: instead, it presents the same system as SPLB, but with a 3MSG [ly]. Two related questions are raised. First, why do varieties like SPLB lack such a pronominal form for the accented 3MSG? Second, why is it the impersonal pronoun that is recruited to fill the gap?

Table (20) presents the facts from SPLB, Nouzerines and French, this time decomposing the accented pronouns into P(ERSON)/C(ASE) and N(UMBER)/G(ENDER) exponents. The answer to the first question above is apparent immediately: the SPLB system is completely analytic. In Nouzerines, the pronoun [ly] is the exception, not easily lending itself to analyses as /l+y/ - if this were the right analysis, [ly] would be the only place in the language where MSG is expounded by /y/. In French, there is clearly much less analyticity.

(20) SPLB, Nouzerines and French nominative and accent pronouns

SPLB			Nouzerines			French		
<i>nom</i>	<i>accented</i>		<i>nom</i>	<i>accented</i>		<i>nom</i>	<i>accented</i>	
	P/C	N/G		P/C	N/G		P/C	N/G
e ^j	m	ø	e ^j	m	ø	ʒ _s	m	wa
t	t	ø	t	t	ø	ty	t	wa
ã ⁿ	s	ø	ã ⁿ	s	ø	õ ⁿ	s	wa
o ^l	s	ø	o ^l	ly		il	lqi	
al	ji	al	al	ji	al	el	el	
n	n	^u zot	n	n	^u zot	nu ^z	nu	
vu ^z	v	^u zot	vu ^z	v	^u zot	vu ^z	vu	
e ^z	ji	^u zot	e ^z	ji	^u zot	il ^z	ø	
al ^z	ji	-al- ^u zot	al ^z	ji	-al- ^u zot	el ^z	el	

It stands to reason that in a system where all accented pronouns are decomposable into two exponents, a less analytic form would be more of a problem than in a system where analyticity is more general. Importantly, this view of the facts correlates with the bi-morphemic analysis of [j]-initial accented pronouns from the previous subsection. In this context, it is immaterial whether Nouzerines or SPLB represents the more conservative system – the latter is clearly more “regular” than the former.

As for the choice of [sø] for the 3MSG, it seems to follow from the features to be realized. Since /s/ is already used for the 3P in possessives like /s_ø^{un}/, and /ø/ is the general SG marker, /s-ø/ is the ideal candidate. Other candidates, such as 3FSG [jɛl] or 3MPL [jyzot] correspond to features that are not present in the morphological specification of the 3MSG. Of course, one may ask why, given /j_i+al/ => [jɛl], one does not derive /j_i+o^l/ => [jø]. Any answer I can provide to this question will be speculative; it seems that the use of an existing form from another cell in the paradigm is preferred to the construction of an innovative one. It is in this sense that /sø/ is “recruited”.¹⁷

4.2. Marking plurality and gender

As highlighted in yellow in the table below, a gender distinction is made in the plural pronouns of the 3P and in the articles, including possessive articles. When the base is identical for M and F, /o/ occurs for M and /a/ for F. In the cells highlighted in green, however, one finds another vowel /e/. In the possessive article and the demonstrative, this vowel is used for both masculine and feminine complements. Finally, number is always also marked with the exponent /^z/ (when the exponent is in a liaison environment).

(21) The pronominal system of Saint-Pierre-le-Bost – plural exponents

		<i>unaccented</i>				<i>acc.</i>	<i>possessed</i>							
		<i>nom</i>	<i>acc</i>	<i>dat</i>	<i>ref</i>		<i>msg</i>	<i>fmmsg</i>	<i>mpl</i>	<i>fmpl</i>	<i>def</i>	<i>indef</i>	<i>dem</i>	
<i>sg</i>	<i>1</i>	e ^j	m	m	m	mø	m _ø ^{un}	m _a ^{un}	mo ^z	ma ^z				
	<i>2</i>	t	t	t	t	tø	t _ø ^{un}	t _a ^{un}	to ^z	ta ^z				
	<i>3</i>	<i>neut</i>	k	z _o	-	s	ku	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	so ^z	sa ^z			
		<i>imp</i>	ã ⁿ	-	-	s	sø	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	so ^z	sa ^z			
		<i>m</i>	o ^l	l	j _i	s	sø	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	so ^z	sa ^z	l	ẽ ⁿ	ko
	<i>f</i>	al	l _a	j _i	s	jɛl	s _ø ^{un}	s _a ^{un}	so ^z	sa ^z	l _a	ẽ ⁿ	kɛl	
<i>pl</i>	<i>1</i>	n	n _u ^z			nzot	nut	nut	nute ^z	nute ^z				
	<i>2</i>	vu ^z	vu ^z			vuzot	vut	vut	vute ^z	vute ^z				
	<i>3</i>	<i>m</i>	e ^z	lo ^z	j _i	s	jyzot	luκ	luκ	luκe ^z	luκe ^z	lo ^z	do ^z	ke ^z
		<i>f</i>	al ^z	la ^z	j _i	s	jɛlzot	luκ	luκ	luκe ^z	luκe ^z	la ^z	da ^z	ke ^z

The data therefore pose a small challenge to the morphologist formalizer, in that plurality seems to exhibit a three-way distinction: M, F, and N(EUTER), with the latter being used for the 3MPL.NOM; but at the same time, it seems to be stably realized by /^z/ . Rather than have such three-way distinction, I propose the following realizational statements, modeled and applied in the tradition of Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993):

¹⁷ One may claim that /o^l/ is somehow specified for nominative case; and that for this reason, it is used neither in non-nominative clitics nor in the accented pronoun. However, 3F /al/ is also not used in non-nominative clitics, but it *is* used in the accented set.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have examined several aspects of the phonology and morphology of the pronominal system of SPLB, a local variety of the linguistic area of France known as the “Croissant”. Rather than offer an inter-dialectal analysis, my goal was to examine the alternations and exponent distribution within this single vernacular, and to propose an account that motivates them. I have made the following claims:

- I. Despite appearances, 1PL and 2PL exponents differ only in the first consonant; other differences in their realization patterns follow from this one.
- II. Despite appearances, 1PL.NOM and 1PL.NON-NOM exponents are segmentally identical; the differences follow from the latter involving an additional CV unit.
- III. Accented 3PL and 3F pronouns combine the DAT /ji/ and the otherwise expected exponents for F and PL.
- IV. The accented 3M involves the recruitment of the exponent /s/ and its combination with the general SG marker /ø/, in the interest of regularizing the paradigm.
- V. When gender distinctions are absent for the PL exponent, an exponent /e^z/ arises, which can be regarded as the default option.

The phonological analysis was made possible by manipulating the representational options of Strict CV. Time will tell if micro-variation with respect to the treatment of defective representations can account for the differences between the system of SPLB and those of other dialects of the Croissant.

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