A Comprehensive Diachronic Grammar of Modern ULTRAFRENCH

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1 Phonology and Evolution from Modern Pseudo-French

	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	b, b ^{fi}	d			
Nasal		n			
Fricative	φ β, ῦ	s z, θ ð	ççz	хχ	h
Approx.			ų ų̃, j̇	щщ	
Lat. Fric.		Ĩġ	Ã		

	Front	Back
Close	iĩi̇̃i, yỹ ỹ̈́ ÿ́	սũῗս
Close-mid	e ẽ ễ ẹ	o ô
Mid	ə ⟨e⟩ e	ş
Open-mid	εεξε	ã ỗ
Open	a a	ãã

Legend

 \tilde{V} = nasalised vowel, \tilde{V} = nasal vowel, V = any vowel (or, in conjunction with \tilde{V}/\tilde{V} , oral vowel) V = nasal consonant, \tilde{C} = nasalised consonant (e.g. $/\tilde{W}$, but not true nasals), V = any consonant.

Preliminary Changes

1.
$$g, k, w > u \langle r \rangle$$

2.
$$\infty$$
, $\tilde{\infty}$, $\emptyset > y$, \tilde{y} , \tilde{y}

3.
$$0 > 0$$

4.
$$y > j / (\#)V$$

5.
$$V_{\alpha} > \emptyset / \# V_{\alpha}$$

6. lj, ly >
$$\Lambda$$

7.
$$j > q \langle y' \rangle$$

8.
$$\psi > \psi / _i$$

9.
$$C > \emptyset / \#_C$$

10.
$$C > \emptyset / C_\#$$

11.
$$k > x \langle c'h \rangle$$

12.
$$\int, 3 > \varepsilon \langle \zeta \rangle, z \langle j \rangle$$

13. $nt > n\theta$

14. t > d [d] ('hard /d/')

15. p > b [b] ('hard /b/')

16. $f, v > \phi \langle f \rangle, \beta \langle b'h \rangle$

Great Nasal Shift

16.
$$\tilde{V}l > \tilde{u} \langle w \rangle$$

17.
$$V > \tilde{\tilde{V}} / [N\tilde{C} \psi \psi] N#$$

18.
$$V, \tilde{V} > \tilde{V}, \tilde{\tilde{V}} / [N\tilde{C}vw], [N\tilde{C}vw]_$$

19.
$$\tilde{\mathfrak{d}}$$
, $\tilde{\tilde{\mathfrak{d}}}$,

20. N,
$$\tilde{C} > \emptyset / V_{\#}$$

21.
$$\eta, \eta > \eta$$

22.
$$V, \tilde{V} > \emptyset / N N$$

23. m, l,
$$\Lambda > \tilde{v} \langle v \rangle$$
, $\tilde{k} \langle l \rangle$, $\tilde{\Lambda} \langle l \rangle$

Intervocalic Lenition (/ V_V is implied)

22.
$$x, s, z > h$$

23.
$$\varepsilon$$
, \tilde{k} , $\tilde{\lambda} > \tilde{j} \langle \dot{\varepsilon} \rangle$, \tilde{v} , \tilde{w}

24.
$$n\theta > n$$

25. d, d, b, b >
$$\eth \langle d'h \rangle$$
, $\theta \langle t'h \rangle$, β , $b^h \langle bh \rangle$

26.
$$\phi > \beta / V_V$$

Late Changes

26. C[+stop, -alveolar] $C_{\alpha} > C_{\alpha}$

27. $h > \emptyset / hV$

28. $\theta > \emptyset / C_C$

29. V[-nasalised, -nasal] > 9 / #

1.1 Pronunciation, Allophony, and Stress

There is not a lot of allophony in UF, save that /x/ is realised as $[\chi]$ around back vowels and $[\varepsilon]$ elsewhere, e.g. $c'h\acute{u}r/x\~{u}u/$ 'to shrink' is pronounced $[\chi\~{u}^{*y}]$. Furthermore, /h/ is $[\varsigma]$ before variants of /i/ and /y/, and [h] elsewhere.

The vast majority PF words are stressed on the last syllable of the root, e.g. ad'hór' to love' /a'ðɔ̃ɰ/, but $b'had'hór\acute{e}$ 'you (PL) love' / β a'ðɔ̃.uqẽ/. The stress is not indicated in writing, neither in actual texts, nor in this grammar or in dictionaries.

The only exception to this rules are certain particles and irregular verbs, some of which have irregular stress; for instance, the forms of *ed* 'to be' are all stressed on the first syllable. Any such words that deviate from the norm will be pointed out in this grammar and in dictionaries.

Oral vowels before the stressed syllable are often somewhat muted or reduced, albeit still audible, and stressed vowels are lengthened if they are nasalised, e.g. the pronunciation of $ad'h\acute{o}r$, which we just transcribed as /a'ðɔ̃u/, is actually closer to [a'ðɔ̃y-].

Furthermore, as indicated in that same example, word-final $/\psi$ is often realised as velarisation of the preceding vowel; the same, however, is not the case for $/\tilde{\psi}$.

Initial / ψ / is sometimes elided after words that end with / ψ /, particularly in particles (e.g. $rv\acute{a}$ 'alas').

1.2 Orthography

The spelling of most UF sounds is indicated above; the less exotic consonants are spelt as one might expect. That is, /b, d, n, ϕ , s, z, h/ are spelt $\langle b, d, n, f, s, z, h \rangle$, respectively.

The 'hard' voiced \dot{p} , \dot{q} which are pronounced exactly like their regular counterparts, are normally also spelt $\langle b \rangle$ and $\langle d \rangle$. However, the dot is commonly used in dictionaries and grammatical material to distinguish between the two as they differ from one another in how they are lenited. Furthemore, a dot below or above a letter is commonly to indicate a variety of different things, depending on the letter:

- a dot below in *b*, *d* indicates that they are the 'hard' variants of the letter, which are pronounced the same, but lenited differently;
- a dot below in l indicates that it is palatal $/\tilde{A}/$ instead of alveolar $/\tilde{B}/$;
- a dot below in *e* indicates that it is a schwa. Note that there is no nasal(ised) schwa;
- a dot below nasalised \dot{e} , \dot{e} indicates that they are $/\tilde{e}/$, $/\tilde{e}/$ instead of $/\tilde{e}/$, $/\tilde{e}/$;
- a dot above in \dot{c} indicates that it is lenited / \mathring{j} /.

Thus, in non-grammatical writing, the following are indistinguishable:

- l can be palatal / $\tilde{\xi}$ / or alveolar / $\tilde{\xi}$ /;
- *e* can be a schwa, or /e/;
- \acute{e} , \acute{e} can be $/\tilde{\epsilon}/$, $/\tilde{\tilde{\epsilon}}/$ or $/\tilde{e}/$, $/\tilde{\tilde{e}}/$;
- *ç* can be /*ç*/ or /*j*/.

Elided initial /u/ is indicated by omitting the r in writing and attaching the word to the previous one with a hyphen, e.g. $-v\acute{a}$ 'alas'.

2 Accidence

2.1 Verbal Morphology

Verbs in UF are inflected for person, number, tense, aspect, mood, and voice. Verbal inflexion is mainly done by means of concatenating a vast set of prefixes onto a verb, with the occasional suffix and circumfix making its appearance. This chapter details these affixes, their meanings, uses, forms, and restrictions.

2.1.1 Active/Passive Affixes

UF has a set of active/subject as well as passive/object prefixes which can be used on their own or in combination with one another, though at most one active and one passive prefix may be combined with a verb.¹ Table 1 below lists those prefixes, two of which are actually circumfixes.

Active	Sg	Pl
1st	j-	ó-/r-/w(y')ó
2nd	д(е)-	b'h(y)(y')é
3rd m	l(e)-	l(e)-
3rd f	ll(a)-	ll(e)-
3rd n	S-	l(a)-
Infinitive		d(e)-

Passive	Sg	Pl
1st	ν-	ó-/r-/w-
2nd	₫(ẹ)-	b'h(y)-
3rd m	<i>y</i> '-	lý-
3rd f	<i>y</i> '-	lý-
3rd n	sy-	lý-
Infinitive	à	i-/h-

Table 1: Active (left) and passive (right) verbal affixes.

A great degree of syncretism can be observed in the third-person forms. The gender distinction in the 3sG that diachronically resulted from gendered personal pronouns is almost non-existent in the plural; the reason for this development is that those forms are derived from the old dative form, which lacked this distinction altogether.

The ACT 1PL, 2PL forms are only distinguished from their passive counterparts by the presence of additional suffixes in the former. The 3SG N in the active and passive is derived from the PF demonstrative *ce and its variants; the 3PL N is derived from the other 3PL forms.

The 1PL prefix varies if there is a vowel following it: if it is any vowel that is not a variant of 'o', the prefix is realised as *r*- instead, e.g. *ad'hór* 'love' to *rad'hóró* 'we love'. If the vowel a variant of 'o', the prefix is realised as *w*- instead, e.g. *ob'heír* 'obey' to *wob'heíró* 'we obey'.

The INF PASS prefix \grave{a} - coalesces with any vowel following it: it becomes \acute{a} if it is followed by a nonnasal variant of 'a', e.g. ad'hór to $\acute{a}d$ 'hór 'to be loved'; $\^{a}$ if it is followed by a nasal variant of 'a', e.g. $\acute{a}nv\acute{e}$ 'give life to' to $\acute{a}nv\acute{e}$ 'to be animated'; and h- if it is followed by any other vowel, e.g. ob'he $\acute{i}r$ to $\acute{h}ob$ 'he $\acute{i}r$ 'to be obeyed'.

The parenthesised vowels are used if the prefix is followed by a consonant, e.g. dir 'say' to lledir 'they (F) say' and b'hydire' 'you (PL) say', but ad'hor to llad'hor 'they (F) love' and b'had'hore' 'you (PL) love'. The prefixes o' and a' retain their main forms if followed by a consonant, e.g. dir 'say' to o' 'We say' and o' 'to be said'. The exception to this is that 2PL o' h(y)- drops the y if followed by a glide, e.g. o' 'ir' to hear' to o' hy'ire' 'you (PL) hear' (not *o' hyy'ire').

The y' in the suffix parts of the 1PL, 2PL ACT are dropped if the verb ends with a consonant, e.g. ad'hór to b'hád'hóré, or if it ends with a vowel that is a variant of 'o' in the case of the 1PL and 'e' in the case of the 2PL, in which cases the vowels are contracted and a level of nasalisation is added, e.g. vvóríhe 'to remember' to b'hyvvóríhé 'you (PL) remember' (not *b'hyvvóríhy'é). In all other cases, the y' is retained, e.g. óvvóríhey'ó 'we remember'.

When multiple prefixes are used together, active prefixes precede passive prefixes, except that infinitive prefixes always come first, e.g. *ad'hór* 'love' to *jvad'hór* 'I love myself' (not **vjad'hór*) and *b'hy'ad'hóré* 'you (PL) love him/her', but *devad'hór* 'to love me' and *àb'had'hóré* 'to be loved by you (PL)'. Recall that at most one infinitive prefix may be used.

By way of illustration, consider the paradigm of the verb $ad'h \acute{o}r$ as shown in Table 2 below. Since this word starts with a vowel, the parenthesised vowels in Table 1 above are not used. Furthermore, since it starts with a non-nasal 'a'-like vowel, the \acute{o} - prefix is realised as r- and the \grave{a} - prefix coalesces with the initial 'a' of the stem to form \acute{a} .

¹Irrespective of whether they are personal or infinitive prefixes. For instance, it would also be illegal to combine e.g. the active infinitive prefix with the first person active singular prefix.

² Diachronically, the base form of this prefix is *o-, whence e.g. *oad'hóró > rad'hóró and *oob'heíró > wob'heíró.

Active	Sg	Pl
1st	jad'hór	rad'hóró
2nd	ḍad'hór	b'had'hóré
3rd m	lad'hór	lad'hór
3rd f	llad'hór	llad'hór
3rd n	ý'ad'hór	lad'hór
Infinitive	dad'hór	

Passive	Sg	Pl
1st	vad'hór	rad'hór
2nd	ḍad'hór	b'had'hór
3rd m	y'ad'hór	lýad'hór
3rd f	y'ad'hór	lýad'hór
3rd n	ý'ad'hór	lýaď hór
Infinitive	ád'hór	

Table 2: Paradigm of the Verb ad'hór.

For comparison, the paradigm of the verb *vvóríhe* 'remember' is shown in Table 3 below. Since it starts with a consonant, the parenthesised vowels in Table 1 are used, and any prefixes that end with a vowel remain unchanged.

Active	Sg	Pl
1st	jvvóríhe	óvvóríhey'ó
2nd	devvóríhe	b'hyvvóríhé
3rd m	lẹvvóríhe	lẹvvóríhe
3rd f	llavvóríhe	llevvóríhe
3rd n	ý vvóríhe	lavvóríhe
Infinitive	dẹvvóríhe	

Passive	Sg	Pl
1st	vvvóríhe	óvvóríhe
2nd	devvóríhe	b'hyvvóríhe
3rd m	y'vvóríhe	lývvóríhe
3rd f	y'vvóríhe	lývvóríhe
3rd n	ý vvóríhe	lývvóríhe
Infinitive	àvvóríhe	

Table 3: Paradigm of the Verb *vvóríhe*.

2.2 Tense and Aspect Marking

Tense in PF is marked by additional sets of affixes that are appended to the verb in addition to the active/passive affixes. There are two broad groups of such affixes: suffixes, which are appended to the end of the verb and replace the ACT 1PL, 2PL suffixes in those persons, as well as circumfixes and prefixes, which are inserted before the active/passive markers and replace the replace the ACT 1PL, 2PL suffixes in some cases.

2.2.1 Suffixed Tenses

The present anterior and preterite are formed by appending a set of suffixes to the verb. Table 4 below lists the suffixes for those tenses. The present anterior has a perfective aspect, while the preterite has an imperfective aspect. The former is commonly used to describe events that are completed—particularly events that occurred recently, hence the name—while the latter is used to describe events that are ongoing or habitual.

Present Anterior	Sg	Pl
1st	$-^{L}\acute{e}$	$-^L \hat{a}$
2nd	- ^L á	- ^L áḍ
3rd	- ^L á	- ^L ér
Infinitive	-	-á

Preterite	Sg	Pl
1st	- ^L á	-y'ô
2nd	$-^{L}\acute{e}$	-y'é
3rd m	$-^{L}\acute{e}$	$-^{L}\acute{e}$
Infinitive	-	é

Table 4: Present Anterior and Preterite Affixes.

Neither tense distinguishes gender in the third person. All suffixes, except for the infinitive and 1PL, 2PL PRET, lenite any consonant *before* them, e.g. *ḥárḍáḍ* 'to be willing' to *jḥárḍát'hé* 'I was willing' but *dẹḥárḍáḍá* 'to have been willing'.

Diachronically, the 1SG PRET is an interesting case; in EUF, it was originally *- \acute{e} , but it later changed to - \acute{a} to distinguish it from the 2SG, 3SG PRES ANT. The remaining forms—save the infinitives, which are derived from the tenses' definite endings by analogy—originated from the PF simple past tenses.

The table below lists the example paradigm of the verb *ad'hór* in the present anterior and preterite tenses. Observe that there is no difference between the 1PL, 2PL active and passive.

Active	Sg	Pl
1st	jad'hóré	rad'hórâ
2nd	ḍad'hórá	b'had'hóráḍ
3rd m	lad'hórá	lad'hórér
3rd f	llad'hórá	llad'hórér
3rd n	ý'ad'hórá	lad'hórér
Infinitive	dad'hórá	

Passive	Sg	Pl
1st	vaď hóré	rad'hórâ
2nd	ḍad'hórá	b'had'hóráḍ
3rd m	y'ad'hórá	lýaď hórér
3rd f	y'ad'hórá	lýaď hórér
3rd n	ý'ad'hórá	lýaď hórér
Infinitive	áď hórá	

Table 5: Present Anterior Paradigm of the Verb ad'hór.

Active	Sg	Pl
1st	jad'hórá	rad'hóry'ô
2nd	ḍad'hóré	b'had'hóry'é
3rd m	lad'hóré	lad'hóré
3rd f	llad'hóré	llad'hóré
3rd n	ýaď hóré	lad'hóré
Infinitive	dad'hóré	

Passive	Sg	Pl
1st	vaď hórá	rad'hóry'ô
2nd	ḍad'hóré	b'had'hóry'é
3rd m	y'ad'hóré	lýaď hóré
3rd f	y'ad'hóré	lýaď hóré
3rd n	ý'ad'hóré	lýaď hóré
Infinitive	áď hóré	

Table 6: Preterite Paradigm of the Verb ad'hór.

2.3 Irregular Verbs

2.3.1 The Conjugation of ed 'to be'

Present	Sg	Pl
1st	vy'í	ósó
2nd	фe	b'heḍ
3rd m	le	lẹsó
3rd f	lle	llesó
3rd n	S	lasó
Infinitive	éḍ	

Pres. Ant.	Sg	Pl
1st	ve	ófý
2nd	дуf	b'hu
3rd m	leb'h	lefýr
3rd f	lle'bh	llefýr
3rd n	seb'h	lafýr
Infinitive	éf	vḍ

Preterite	Sg	Pl
1st	vet'h	weḍy'ó
2nd	ḍet'h	b'heḍy'é
3rd m	let'h	let'he
3rd f	llet'h	llet'he
3rd n	set'h	laet'h
Infinitive	ét'hed	

Table 7: Paradigm of the verb ed.

The etymology of these forms is mostly from a gradual simplification of coalesced forms of the personal pronouns with the PF copula. To compensate for the fact that PF lacks certain forms that are present in UF, some of the forms were coined by analogy. For instance, the PRES ANT INF $\acute{e}fyd$ is derived from the PRES ANT stem *fy and the PRES INF $\acute{e}d$, and the same is true for the PRET INF $\acute{e}t$ 'hed.

For obvious reasons, the copula lacks passive forms. At the same time, the first person forms are manifestly derived from the first person passive pronoun, for unknown reasons.

Unlike nearly every other word in the language, all forms of the copula are summarily stressed on the first syllable.

2.4 Noun Morphology

UF has 4 declensions. A definite and indefinite vocalic declension, and a definite and indefinite consonantal declension. As their names might suggest, the former two are used for nouns that start with a vowel, and the latter two for nouns that start with a consonant. UF has no morphologically separate articles; rather, the old PF articles have been incorporated into the declensions. Furthermore, UF no longer has a gender distinction in nouns.

2.4.1 Declension

The table below shows the affixes of the definite and indefinite declensions. The declensions are mostly identical, except that, as with the conjugation of verbs, the consonantal prefixes often end in a vowel (marked below with parentheses), which are not present in the vocalic declension.

Definite	Sg	Pl
Nominative	lá- ^L	lé- ^L
Vocative	\emptyset - L	\emptyset - L
Partitive	dy- L	dę- ^L
Accusative	y'i- ^L	sý- ^L
Inessive	dwá-	dwé-

Indefinite	Sg	Pl
Nominative	ŷn- ^N	ý- ^L
Vocative	/	/
Partitive	dŷn- ^N	dý- ^L
Accusative	s-L	S-
Inessive	dáhŷn-	dáhŷ-

Table 8: UF Declension.

Most of these forms cause lenition in the initial consonant of the noun, e.g. <code>dale</code> 'table' to <code>DEF ACC SG s'thale</code>; this lenition is blocked in the <code>INDEF ACC PL</code> due to the presence of a hypercorrected 's' in PF *ces, e.g. s'dale 'the tables (ACC)' (not s'thale, which is the singular), as well as in less commonly used forms such as the <code>DEF</code> inessive <code>dwádale</code> 'on the table'.

The INDEF NOM SG $\hat{y}n$ - prefix and some other forms nasalise nouns; as a reminder, this means that in nouns starting with d, the d is deleted, e.g. $\hat{y}nale$ 'a table'; it causes nasalisation in words that start with a vowel e.g. $ehy\delta$ 'shield' to $\hat{y}nehy\delta$ 'a shield.' The indefinite vocative does not exist, as that would make little sense. As lenition, nasalisation too is blocked in rarer forms, e.g. INDEF inessive $dah\hat{y}ndale$ 'on a table'.

The diachrony of these forms is mostly from the PF definite and indefinite pronouns, though some forms, such as the accusative, are borrowed from demonstratives instead (DEF from PF *celui and INDEF from PF *ce); the definite partitive forms are from the PF partitive article, and the indefinite forms are formed with an additional d- by analogy to the definite forms. The locative cases are combinations of the articles and PF prepositions.

Definite	Sg	Pl
Nominative	lát'hale	lét'hale
Vocative	t'hale	t'hale
Partitive	dyt'hale	dẹt'halẹ
Accusative	y'it'hale	sýť hale
Inessive	dwáḍalẹ	dwéḍalẹ

Indefinite	Sg	Pl
Nominative	ŷnalẹ	ýt'hale
Vocative	/	/
Partitive	dŷnalẹ	dýť hale
Accusative	st'hale	sḍalẹ
Inessive	dáhŷnḍalẹ	dáhýḍalẹ

Table 9: Consonantal declension of dale.

3 Examples

Çár-vá, sráhó dwávôt'há daçt'heá?

Charles.voc particle indef.acc-fish def.iness-mountain 2sg.act-buy-pres.ant.2sg

'Charles, you bought a fish on the mountain?'

4 Dictionary

lleb'h $\rightarrow e \dot{q}$. lle $\rightarrow e \dot{q}$.

açt'he v. tr. [PF acheter] To buy. ad'hór v. tr. [PF adore] To love, adore. ánvé v. tr. [PF animer] To bring to life, animate. þárḍáḍ v. [PF partante] (+ ACI) To be interested in, willing to, ready to, prepared for. bet'he adj. [PF petit] Small, little. b'hed $\rightarrow ed$. b'hedy'é $\rightarrow ed$. b'hu $\rightarrow e d$. Çár n. male given name, equivalent to English 'Kyle' or 'Charles'. c'hes part. [PF qu'est-ce que] interrogative particle. c'húr v. [PF court] To shrink, reduce in size, nardale n. [PF tableau] Table. $de \rightarrow ed$. \det 'h $\rightarrow ed$. **dír** v. tr. [PF dire] To say, tell. **Dóvníc'h** n. male or female given name, equivalent to English 'Dominic'. $dyf \rightarrow ed$. ebhe adj. [PF épais] Thick. $\acute{e}d \rightarrow ed$. edrrá adj. [PF étroit] Pointy. ed v. irreg. [PF être] FORMS: active only. PRES: SG vy'í, de, le, lle, s; pl ósó, b'hed, lesó, llesó, lasó; inf éd. PRES ANT: SG ve, dyf, leb'h, lleb'h, seb'h; PL ófý, b'hu, lefýr, llefýr, lafýr; inf éfyd pret: sg vet'h, det'h, let'h, llet'h, set'h; PL wedy'ó, b'hedy'é, let'he, *llet'he, laet'h;* INF *ét'hed.* To be. **Edy'ê** n. male given name, equivalent to English 'Stephen'. éfyd vet'h $\rightarrow ed$. ehyó n. [PF écusson] Shield. ét'hed $\rightarrow ed$. Já n. male or female given name, equivalent to English 'John' or 'Joan'. laet'h \rightarrow *ed*. lafýr $\rightarrow e d$. lár adj. [PF large] Wide, broad. lasó \rightarrow ed. leb'h \rightarrow *ed*. le \rightarrow *ed*. lefýr $\rightarrow ed$. lesó \rightarrow ed. let'h \rightarrow *ed*. let'he \rightarrow *ed*.

llefýr $\rightarrow ed$. llesó $\rightarrow ed$. llet'h \rightarrow *ed*. llet'he \rightarrow *ed*. ló adj. [PF long] Long. lúr adj. [PF lourd] Bulky, oversized, heavy. ob'heir v. (in)tr. [PF obéir] To obey. **ófý** \rightarrow *ed*. $\mathbf{\acute{o}s\acute{o}}$ → ed. rá adj. [PF grand] Big, large, great. ráhó n. [PF poisson] Fish. rvá interj. [of unknown origin] FORMS: after words that end with 'r', this is spelt '-vá' instead. Alas, woe, oh. Exclamation of distress, surprise, sadness, or regret. seb'h \rightarrow *ed*. $\mathbf{s} \rightarrow ed$. set'h \rightarrow *ed*. vá $\rightarrow rv$ á. $\mathbf{ve} \rightarrow ed$. vôt'há n. [PF montagne] Mountain. vvóríhe v. (in)tr. [PF mémoriser] To remember. vy'í $\rightarrow e d$. wedy'ó $\rightarrow ed$. y'ír v. (in)tr. [PF ouïr] To hear, understand, listen.