Rebuilding the Rhaeto-Cisalpine written language: Guidelines and criteria. Part I: ORS-Orthography

Claudi Meneghin
Institud de studis Rhaeto-Cisalpins

Abstract

This paper is the first one of a series aimed at reconstructing a unitary Rhaeto-Cisalpine written language, including ISO 639-3 Piedmontese, Ligurian, Lombard, Emilian-Romagnol, Venetan, Istriot, Ladin, Romansh and Friulian. We shall assume that, on the one hand, written language is (relatively) independent from its spoken counterpart; on the other hand, we will fully treat the Rhaeto-Cisalpine (or Padanese) system as a unitary one, belonging to the western branch of Romance languages. After showing that none of the current orthographies now in place can be extended to cope with the whole language, we propose to retrieve a medieval-like orthography (close to that of Subalpine sermons), in the same spirit of Alibert's for Occitan, Stich's for Francoprovençal and Hull's unified Padanian orthography. We yield a few examples of transcriptions of excerpts from literary texts.

Keywords: Rhaeto-Cisalpine, Padanese, written language, speech, orthography, western-Romance languages, ISO 639-3, Piedmontese, Ligurian, Lombard, Emilian-Romagnol, Venetan, Istriot, Ladin, Romansh, Friulian.

1 Introduction

This paper is the first one of a series aimed at reconstructing a unitary written-language system for the Rhaeto-Cisalpine (or *Padanese*) domain. Our work lies in the following framework:

- According to Hull (1982), Schmid (1956, 79-80), Bec (1970-71, vol. II, 316), the Rhaeto-Cisalpine (or Padanese) system is a unitary one, belonging to the western branch of Romance languages, and thus strictly related to French, Occitan, Catalan (This is nowadays almost universally accepted, except perhaps —as efficaciously depicted in Hull (1989, 8)— by some scholars still applying unscientific criteria unconsciously inherited by the *Italian Risorgimento* political bias).

Ianua. Revista Philologica Romanica
Vol. 7 (2007): 37–72
ISSN 1616-413X
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

© Romania Minor

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

- This piece of language planning falls into the categories of *Ausbau* (Kloss 1967), *Gestaltung* or *Aufbau* (Schmid 1982, 1994) and also *Einbau* (Fishman 2007), the latter meant as *the concern for fostering similarity-focused emphases* (Thus, at least concerning this example, *Ausbau* and *Einbau* do not seem to be opposite categories; of course the connected Padanese *Abstand* language is simply the direct sum of the Romance varieties spoken in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain which, according to Hull (1982, 660), «although heteronomous today, are essentially uniform»).

- Moreover, it will be aimed at promoting *a dialectic between inclusive theories and inclusive practices* and at *deconstructing exclusive ones* (Beaugrande 1999): our claim is that, by a sociolinguistic point of view, the artificial extension of the Italian language to the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain is precisely an exclusive operation (this fact will be proved in a subsequent part of this paper). As a matter of fact, borrowing Phillipson's (1992, 47) words, «centuries of linguistic discrimination have convinced most speakers [...] that their own speech is irredeemably inferior and thus improper for participating in socially or professionally significant discourse» (quoted in Beaugrande 1999; the above statement does not hold for the Swiss side of the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain). Thus most varieties of the Padanese language have lost their «high» registers. These series of papers is aimed at reconstructing these registers, mostly by providing a suitable written-language tool.

- We will fully share the view according to which written language is a (relatively) independent system from its spoken counterpart: see Cercle Linguistique de Prague (1929, 3.a-3.b), Linell (2005), Vachek (1959), and Aaron & Joshi (2006) for most recent developments.

The above independence lies of course within the bounds of a higher-level correspondence, see e.g. Vachek (1959, 15): we could efficaciously talk about a «complementary» role of the speech and written language (Vachek 1959, 13). Oversynthesising, on the one hand it could be stated that «understanding» written language (see Winograd (1980) for a deep discussion of this term) mostly pertains to visual perception; according to Frinta's (1909, 36) synaesthetical words, «the role of orthography is to speak quickly and distinctly to the eyes» (quoted in Vachek 1959, 8). On the other hand «understanding» the speech essentially deals with the auditory apparatus. Moreover, speech involves a much higher degree of feedback between hearing and speaking than written language between reading and writing (Linell 2005).

It seems that properly acknowledging this independence is a crucial matter for endangered languages (as Padanese is, according to *Unesco red book*, see below): of course, it would be optimal to safeguard both spoken and written language; nevertheless, each one of the two needs a suitable strategy to achieve this goal, and the above alleged motivations clearly show that those strategies should be independent: here we will focus on construing an appropriate strategy for written language.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Consider for instance the lack of prose work in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine language (in contrast with the still large amount of poetry). Indeed, complex prose work could not be vehiculated throughout the whole linguistic domain, because of dialectal variation, forced by current orthographies into writing. Thus, a reader of a certain dialect is in general able to read phonetic transcriptions of texts written in another dialect; nevertheless he/she is unable, without training, to lead them back to the form they would have assumed in his/her own dialect. In this way, complex prose work suffers from the lack of potential readers and, as a consequence, has no market. Here the proper nature of written language is at stake: borrowing Venezky's (1999, 4) words about English orthography, we could state that «The written norm [...] is a complex system that preserves bits of history (i.e. etymology), facilitates understanding, and also translates into sound.»

Also, following Chomsky & Halle (1968, 49): «The fundamental principle of orthography is that phonetic variation is not indicated where it is predictable by general rule.»

We could also quote Stich's (1998, 83) words, correctly focusing on the problem:

> Il faut aussi considerer qu'une graphie phonétique n'est pas toujours facile à lire [...] Qui peut reconnaître du premier coup d'oeil cette phrase reproduisant la prononciation d'un titi pariesien: *vla sè modiz ouazo kyi s anfui* (voilà ces maudits oiseaux qui s'enfuient)?

Indeed, if phonetic orthographies (in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain, *de facto* variously mimicking the Italian standard orthography, with the relevant exception of Romansh) are locally adequate as a mean for representing the speech by written signs, they tend to conceal the unity of the language behind the faithful representation of its dialectal variation (which has progressed to a high level in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain), making reading more difficult. This is far from surprising, since, according to Vachek (1959, 8):

> while any system of phonetic transcription provides means for an optical recording of the purely acoustic make-up of spoken utterances, the traditional writing system increasingly tends to refer to the meaning directly without necessarily taking a détour via the corresponding spoken utterances.

On the contrary, giving up a strict correspondence between graphemes and phonemes could impulse prose literary production, because complex works could be felt as universal throughout the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain, by making reference to the meaning easier to read. The readers of each dialect would apply slightly different sets of spelling rules. Thus the local identitarian issue (i.e. linguistic variation) would be driven from the phase of writing to the phase of reading. And our ORS orthography can be used even for each Rhaeto-Cisalpine variety (Piedmontese, Ligurian, Lombard, Emilian-Romagnol, Venetan, Istriot, Ladin, Romansh, Friulian) separately.

Ianua 7 (2007)
ISSN 1616-413X

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

This seems to be strictly necessary, but far from sufficient, since, as a matter of fact, most Padanian people are analphabet in their own tongue. The extent to which the Rhaeto-Cisalpine language is endangered is a serious socio-linguistic trouble, which, undoubtfully, would deserve a rigourous scientific analysis.

If the prose work throve again, this fact could hold in check the above worrying phenomenon, by glueing all different dialect communities onto a larger one (even if only by the written language side). The sinergic effect of this operation upon the prestige of the language would manifest without delay. And an increased prestige of written tongue could in turn increase the chances of survival of spoken language, at present in danger:

Table 1[1]

Name	**ISO 639-3 code**	**Danger**
Piedmontese	Pms	PE
Ligurian	Lij	PE
Lombard	Lmo	PE
Emilian-Romagnol	Eml	PE
Venetan	Vec	NE
Istriot	Ist	SE
Ladin	Lld	E
Romansh	Roh	E
Friulian	Fur	E

On the other hand, it should be taken into account that contemporary computer technology is likely to confer even more importance than in the past to written language, by making it *de facto* free from geographical constraints. This raises the urge of an appropriate development of a written norm. Indeed, if we accept that no hierarchy holds in between written language and speech (Vachek 1959, 12 ff.), we should also carefully consider that the former now allows a potentially worldwide pit, so it should be left free to follow its autonomous way of development.

Summing up, phonetic orthographies shouldn't be taken as a basis for written language *per se*; in other words, their role should be rather meant as some kind of (valuable) interface between speech and writing: for instance, they seem to be specially useful to teach Rhaeto-Cisalpine dialects to people who have been alphabetized in Italian (see for instance Vitali 2004-05), thus turning into a useful tool to reverse language shift to Italian. Although, they carry the implicit danger of ending up by forcing phenomena characteristic of the speech into writing.

The case of English tongue, and of its vital development, proves, on the contrary, that a neutral (or even negative) feedback between speech and written norm (see also Cercle Linguistique de Prague 1929, 3.a.5) is far from being disadvantageous (for a survey of English spelling, see Carney 1994, Venezky 1999; see also Vachek 1959).

[1] SE = Seriously endangered, E = Endangered, PE = Potentially endangered, NE = Not endangered; source: *Unesco red book of endangered languages*. Pms, Lij, Lmo and Eml are being considered to be put in the «endangered» category.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Upon this basis, we propose to retrieve a medieval-like orthography, in the same spirit as Alibert's one for Occitan language (see e.g. Bec 1978), Stich's (1998) for Francoprovençal, and Hull's (1982) UPO (Unified Padanian Orthography). Its archaic character will be obliged: subsequent epochs show indeed an increasing tendence to italianising the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain by the levelling action of Milan and Venice (see Sanga 1984, 5.1); a suitable construction of a genuine the Rhaeto-Cisalpine written norm deserves thus to counteract that tendence, since italianising the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain simply means (gradually) replacing its varietis by the Italian language, as nowadays facts are dramatically proving. The genuinity of this norm should also help Padanian speakers or writers to free themselves from the sentiment of subordination to the Italian language.

Our orthography will be *morphophonemic* (see Venezky 1999, Vachek 1959) in character: on the one hand, it will have a phonemic side, inasmuch it will resume western Romance characters (for instance the use of the trigraphs *que*, *qui*, mostly to be read /ke/, /ki/); it will have a morphemic side as well, since the actual phonetic realisation of a grapheme will in general depend upon the context which it lies within (we cite: our historical use of the graphemes *x*, *h*; the French-like etymological *est* and *et* for 'is' and 'and'; the conservation of most Latin consonantal groups, see below). Yet its morphemic character well be less developed than in English orthography.

We will call our orthography *Orthographa de Referença S (ORS)* recalling Stich's (1998) work for Francoprovençal; the *S* in *ORS* is meant to stress the (morphemic) sigmatic nature of the written plural marker (see below).

2 The Rhaeto-Cisalpine language: an overview

We briefly hint at the geographical domain of the Rhaeto-Cisalpine language: according to Hull (1982) (who prefers the term 'Padanese'), it is made up by the Po valley, with its tributaries and parallel rivers (Reno, Adige, Piave, Tagliamento, etc.) extended to «include the Ligurian coast (forming the southern side of the western Appenine watershed), the Istrian peninsula, and the Rhine, Inn and Spöl valleys of Rhaetia and Alpine Lombardy which the Romans colonized from the Po Valley and later joined to Cisalpine Gaul to form the diocese of Italia Annonaria.»

The Roja and Bévera valleys in France and the Montefeltro region in the Marches belong to the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain as well; on the contrary, the upper valleys of Piedmont-Val d'Aosta belong to the Occitan or Francoprovençal languages and there are some Alaman, Bavarian and Slovene pockets in the Alps. Varieties of Rhaeto-Cisalpine speech are found also in Lucania, Sicily, Bonifacio (Corsica), Carloforte and Calasetta (Isola San Pietro and Isola Sant'Antioco, off south-west Sardinia) and in the small Emilian enclaves of Gombitelli and Sillano in the north-west of Tuscany.

The administrative or state borders and the linguistic ones are in general unrelated.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

The Rhaeto-Cisalpine system (which includes Romansh, Ladin, Friulian, Piedmontese, Lombard, Emilan-Romagnol, Ligurian, Istriot and Venetan) is a unitary Galloromanic system, strictly relative of French, Francoprovençal and Occitan-Catalan, and essentially unrelated to Italian, according to Hull (1982, xl):

> the Ladin, Gallo-Italic and Venetian dialects constitute an essentially homogeneous linguistic system displaying common characteristics that set them apart from the dialects of Peninsular and Insular Italy and ally them closely to those of Northern France, Occitania and Catalonia.

Moreover, while analysing the position of Friulian tongue within Romance languages, the Occitanist Pierre Bec states that:

> A la fois novateur et archaïsant par rapport au gallo-italien, le rétofriulan doit être de toute façon intégré à l'ensemble gallo-roman [...] cisalpin, dont il constitue [...] une aire marginale et conservatrice. [...] vue en diachronie, une certaine unité peut être assurée, surtout entre Raetoromania et Cisalpinia (Bec 1970-71, vol. II, 316).

On the other hand, Heinrich Schmid (1956, 79-80) concludes:

> Im Rätoromanische treten uns schließlich Mundarten entgegen, die —was die grudlegenden Sprachzüge betrifft— von solchen Überlagerungen nahezu frei sind und in der echsten Form noch heute einen rein westromainschen Typus (eigener Prägung) darstellen. Jene Merkmale, die das Rätoromanische mit oberitalienische (Rand-)Gebieten teilt gehören fast ausnahmslos dem gemeinsamen westromanischen Charakter Grundstock an, der ja gerade den *un*italienischen Charakter all dieser Mundarten ausmacht.

Following again G. Hull (1982, 660):

> [...] the Romance vernaculars of Northern Italy and Rhaetia have conserved, and in many cases have developed further, their original Gallo-Roman structure, and the superficial Italic [...] influences on certain of them are insufficient to warrant a classification of all or part of the Rhaeto-Cisalpine zone as «Italo-Romance» in the strictly linguistic sense of the term. The «Padanian» dialects, although heteronomous today, are essentially uniform [...]

One of the most important Gallo-Roman features of this system is the regular fall of all final atonic vowels except *–a*: /ka:mp, ka˜:p/ 'field', /pa:rt/ 'part', /kwe:st, ke:st/ 'this' (but: /p'Orta/ 'door', /f'enEstra/ 'window'); the main exception are Venetan, Ligurian (with its transitional dialects to Piedmontese) and the dialects of a section of the Lower Ticino Basin comprising the districts of Borgomanero and Galliate (Novara), Busto Arsizio (Varese) and Bienate (Milan). In all these places, the masculin final markers /o/ and /u/ have to be considered retrogressions of the Gallo-Roman apocope due to medieval Italian adstratum effects (Hull 1982, 214 ff.).

Before going on, we recall that phonetic transcriptions will be enclosed by couple of slashes. All of them will use the SAMPA system.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

3 Guidelines and criteria

On the one hand we will make morphophonemic choices for our orthographical system, in such a way that the same script will be read in different ways according to both dialect and lexical variation; on the other hand the underlying philosophy of our reconstruction will be the aim at pointing out the fact that Rhaeto-Cisalpine tongue belongs to the western branch of Romance languages. This will be done also by adopting most of the current western Romance orthographical devices.

In the same spirit of Cercle Linguistique de Prague (1929, 1.b), we will consider the diachronical and syncronichal points of view to be intimately related, and we will not separate them. In fact our orthography will initially spring from diachronical motivations. That is implicit, since it is assumed to be at least in part etymological. Nevertheless, we will operate syncronichal generalisations to retrieve a minimal amount of regularity, at least at the local level. In other words, we will try to set up a system such that, for each dialect, reading rules show a foreseeable behaviour. The reading rules of different dialects will turn one into the others by regular transition functions.

Summing up, on one side we will use the graphemes *j*, *x*, *ç* mostly in an etymological way. On the other side, we will use the (mostly silent) desinence *–s* to mark plural nouns and adjectives; according to the principle of the most conservative form, we will always write the *–r* marker for the infinitive of verbs: by a phonetic point of view, the latter shows a variegated degree of preservation (see below).

In the same spirit, we will write *u* to synthesise the equally possible outcomes /u/ and /y/: consider for instance the important work LSI (2004) for Swiss-Lombard: of course it has been built up to render every dialectal variation by means of the orthography. Our goal is in some sense the opposite: nevertheless, LSI (2004) gives us the important help of proposing us the most conservative form for the each word. For instance, we have both *mur* and *mür* (/mu:r, my:r/ 'wall') in the LSI (2004) descriptive orthography. In this case, the natural orthographical choice will be the one corresponding to the pronunciation (/mu:r/) of Mesolcina valley (and Upper Valtellina). Most Lombard people read rather /my:r/, but this is not idiosyncratic, mainly because this *u* vs. /y/ correspondence almost exactly matches with the French and Occitan situations (The same correspondence is also in force in Milanese classical orthography).

By both the point of view of the most conservative forms and of the strategy of matching as far as possible with western Romance tongues, we adopt the digraphs *pl*, *bl* and *fl* typical of Rhenania, Engadine and Val Müstair, Val Bregaglia, Val Poschiavo, Upper Valtellina and Livigno, Val Gandino (Bergamo), the upper Chiese Basin, the Noce Basin, the Dolomitic valleys of Gardena, Badia, Marebbe and Livinallongo, and Friuli (see Hull 1982, 379) even to the extent of representing /pj/ /bj/ e /fj/ of most Rhaeto-Cisalpine dialects. For instance, we shall write *plan* to render /plaN/, /pjaN/, /pja˜/, /pla/ and /pja/ 'plan'.

The latter choice has been made in the same spirit of Stich's for Franco-provençal: see Stich 1998, 49. There is plenty of motivations for this. On the

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

one hand, conservative dialects couldn't in any case accept the innovative form *pian*, while the innovative ones can think of the digraphs *pl*, *bl* and *fl* as *flag graphemes*, which could stress some kind of distinction from the Italian written tongue, at present socially predominating (except of course the domain of the Romansh language). One the other hand, this global strategy points out much better the Gallo Romance nature of the Rhaeto-Cisalpine language. Unfortunately, the most innovating outcomes like /ptS/<pl (upper Valtellina) and /tS/ < *pl* /dZ/ < *bl* /S/ < *fl* (mainly in Liguria) seem to show a low degree of compatibility with the above device (one could envisage the devices *pj*, *bj*, *fj* instead, as in Di Peroti [private communication]).

3.1 The plural marker: feminine

In most cases, the Rhaeto-Cisalpine feminine plural marker is derived from the Latin first declension accusative *–as*, which evolved into *–es* (Hull (1982, 439) and IS (1995, 78) for a slightly different point of view in diachronics), and then into /–es/, /–e/, /–is/, /–i/, or ∅, typical phonemes of contemporary Padanese. All these outcomes will be synthesised by the historical Cisalpine script *–es* (Hull 1982, 439). There are exceptions: in the dialects of Colla valley (upper Luganese), upper Valtellina, Livigno, and Bregaglia valley (Hull 1982, 438-439), *–as* evolves directly into *–a* and, sometimes, later on, into *–an*: *lan gamba* (the legs, Bregaglia, current orthography). Moreover, the Romansh language fully preserves *–as*, even as a phonetic outcome. These latter cases (if considered in isolation) will be dealt with by the etymological device *–as* (with silent *–s* in the Lombard dialects). The Friulian device *–is* (correponding to a feminine singular marker *–e*) will be admitted as well. We recall although that a shifht to the *–es* marker should be supported anyway, if the above varieties are not being considered in isolation.

The simultaneous existence of dialects with feminine plural in *–a* and of dialects whose feminine plural is derived by the Rhaeto-Cisalpine tipus *–es* seems to dispute the diachronical view proposed in IS (1995, 78): we prefer indeed G. Hull's (1982, 439) point of view. Accordingly, the fall of final *–s* should be thought of as subsequent to the transformation of *–as* in *–es*, where it happened: otherwise it seems that we have resistence to the transformation *–a* > *–e*.

This sigmatic device has been adopted in Francoprovençal as well, with an almost always silent final *–s* (see Stich 1998, 81). Finally, if a singular word ends with a consonant (i.e. it derives from a Latin declension different from the first one) the *–es* desinence is driven to a simple *–s*; analogously to French, singular words ending in *–s* will stay uniflected when turned to plural. Here are some examples:

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Table 2

ORS	Most common pron.	English
donnes	/dOn, d'Oni, d'One/	women
duonnas	/d'wOnas, d'wOna/	women
portes	/p'O:rt, p'Orti, p'Orte/	doors
portas	/p'Ortas, p'Orta/	doors
actions	/asj'u, atsj'uN, atsj'oN, /atsj'u˜:, atsj'O˜:, aktsj'o˜s, aktsiuns/	actions
citats	/tsit'a:, sit'a:, tsitats, tSitats, tSita:/	cities
púles	/p'2les, p'ylas, p'yres/	flea, fleas

As a consequence of the treatment of *q* and *g* (see below §§3.4-3.7), if a singular word ends by *–ca* or *–ga*, its plural will end by *–ques*, *–gues*.

3.2 The plural marker: masculine

Since in this first part of the paper the ORS orthography is thought of as a device to maximize the surveyability of the unitary character of the Rhaeto-Cisalpine system, fully accepting, anyway, its linguistic variation, we will propose a set of devices maximizing the regularity of written language without a full standardisation (Our proposal of a very written standard will be shown in the subsequent parts of this paper. Nonetheless, we would like to disclose that our solution will essentially amount to proposing the Ladin masculine plural markers shown in the second item in the below list).

To mark the masculine plural, we propose that:

1. When masculine singular and plural are at present identical, a silent *–s* will be added to the plural noun or adjective (unless the singular form ends by *–ç*, *–s*, *–x* or *–z*: in this case, the plural forms will stay uninflected or will be palatalised, see the table here below); this device will be envisaged (as a regularising one) even if the former plural inflection historically ended with *–i*; as to the latter, it should however be kept into account that it is not necessarily a direct continuation of a Latin nominative plural, but it could have formed as an innovative marker due to a final oblique -s tending to become silent (see Anglade 1921, quoted in Hull 1982, 478).

2. When a former *–i* in the ancient plural form retracted and palatalised the preceding consonant (mainly in Ladin and eastern Lombard), this fact will be preserved in the written language as well and marked by:

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Table 3[2]

SAMPA sing.	SAMPA plur.	Note	ORS sing.	ORS plur.
/k/	/tS/	tonic	c	ch
/sk/	/S/	tonic	sc	sch/sh
vowel + /l/	vowel + /i/		l	ly/y
/n/	/J/	atonic	n	ny
/s/	/S/		s	sh
/t/	/tS/		t	tg
/ts/	/tS/		ç	ch

3. If a final phonetic /–i/ is still present (mainly Veneto, Liguria and some iles in Lombardy) it will be preserved in the written language as well.

These devices for marking the plural correctly stress the importance of the diachronical analogy between western-Romance plurals and the Rhaeto-Cisalpine ones. The more conservative dialects (those with sounding *–s*) will display a closer analogy to Catalan and Occitan, while the most innovating ones, like ISO 639-3 Piedmontese and Lombard will display an almost complete analogy to French, since there is no phonetic /s/ in French (and Francoprovençal) plurals, apart from the so called residual *liaison*; nevertheless French orthography (thanks to standardisation and officiality) kept itself better preserved along time.

3.3 The infinitive

Upon the basis of the principle of the most conservative form, we will always write the desinence *–r* for the infinitive, which, as stated above, is variously preserved by a phonetic point of view (see e.g. Jaber & Jud 1933, table 1014).

This device has been adopted even in languages (such as Occitan, Catalan, French and Ladin) where the final phonetic /r/ has almost completely disappeared: as to French and Ladin (Dell'Aquila 2006, 265), consider the infinitive of the verbs of the first group *parler* /paRl'e/; about Catalan see e.g. Fabra (1918, 26), concerning Occitan e.g. Salvat (1943, 9). As far as the latter tongues are concerned, the corresponding example is of course *parlar*; in Rhaeto-Cisalpine both *parlar* and *parler* are preserved. Both /e/ and /E/ are possible as thematic vowels.

The written final *r* cannot be considered a *flag character* since this solution is closer to written Italian tongue than the more «dialectal» ones without *–r*. Though, this choice seems unavoidable for written tongue: depriving the infinitive of its specific marker (*–r* within Romance languages) is likely to jeopardise

[2] At present, the use of *h* in Ladin is still the same of «classical» Lombard orthography, thus pointing out gutturality: as a matter of fact, the current Ladin orthography uses the couple *c/ch sc/sch* in the inverse way with respect to ORS. As explained below (§3.4) we prefer the more natural use of *h* to indicate palatality, as in Romansh (and of course North Occitan and French).

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

the comprehension of written text, by masking the function of the words pointing out actions, such as the infinitives.

Our solution, unfortunately, introduces an ambiguity in the phonetic rendering of the written texts in western Lombard: this concerns the duration of the vowel or diphtong preceding the infinitive marker *–r*. Indeed, according to each different dialect, it could be short or long (see e.g. LSI 2004, at the entry *piasé* —which we shall write *plaxeir*— where all Swiss Lombard variants are recorded), whilst in Lombard tongue a vowel, if followed by a simple *r* in final tonic syllable, is always long. The motivations we alleged here above, however, well show that it is highly preferable to introduce this idiosynchrasy rather than eliminating the ortographic marker *–r*.

3.4 The use of *c*, *g* and *j*

These characters will be used mostly in an etymological way, stressing the appartenence of Rhaeto-Cisalpine to the western branch of Romance languages. Nevertheless, some synchronical generalisations will be made, for the sake of regularity.

Let us look into the use of *c*, *g* and *j*: we will need some preliminar phonological considerations.

In most Rhaeto-Cisalpine dialects the outcomes of Latin *c*/*g* followed by *a*, *o*, *u* are /k/ and /g/; we will write *c*/*g* accordingly. To different extents, Romansh, Ladin, Friulian and some Alpine Lombard dialects palatalise to /tS/ and /dZ/, analogously to Alpine Occitan. We will write *ch*/*gi* or *ch*/*j*.

When Latin *c* resp. *g* are followed by *i* or *e* or *j* is followed by *a*, *o*, *u*, various possible outcomes are, according to Hull (1982, 296-308):

- /s/ resp. /z/ Piedmontese, Ligurian, Eastern Lombard, Venetan (in alternation with /tS/ resp. /dZ/ see below).
- /tS/ resp. /dZ/ Novara province, Western Lombardy, Canton Tessin, Canton Graubünden, Valtellina (together with the contiguous Upper Val Brembana in Bergamo province), the Giudicaria valleys, Val di Sole and the Novella Valley (Val di Non), the Avisio Basin, Val Gardena, Val Badia and Val Marebbe, Val Livinallongo, the greater part of Northern Friuli, the Frignano district of the Emilian Appenines, and the south-eastern corner.
- /S/ resp. /Z/ higher valleys of the Toce, Ticino and Adda (excepting Upper Valtellina); the Engadinish villages of S-chamf, Zernez and Ftan, together with Tschierv in neighbouring Val Müstair; and the western part of the Frignano district; Old Milanese, now in regression by the Italian superstratum effects of /tS/ resp. /dZ/.
- /ts/ resp. /dz/: central Padanian, also /T/ resp. /D/ in Bolognese and some Venetan varieties.

All these sounds will be put in connection with the orthographical devices *–c+{e, i}–* resp *–g+{e, i}–*.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

On the other hand, *cl*+VOWEL resp. *gl*+VOWEL are either preserved as such (/kl/ resp. /gl/: Romansh, Friulian, alpine Lombard dialects) either palatalised to /tS/ resp. /dZ/: once more, the written norm will be etymological, and it will envisage the devices *cl* resp. *gl*. Finally, the sound /tS/ could also arise from the palatalisation of final Latin *–it*: Lat. NOCTEM > /n'Oit/ (Alpine dialects, generally written *noit*) or /nOtS/ (elsewhere, generally written *nocc* in the current orthographies; we completely discard the italianism *nott*). Our morphophonemic orthography will respect this source as well.

Thus, oversynthesising, the «genuine» mean-value Rhaeto-Cisalpine relationship between the graphemes *c*+VOWEL resp. *g*+VOWEL is simply the French, Occitan or Catalan one; this relationship naturally extends to the digraphs involving the voiced consonant *g*+VOWEL: the perypheral relationship (*c*+{*e*, *i*} sounds /tS/, otherwise it sounds /k/; *g*+{*e*, *i*} sounds /dZ/, otherwise it sounds /g/) should be explained instead:

a) by assuming a more conservative dynamics (Alpine dialects: the phonological situation of Romansh and Ladin is similar, even if Romansh uses *tsch* and *tg* to represent /tS/);

b) by the Italian superstratum effects (lowlands dialects).

We will also reintroduce the historical Cisalpine grapheme *ç*, variously attested in Padanian historical texts (see e.g. Brevini 1984; Hull 1982, 186).

By the point of view of contemporary Padanese, it will sound, in every position (see Hull 1982, 299):

a) /ts/ in La Spezia province, Lunigiana from Bagnone southwards, Frignano), areas of the Ligurian Appenines, Novara province, the north-western fringe of Lombardy with Canton Ticino and Valtellina, the Grisons, the Dolomites (Val di Fassa, Val Gardena, Val Badia and Val Marebbe, Val Livinallongo, Ampezzo, Auronzo and Upper Comelico), and northern Friuli (also /T/ in Bolognese and some Venetan varieties);

b) /s/ elsewhere (possibly shifting to /S/ in old Milanese, now in regression).

Summing up, our spelling rules for the graphemes *c*, *g*, *j* will be (but etymological exceptions are possible):

- *c* resp. *g*+CONSONANT different from *h*, *l* sound /k/ resp. /g/.
- *c*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} sounds /k/ whilst *g*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} sounds /g/.
- *c*+{*e*, *i*}; *ç*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} and *sc*+{*e*, *i*} admit variuos palatal or apical pronunciations, but the mean-value one is /s/ and the conservative ones are /ts/, /tS/; no opposition is envisaged in between *c*+{*e*, *i*} and *sc*+{*e*, *i*}, but local variations are feasible.
- *g*+{*e*, *i*} admits variuos palatal or apical pronunciations, but the mean-value ones are /z/ or /Z/ and the conservative ones are /dz/, /dZ/.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

- *ch*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} sounds /tS/ and is used only in Romansh, Ladin, Friulian and alpine Lombard to represent the palatalised outcomes of Latin CA, CO, CU. The grapheme *ch*+CONSONANT always sounds /k/.

- *cl*+VOWEL resp. *gl*+VOWEL sound either /tS/ (mean-value pronunciation) or /kl/ (conservative pronunciation), resp. either /dZ/ (mean-value pronunciation) or /gl/ (conservative pronunciation).

- *j*+VOWEL admits variuos palatal or apical pronunciations, but the mean-value ones are /z/, /Z/ and the conservative one is /dZ/.

- *gi*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} (but *j*+{*a*, *o*, *u*} will be allowed as well) sounds /dZ/ and is used only in Romansh, Ladin, Friulian and alpine Lombard to represent the palatalised outcomes of Latin GA, GO, GU.

Other cases of /tS/ will be dealt with by using *tg*/*tj* according, if feasible, to the etymology. Finally, note that the palatal lateral approssimant /L/ (or its outcome /j/) will be rather connected to the grapheme *ly* (see §3.7), so no ambiguity will arise with the grapheme *gl*. It should be noted that connecting /dz/ and *g*, *j* is characteristic of some Francoprovençal and Occitan varieties (Stich 1998, 39 and 80; Bec 1978, 44; Salvat 1943, 6), so it can be extended rightly to the eastern Lombard /z/ < /dz/ outcomes of Lat. J/G in the same positions.

When /tS/ is the outcome of the palatalisation of VOWEL+*it* at the end of a morpheme, it will be connected to this digraph; as a matter of fact, the phonetic outcome /it/ is still preserved in some Alpine dialects:

TABLE 4

ORS	**Most common pron.**	**English**
noit	/n'Oit/ (Alps) /nOtS/ (most dialects)	night
lait	/l'ait/ (Alps) /latS/ (most dialects)	milk
speitar	/speit'a, speit'ar, spetS'a/	to wait

The grapheme *ç* will be allowed to be replaced by *t* when preceded by a semiconsonantic *i* or etymological residue of such an *i*.

TABLE 5

ORS	**Most common pron.**	**English**
ambulança	/ambyl'antsa, ambyl'ansa, ambul'ansa/	ambulance
iniçi/initi	/initsi, in'isi, in'ise/	beginning
gràçia/gràtia	/gr'atsja, gr'asja/	grace, thanks
spuça	/Sp'ytsa, sp'2sa, sp'utsa, sp'usa/	smell
democràtia	/democr'asia/	democracy

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

ORS	Roh (Vallader)	Fur	Lld	W-Lmo (Ticinese)	E-Lmo (Bergam.)	Pms (Turinese)	Eml (Bolognese)	Lij (Genoese)	Vec	English
cent	—	/tSeNt/	/tSeNt/	/tSe:Nt/	/sEnt/	/seNt/	/ts{nt/	/s'entu/	/s'ento/	one hundred
cient	/ts'i@nt/	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	one hundred
cercar	—	—	—	/tSerk'a/	/serk'a/	—	—	/serk'a:/	/serk'ar/	to look for
cerchar	/tSertSa:r/	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	to look for
cercær	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	to look for
quirir/	—	—	/kir'i/	/kwir'i/	—	/serk'e/	/tsark'Er/	—	—	to look for,
qüirir										to query
chirir	—	/tSir'i/	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	to look for,
										to query
cert	/tSErt/	/si'Ert/	/tSErt/	/tSE:rt/	/s'Ert/	/tSErt/	/tse:rt/	—	—	certain
ciel	/tSe:l/	/tsi:l/	/tsj'el/	/tSe:l/	/sjel/	/tSe:l/	/tsi:l/	/se:/	/sj'elo/	sky
circa	/ts'irk@/	—	/ts'irka/	/tS'irka/	/sirk'a/	/tS'irka/	/ts'i:rka/	/sirk'a/	/sirk'a/	around
citat	/tsit'a/	/tSit'a:t/	/tsit'e/	/tSit'a:/	/sit'at/	/tSit'a/	/tsit'E/	/sit'{:/	/sit'a/	city
civil	/tsi'vil/	/tSiv'i:l/	/tsi'vil/	/tSi'i:l/	/si'il/	/siv'il/	/tsiv'i:l/	/siv'ile/	/siv'ile/	civil
clamar	/kl@ma:r/	/klam'a:/	/klam'e/	/tSam'a/	/tSam'a/	—	—	/tSam'a:/	/tSam'ar/	to call
clamer	—	—	—	—	—	/tSam'e/	/tSam'Er/	—	—	to take
clapar	—	—	—	/tSap'a/	/tSap'a/	—	—	/tSap'a:/	/tSap'ar/	to take
claper	—	—	/tSap'e/	—	—	/tSap'e/	/tSap'Er/	—	—	to take
clav	/kla:f/	/kla:f/	/klef/	/tS'a:f/	/tS'af/	/tS'af/	/tSEv/	/tS'ave/	/tS'ave/	key
glaç	/glatS/	—	—	/dZas/	/dZas/	—	/dZa:ts/	—	/dZ'aso/	ice
glaça	—	/gl'atSe/	/gl'atSa/	—	—	/dZ'asa/	—	/dZ'asa/	—	ice
gleixa	—	/gl'ezie/	/glj'ei̯Ja/	/tS'eza/	/gl'eiza, tS'eza/	/tS'eza/	/dZi:za/	/dZeZa/	/tSeZa/	church
juny	/dZyn, Zyn/	/j'uJ/	/ZyJ/	/dZyJ, ZyN/	/z2J/	/dzyN/	/zoJ/	/zyJu/	/dZuJo/	June
just	/dZySt, ZySt/	/j'ust/	/dZySt/	/dZy:S, tZy:St/	/z2st, dZ2st/	/dZy:S/	/dZost/	/z'ystu/	/dZusto/	right

A dash in a cell either means that the SAMPA transcription has to be found in one of the adjacent cells, or that the corresponding word envisages another theme in that language; the ORS transcriptions are broad.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

3.5 The use of *qu* and *gu*

Since we keep the grapheme *h* to spot out palatalisation (see §3.2) our orthographical conventions (always keeping in mind that we want to use a western-Romance like orthography) raise the need for written counterparts for the phonemes /ke, ki/ and /ge, gi/ without use of the grapheme *h*: the Catalan devices (see e.g. Fabra 1918, 10) seem the most adequate:

- *que*, *qui* read /ke, ki/, except for the most conservative dialects which will read /kwe, kwi/' qua always reads /kwa/; on the other hand, /kwe, kwi/ will be represented by *qüe*, *qüi*. In a symmetric fashion,

- *gue*, *gui* read /ge, gi/, while *gua* reads /gwa/ and /gwe, gwi/ will be written *güe*, *güi*:

Table 6

ORS	Most dialects	Preservative only	English
quant	/kwa:nt/		how much
perqué	/perk'e/		why, because
que	/ke/		that, who, whom...
quest	/ke:St/	/kwe:st/	this (m.)
qui	/ki/		who
quilò	/kil'O/		here
quist	/ki:St/	/kwi:st/	these (m.)
questa	/keSta/	/kwe:sta/	this (f.)
questes	/k'eSti/	/kw'e:sti/	these (f.)
questes	/k'eSte/	/kw'estes/	these (f.)
questas	—	/kw'e:stas/	these (f.)
guel	/gEl/		penny
guignol	/giJ'Ol/		facetious
guisa	/g'iza/		cast iron
guitara	/git'ara/		guitar
güera	/gw'Era/		war

The clitic particle *ghe* (/ge/) will be allowed to be an exception, and it will retain its traditional orthography with *h*; moreover, to improve the surveyability of the inflected forms of the verb *higa* / *haver* / *havir* 'to have', it will always retain its etymological *h*. The agglutination of *gh'* with the parts of the verb *higa* / *haver* / *havir* will be allowed: *al gha*, *al gh'a* /alg'a/, '(he) has'. In both cases, the conjugated forms of *higa* / *haver* / *havir* will drop their initial *h*.

In the same spirit, the particle *ghe* will never agglutinate with the parts of *vess*/*ésser* 'to be': *al gheva*, *al gh'eva* 'he had', but: *al gh'era* 'there was, he was there'.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

3.6 The use of *x*

Let us turn to examine the use of the grapheme *x*: it is a historical Cisalpine grapheme, used in an irregular way to represent /z, Z/, /s, S/, and /ks/.

We will regularise a bit, by using it mainly to represent the phoneme realised by an intervocalic /Z/ in Ligurian or Ladin and /z/ elsewhere, including those words displaying a final atonic vowel in Ligurian and and, correspondingly, a final /z/ or /s/ in the dialects of the Padanian valley and often /S/ in Ladin and Romansh. It is worthwhile noting that this device matches the Ligurian traditional orthography, and, in some cases, the Venetan one.

TABLE 7[3]

ORS	**Cisalpine Standard**	**Ligurian**	**Dolomitan Ladin**	**English**
rexon	/rez'oN/	/raZ'oN/	/reZ'oN/	reason
examen	/ez'am/	/eZ'ame/	/eZ'am/	exam
croux	/kru:z, kru:s/	/kruZe/	/kr'OuS/	cross
dex	/de:z, de:s/	/deZe/	—	ten
diex	—	—	/d'jeS/	ten

This analogical device will be pushed as far as the thematic roots allow: consider for instance the word *voux* 'voice': it will synthesise the Lij *voxe* /v'uJe/, Pms *vos*, /vus/, Lmo *vos* / *vus* / *us* /vu:s, vu:z, vus, us/, Lld *ousc* /'OuS/, Roh *vusch* /vuS/, Fur & Vec *vose* / *vose* / *ose* /v'oze, v'ose, 'oze/, Eml /v'Ouz/ (local orthographies have been shown); compare also *axòu* / *axée* / *axid* ('vinegar': Lij /aJ'Ou/, W-Lmo /az'e:/, E-Lmo, /az'it/); as in Hull (1982, 705), but with different motivations, the synthetic Rhaeto-Cisalpine synthetic form will be *axeid*.

There will be etymological exceptions, mainly compound words with the prexif *ex–* (/eZ, ez/ if followed by vowel or voiced consonant, /eS, es/ if followed by voiceless consonant), *màxim* and compounds, *ixí*, *axí*, *xi* and so on.

In the other positions (i.e. mainly in the initial position and in the combinations CONS+*x*+VOWEL, VOWEL+*i*+*x*+VOWEL and VOWEL+*i*+*x*), the grapheme *x* in the will rather sound /S/, /s/ or even /ks/ according to the different dialects: *enxí* /enS'i, inS'i, i'si, aks'i/ 'so'; *xavata* /Sav'ata, sa'ata/ (but also *sçavata*, *savata*) 'slipper'; xiguera /Sig'era, sig'era/ (but also *sciguera*) 'fog'; *faixa* /f'aSa, f'asa, f'a:tsa/ (but also *fasha*, *fassa*, *faça*) 'face', etc.

The subsequent parts of this paper will propose a full Rhaeto-Cisalpine standard, with an even more regular use of the flag character *x*.

[3]The «Cisalpine Standard» device in this table is simply a synthesis of the current Cisalpine pronunciations: final /oN/ may in turn be read /O , oN, uN, u , u, ouN, OuN, 2uN/ and atonic /e/ may be neutralised into /a/.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

3.7 The use of *ly* and *ny*

We have seen that the set of the orthographical devices we propose makes the grapheme *h* a palatalisation marker.

However, the palatalisation of /l/ and /n/ to /L/ and /J/ will be rather indicated by the devices *ly* and *ny*, in most cases closer to the etymology. This device had been proposed, in a different context by Daniele Vitali (private communication, 2003).

It should be kept into account, moreover, that y is a historical Cisalpine grapheme: see for instance Vivaldo Belcalzer's texts in the excerpts. The grapheme *ly* will be locally allowed to be reduced to *y*.

Table 8

ORS	SAMPA	English
semely, semey	/sem'eL, sem'ej/	dream
mely, mey	/meL, mej/	better
campanya	/kamp'aJa/	country
any	/aJ/	years

3.8 Atonic *e*: neutral vowel or schwa [ə]

The *e* grapheme in unstressed position is in connection with the phoneme *schwa* (IPA: /ə/, SAMPA /@/): see Hull (1982, 188). Due to dialect fragmentation, it admits several phonetic realisations. We mainly distinguish two classes of cases:

a) *Within words*, it will sound /a/ in the north and /e/ in the south:

Table 9

ORS	Most common pron.	English
còdex	/k'Odes, k'Odas/	code
qüíndes	/kw'iNdez, kw'iNdas/	fifteen
negot	/neg'Ot, nag'Ot/	nothing

b) *In final position*: void phoneme, or ∅ almost everywhere: this implies the epenthesis of atonic /e/ or /a/ if this final *e* is preceded by a *muta cum liquida* group: *libre*, /l'iber, l'ibar/, somewhere /l'ibru, l'ibra, l'ibri/ (Erto, Cimolais, some Bergamasque valleys, most of Friuli, upper Lombardy, Tessin, Val Poschiavo, see Hull (1982, 212)).

3.9 «Closed» diphtongations

Latin tonic *o* underwent many kinds of developments in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain (see Hull 1982, 109 ff.). This section mainly concerns western Padanese, including ISO 693-3 Piedmontese, Ligurian, Lombard, western Emilian and Ladin. We will deal here with the following phonetic developments of Latin tonic *o*:

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

1. /O/ > /wO/ > /HO/ > /H2/ > /2/
2. /O/ > /we/ > /He/ > /H2/ > /2/
3. /O/ > /Ou/ > /u/

As to 1), it is worth while recalling that an analogous development has been recorded in the Catalan variety of the Capcir:

> La característica més singular és la /œ/, o sigui, una e labialitzada, procedent de tota U llarga del llatí clàssic [...] *tœ* < TU, *fœm* < FUMU, *mœt* < MUTU [...] o també de la u resultant de la diftongació de la O oberta del llatvg.: *öll*, *ull* (< **uoll* < OC'LU). (Veny 1998, 54)

The develpoment 2) concerns also Ladin, but at present, in many varieties, has developed only up to the step /we/. The set 1) + 2) is strictly analogous to French as an *Abstand* language (see Zink 1986, 195). Analogously, the development 3) (characterictic of French as well) has progressed only up to /Ou/ in many Rhaeto-Cisalpine varieties (Ladin, Lombard varieties of Leventina, Blenio Valleys and Livigno; but /Ou/ could also be an outcome of /O/ > /wO/ > /wOu/ > /Ou/, see Hull (1982, 123)).

Thus, we first propose a synthesis of the so called «classical» or «traditional» western Padanese orthographies (Piedmontese, Ligurian, classical Milanese): we will also make a comparison with Hull's UPO (Unified Padanian Orthography) and the standard-Ladin solution.

In connection with the sounds /2/ and /9/, we suggest to parallel French contemporary orthography and preserve the distinction *eu*/*œu*, mostly in accordance with their distribution in the corresponding French words (this will yield a higher frequence of *œu* than in French; thus the question could be raised whether generalising or not its use to all words with /2/ and /9/ in tonic position; it should also kept into account that the frequence of /2/ and /9/ in western Padanese is higher than in French). A dash in the column of French words does not mean of course that the corresponding French word does not exist, rather that the orthography of the involved Padanese word has been suggested by the morphology of the overhanging French one, without regard to its actual meaning. The standard-Ladin solution is recorded as well as a possible alternative device for our orthography. It is worth while recalling that the latter matches the ancient French orthography: according to Zink (1986, 195): «La graphie *–ue–* [était] traditionelle au Centre jusqu'au XIII siècle pour traduire le produit de *o* ouvert diphtongué [...].»

A deeper discussion about the relationship between French and western Padanese on one side and Ladin, Friulian and Rhaeto-Romansh on the other side will be performed in the subsequent parts of this paper.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Table 10[4]

French	ORS (W-Padanese)	Dolomitan Ladin	Hull's UPO	English
cœur	cœur	cuer	cuor	heart
œuf	œuv	uef	uov	egg
feu	feug	fuech	fuog	fire
feuille	feulya	fueia	fuoglia	leaf
—	veulya	vueia	vuoglia	wish
jeu	jeug	juech	juog	game
lieu	leug	luech	luog	place
neuf	neuv	nuef	nuov	new

In the same flavour, we shall use the Pavese (and French) digraph *ou* in connection with /u:/ (/u/) in stressed final syllables of words:

Table 11[5]

ORS	SAMPA	English
flour	/flu:r, flur, fju:r, fj'Ou, fl'Our/	flower
voux	/vu:z, vu:s, v'Ous, 'OuS/	voice
louf	/luf, l'Ouf/	wolf
amour	/am'u:r, am'ur, am'Our/	love
morous	/muru:z, muru:s, mur'Ous, mur'Ouz/	lover, boyfriend
voxina	/vuz'ina, vuJ'ina/	little voice

As to vowel quantity opposition (for those dialects where it is in force), these diphtongs and triphtongs will be dealt with as single vowels (see §3.12). To separate vowels otherwise united in a diphtong, we shall use a diaeresis, like in Occitan-Catalan and French, e.g. *eü* = /eu/. All other diphtongs are to be read separately, and if they include a *u* it does not change into /y/ (for those dialects presenting this sound): *laurar* /laur'a/ 'to work'; *laura!* /la'ura/ 'work!'; *taula* /t'aula/ 'table'.

3.10 Dealing with simple *u* and *o*

The graphemes *u* and *o* (if not belonging to a diphtong or to a *–on* like suffix: see below §§3.14-3.15) will be used in the etymological way. This implies the need of different spelling rules according to each geographical zone.

In this first part of the paper, we give some outlines about the situation of ISO 639-3 Lombard only: the so called *non-ü* zone includes (Hull 1982, 154 ff.): Alta Valtellina (Bormio e Grosio), Livigno, val Mesolcina and val Calanca, the Isorno Valley, the Chironico and Sobrio districts in lower Leventina valley, the Auresio

[4]In Ladin *ue* can be read both /we/ and /2/ according to different varieties (see (Valentini 2001, 25)) and final ch always means /k/; final atonic vocalism is not taken into account here.

[5]The diphtongued pronunciations /fj'Ou/ and /l'Ouf/ are characteristic of the Lombard dialect of Livigno and of Ladin; the variants luv /ly:f, ly:v/ e luf /lyf/ are also widespread.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

district in western Canton of Tessin, the districts of Sonvico, Villa, Campestro e Breno in the upper Luganese, Stenico, Tione, Roncone and Fontanedo in the middle Sarca valley, Coredo and Novella valley in the Anaunic Valley.

i) In the *non-ü* zone: *u* is read /u/ e *o* is read /o, O/.

ii) Upper Tessin: *u* is read /y/ e *o* is read /o, O/.

iii) Middle Valtellina: *u* in tonic position is read /y/; *u* in atonic position is read /u/ and *o* is read /o, O/.

iv) Lower Valtellina, Lower Tessin, Brianza, Milanese: *u* is read /y/ in every position e *o* is read /O/ in tonic position e /u/ in in atonic position.

v) Bergamasque, Cremonese, Ossolan groups: *u* in tonic position is read: /y/ in free syllable and /2/ in blocked syllable; *u* in atonic position is read: /2/ if the word contains *i* in the subsequent syllable, /y/ otherwise; *o* is read /o, O/ in tonic position; *o* in atonic position is read: /2/ if the word contains *i* in the subsequent syllable (in this case the orthographical device *ö* will be allowed as well), /o/ otherwise.

vi) Bressan group: *u* in tonic position is read: /y/ in free syllable and /2/ in blocked syllable; *u* in atonic position is read: /2/ if the word contains *i* in the subsequent syllable, /y/ otherwise; *o* is read /o, O/ in tonic position; *o* in atonic position is read /o/.

3.11 Geminate consonants

Following the Catalan norm, we will not admit any kind of geminate consonants, apart from the following exceptions:

a) the grapheme *ss* to point out voiceless /s/ between vowels or voiceless /s/ in final position if preceded by a short vowel;

b) some Cisalpine etymological geminates (*ll*, *mm*, *nn*, *rr*); see Hull (1982, xxxii ff.) like in:

Table 12

ORS	Most common pron.	English
commun	/kum'yN, kom'y, kym'y/	municipality
parolla	/par'Ola/	word
personna	/pers'Ona, pers'ona/	person

3.12 Phonemic vowel length

This feature is mostly developed in ISO 639-3 (Western) Lombard and Friulian: compare the minimal pairs /pas/ 'step, pass' vs. /pa:s/ (or /pa:z/) 'peace' in Lombard and /mi:l/ 'honey' vs. /mil/ 'one thousand' in Friulian.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

We will discuss here the situation of Lombard, where this feature is highly developed, because any pan-Padanese orthography should be able to cope with this critical issue. We postpone a discussion of phonemic vowel length in the whole Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain; the reader is referred to Hull (1982, 66 ff.).

With the relevant exception of Cremonese, this feature is in force only in final syllables: here 'final' is meant with respect to the effective phonetic realisation.

According to LSI (2004, vol. 1, 22) a vowel preceding *gl*, *gn*, *m* (for us *ly*, *ny*, *m*) is always short, whereas before simple *r* or {*l*, *m*, *n*, *r*}+CONSONANT is always long.

A nasalised vowel is always long as well; by contrast, a vowel before velar *–n* is always short: for instance, *can* 'dog' can be realised as /caN/ or /ca˜:/. In any case, there is no vowel quantity oppostion within the same dialect. On the contrary, we have vowel quantity opposition in the case of VOWEL+*l*: consider e.g. the couple /pel, pEl/ 'skin' vs. /pe:l/ 'down'. In this case, we prefer to follow Hull (1982, xxxii ss.) so we will not duplicate the *l* even in final position. We will point out the cas for a long vowel by means of a circumflex accent: *pel* /pel, pEl/ 'skin' vs. *pêl* /pe:l/ 'down' (a long accent could be envisaged too: *pel* vs. *pēl*).

Following LSI (2004), in general, a long vowel will be pointed out by a voiced consonant in final position (even if with voiceless phonetic realisation); a short vowel by a voiceless consonant: *sambug* /samb'y:k, samb'y:g/ 'elder'; *olòc* /ol'Ok, /ul'Ok/ 'owl'. To this extent, *q* and *ss* are considered voiceless, *s*, *j* and *x* voiced (even if phonetically voiceless). If a plural marker *–s* is involved, in many western dialect it will be silent, so we are lead back to the preceding case (but see also Nicoli 1983, 104). As to those alpine western dialect realising the feminine marker *–es*/*–as* as /i/ or /a/ and all eastern dialect realising it as /e/, there will be no vowel quantity issue related to feminine plural, since the involved vowel of the corresponding western word will no longer be placed in the final syllable. There will be some exceptions, like the case of short vowels followed by voiced consonants in words of the same lexical family, for instance /g'2ba/ 'humpbacked, f.' vs. /g'2p, g'2b/ 'humpbacked, m.'. Since our goal is to maximise the evidence of lexical relations, we will use Birago's (XVIII century, see Caverzasio 1983) voiced/voiceless consonantal digraphs: *gœuba* /g'2ba/ vs. *gœubp* /g'2p, g'2b/; *gœubpes* /g'2bi, g'2be, g'2ba, g'2b, g'2p/. A breve accent could be envisaged as well: *gœŭba*, *gœŭb*, *gœŭbes*.

3.13 Tonic stress and graphic accents

The rule to point out the stressed syllable is very simple: it is

a) *the last but one* if a word ends by simple vowel, simple VOWEL+*s* or *–en*;

b) *the last one* if a word ends by consonant, except simple VOWEL+*s* or *–en*.

Examples:

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Table 13[6]

ORS	Most common pron.	English
donnes	/dOn, dOni, dOne, dones/	women
portes	/p'O:rt, p'Orti, p'Orte, p'Ortes/	doors
te pòrtes	/tap'Ortas, tep'Ortes /	(you) bring
te pòrtet	/tep'Ortet, tap'Ortat/	(you) bring
i parlen	/ip'arlen, ip'arlan, ip'arla/	(they) speak
qüíndes	/kw'iNdeS, kw'iNdas/	fifteen
Francés	/frants'e:s, frans'es, frants'es, fra~:tSe:z/	French
Franceis	/frans'eis, frans'Eis/	French

In any other case, an explicit graphic accent will be needed: grave on *à*, open *è*, open *ò*; acute on closed *é*, *í*, closed *ó*, *ú*.

Foreign words will be written according to the rules of their languages, including plural inflections.

Table 14

ORS	Most common pron.	English
gòrden	/g'Ordan, g'Orden/	vortex
gòrdol	/g'Ordol, g'Ordul/	plait
jamò	/dZam'O, zam'O/	already
macró	/makr'o/	pander
nevòden	/nev'odan, nev'oden/	snowfall
pèrsig	/p'Ersik, p'Ersig/	peach (fruit or tree)
rémol	/r'emol, r'emul/	oar
còdex	/k'Odes, k'Odas/	code (in some dialects: book)
símel	/s'imel/	similar
sofà	/sof'a, suf'a/	sofa
bureau	/byr'o/	office, writing desk
champagne	/Sa~p'aJ/	champagne
cheque	/S'E:k/	cheque
tableau	/tabl'o/	poster
tableaux	/tabl'o/	posters

3.14 The suffix *–tion*

We first introduce the etymological device *–tion* (< Lat. –TIONEM) because it matches with the historical Rhaeto-Cisalpine spelling, already in use with Bonvesin de la Riva and up to XVI century with the Bergamasque Giovanni Bressani (of course modified in *–tió* by virtue of the eastern Lombard denasalisation of final *n*, see e.g. Canz. Lomb., vol. 3, 15). On the other hand, consider the different phonetic realisations in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine dialects: /sj'u/ (Eastern Lombard); /sj'uN, sj'u~:/ (South-western Lombard, Piedmontese, Ligurian);

[6] «you» is meant singular.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

/tsj'un, tsj'oN/ (Romansh, Ladin, North-western Lombard); /s'jO˜/ (Central Padanese); /Tj'O˜/ (Bolognese), /Tj'oN/ (some Venetan varieties); /tsj'om/ (rare). By a sociolinguistic point of view, this is clearly the case for a *flag spelling*, differentiating Padanese from Italian and coagulating the speakers of all different dialects around it. The suffix *–tion* seems rather adequate, but the traditional Ligurian solution *–çion* (or *–cion*, Cisalpine traditional as well) could be envisaged as well. Moreover, while *–tion* and *–cion* would be somewhat irregular by a phonetic point of view, *–çion* would not (see above, the use of *ç*): nevertheless, such an irregular desinence does not worsen the surveyability of written texts, since it is immediately recognisable: compare the phonetic exceptional character of *–tion* in French.

On the other hand, the cases when the pronunciation is either /sj'u/ (eastern Lombard) /sj'uN, sj'u˜:, sj'oN, sj'O˜:, S'uN/ (elsewhere, and /ts/ never appears) will be dealt with by the use of the suffix *–ssion*: *profession* /profesj'u/ (eastern Lombard), /prufesj'uN, profesj'oN, prufesj'u˜:/ (western Lombard), /prufesj'O˜:/ (Central Padanese), /prufeS'uN/ (Val Bregaglia, Alps, Liguria).

3.15 The graphemes *–n*, *–d* and *–t* at the end of a word (past participle and abstract nouns)

The thematic consonant *d* in the masculine past participle is variously preserved in the Rhaeto-Cisalpine domain (oversynthesizing, it is better preserved in Friulian, eastern Lombard and, to a lesser extent, Romansh and western Lombard); more widespread seems its conservation in the feminine past participle, which although shows a variegated behaviour as well (see Hull 1982, 552 ff.). Abstract nouns preserve a thematic *–t*, mainly in Friulian and eastern Lombard:

i) PARLATU(M) > *parladu* > *parlau* > /parl'a:, parl'O:, parl'u:/, or

ii) PARLATU(M) > *parladu* > *parlad* > /parl'at, parl'ad/ 'spoken';

iii) QUALITATE(M) > *qualitade* > *qualitad* > *qualitat* /kwalit'at, kwalit'a:t/, or

iv) QUALITATE(M) > *qualitade* > *qualitad* > *qualitat* > /kwalit'a:/ 'quality'.

On the other hand, most dialects velarise or nasalise the final *–n* in tonic syllable (with local exceptions: Hull 1982, 361-362), whilst Eastern Lombard, some Venetan and Lucano-Padanian dialects denasalise it completely: /paN, pa˜:/ vs. /pa/ 'bread'.

Our synthesis (valid only by a synchronical point of view) will be the adoption of the most conservative form of both groups: we will write all the final consonants we have considered, i.e. *–d* (past participle), *–t* (abstract nouns), and *–n*.

This gives rise to the following superdialectal graphemes:

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

- *–ad*, *–id* (final position, past participle): phonetic realisations /–'at, –'ad/, /–'it, –'it/ or /–'a:/, /–'i:/;
- *–ud* (final position, past participle): phonetic realisations /–'yt, –'yd/, /–'ut, –'ut/ or /–'y:/, /–'u:/;
- *–at* (final position, nouns): phonetic realisations /–'at, –'a/ in eastern dialects and /–'a:/; (as to nouns: see e.g. Cherubini 1840, vol. 1 *citàa*, vol. 3 *quantitàa*; in partial contrast, see LSI 2004, vol. 1, *citá*, vol. 4, *quantitá*; cfr. vol. 1, p. 23);
- *–an*, *–in* (final position): phonetic realisations /–'aN/, /–'iN/ or /–'a˜:/, /–'i˜:/ and /–'a/, /–'i/;
- *–on* (final position): phonetic realisations /–'oN/, /–'uN/ or /–'u˜:/, /–'O˜:/, and /–'u/.

3.16 The use of *z*, *s* and *ss*

Thanks to our spelling rules for *ç*, *g*, *j*, *t* the *z* grapheme is made free to be used in connection with the phoneme realised as: /dz/ in upper Valsesia, Ossola, north-western Lombardy, Canton Ticino, Lower Valtellina, upper Val Bregaglia, Engadine, Val Müstair and the Central Grisons; /z/ elsewhere (see Hull 1982, 304).

Henceforth, any ambiguity with /ts/ or /s/ will be eliminated and the use of diacriticals (contrasting with the Romance tradition) aplied to *z* to mark its voiced quality made superfluous. Examples: *ranza* /r'andZa, r'a˜:za/ 'sickle, death'; but *sperança*, /Sper'antsa, sper'aNsa, sper'a˜:sa/ 'hope'.

The use of the graphemes *s*, *ss* will be the customary one:

- *s* + *voiceless consonant* will sound /s/ or /S/ according to the corresponding Indoeuropean isogloss (see Schmid 1956, maps);
- *s* + *voiced consonant* will analogously sound /z/ or /Z/;
- intervocalic *–s–* will sound /z/ almost everywhere (except upper Valtellina, where it still sounds /s/);
- intervocalic *–ss–* will always sound /s/.

3.17 Other devices

a) We will always write down the etymological desinence *–en* for the sixth person of the verbs; in many dialects, it will be neutralised in /a/, thus de facto merging the third and sixth persons in the conjugation of the verb (also /u/ is attested e.g. in Piedmontese):

> *i parlen* /i p'arlen, i p'arlan, i p'arla/ 'they speak' (cfr. Fr. *ils parlent* /il pa:Rl/ 'they speak').

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

b) The hyphen «–» will be used to separate the parts of verbs and clitic prononuns in combination, even in the interrogation form (the rules about the neutral *e*, final or intermediate, apply; the words separated by a hyphen are considered one word, according to phonetics):

Table 15

ORS	Most common pron.	English
parlar-ghe	/parl'ak, parl'ag/	to talk with him/her
ghe-parlar*	/gaparl'a/	to talk with him/her
cantar-ghe-la	/kant'agela, kant'agala/	to sing it to him/her
ghe-la-cantar*	/galakant'a/	to sing it to him/her
canta-el?	/k'antel/ (East. Lombard)	does he sing?

*Poschiavino

We will not use hyphens for weak subject pronouns:

mi a vegni, *al vegn* (cfr. Fr. *chante-t-il?*, *moi, je viens*, *il vient*)
'I come, he comes'.

c) Monosyllabic words will not carry any accent in general, with some exceptions in case of ambiguity (however, ORS orthography has been built up to minimise the need for diacritical signs):

a clitic, *à* preposition (but *ha*, verb);
quí /ki/ (but *quilò* /kil'O/ will be preferred) 'here', *qui* /ki/ 'who';
dí /di/ 'day', *di* /di/ 'of the (plural m., locally also f.)';
i 'the (pl.)', but *ir* /i, ir/ (and not: *í*) 'to go'.

Finally in the case of need for stressing out the palatalisation of *a* onto /E/ (a widespread phenomen in the Alpine domain), the digraph *æ* (= alt 145) will be used:

Table 16

ORS	Most common pron.	English
car / cær / chær	/ka:r, k'E:r, tSE:r/	dear; expensive
quadre/quædre	/kw'adar, kw'adru, kw'Edar/	picture, painting, frame...

d) The use of *h* (more): we propose to preserve it, to improve surveyability, in all learned Greek or Latin words, for instance *schema*, *chímica*, *thema*, *mechànica*, *charàcter*, or the prefixes *chrono–*, *hetero–*, *phono–*, *arch–*, *chiro–*, etc. Consider that at least the trigraph *chr* can be considered historical: see the text sample by Giovanni Bressani in the excerpts: the other ones appear thus as natural generalisations.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4 Some excerpts from the Rhaeto-Cisalpine literature

We propose now the some transcriptions of excerpts from literature works: we have fully preserved the structure of each piece. We first report the original orthography, then one or two proposals of ORS ones.

4.1 Giovanni Bressani (16th century)

«These lines were written during the war between the emperor Carl V and king Henry of France» (1550, Bergamasque / Eastern Lombard) (Canz. Lomb., vol. 3, 22).

Original	**ORS (general)**	**ORS (localised)**
SEBE mi no ſo bo da da conſei,	Se ben mi no son bon de dar consely,	Se bé mi no só bó de dar consey,
Maximamet in sto parlá xi gros,	Maximament in sto parlar xi gross,	Maximamet in sto parlar xi gross,
Che i ſu paroli par es baloſei,	Que y su parolles par es balosely,	Que y su parolles par es balosey,
Pu, dscrif ſti vers tegnì istora nom pos,	Pur, de scríver sti vers tegnir istora no em pos,	Pur, de scríver sti vers tegnir istora no 'm pos,
Inſtigat da la rabia, e compasió,	Instigad de la rabia e compassion,	Instigad de la rabia e compassió,
Per tat mal com as fa'nter lor i nos,	Per tant mal com as fa inter lor y nos;	Per tat mal com as fa 'nter lor y nos;
Vedied quata è'nd ol mond tribulatio,	Vedied quanta est ind ol mond tribulation,	Vedied quanta est ind ol mond tribulatió,
E ſpicialmet in la chriſchianitat,	E spicialment in la christjanitat,	E spicialmet in la christjanitat,
Che de roba e d'zet gh'è tata deſfatio	Que de ròba e de gent gh'est tanta desfation	Que de ròba e de gent gh'est tanta desfatió
Per es lu contra lor ixi rabiat	Per es l'un contra l'otre ixí rabiat	Per es l'un contra l'otr ixí rabiat
Ido più gra segnor, ch'i la diráf	Y do plui gran segnours, qu'i la dirav	Y do plui gran segnour, qu'i la dirav
Defénd da guera e d'ν mgna aduersitat,	Deféndér de güèrra e d'umnya adversitat;	Deféndér de güèrra e d'umnya adversitat;
E al inimic de Chriſt, chis te xi braf	Et a l'inimic de Christ, qui es ten xi brav	Et a l'inimic de Christ, qui es té xi brav

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Chal cre d'venz, e sommet tug i ſegnor Com ſo artelaria, zet, cauai, e naf,	Ch'al cred de venz et somét tuit y segnours Com so artelària, gent, cavaly e navs,	Ch'al cre d'venz et somét tuit y segnour Com so artelària, gent, cavay e nav,
Diráf reſpond, e moſſa'l ſo valor, Chai lhaf fa fuz indubitadamet, Che'l Mond e'l Cel in queſt g'haf da fauor,	Dirav respónder et mossar 'l su valour, Que a i l'hav far fúzer indubitadament, Que 'l mond et ol Ciel in quest ghav dait favour;	Dirav respónder et mossar 'l su valour, Que a i l'hav far fúzer indubitadamet, Que 'l mond et ol Ciel in quest ghav dait favour;
Che xi ai guadagnaraf be largamet Daner, zoij, richez, or e pais, Ixì chai shaf pu ſcut d'haui',l talet;	Que xi a i guadagnarav ben largament Daners, joies, riqueços, or e pais, Ixí que ai s'hav plui scut d'havir 'l talent;	Que xi a i guadagnarav ben largamet Daner, joies, riqueços, or e pais, Ixí que ai s'hav plui scut d'havir 'l talent;
E pos la mort hauraf ol Parauis; Be che d'queſt poca zet ſtema sen fa, Ac ſen grigna, e deleza chi ghen dis; [...]	E pos la mort havrav ol Paravis; Ben que de quest poca gent stema se 'n fa, Ac se 'n grigna, et delexa qui ghe 'n dis;	E pos la mort havrav ol Paravis; Bé que de quest poca get stema se 'n fa, Ac se 'n grigna, et delexa qui ghe 'n dis;

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4.2 Anonimous, end of 18th century

Corì chì, corì chì, vecc e giovnot (Mantuan / Western Lombard) (Canz. Lomb., vol. 2, 27).

Original	**ORS (western like)**	**ORS (Ladin like)**
Corì chì, corì chì, vecc e giovnot	Corí quí, corí quí, vegl et jovnot	Corí quí, corí quí, vegl et jovnot
A tör scöla corì dal me maèstar;	A tœur scœula corí dal mè maèstre;	A tuer scuela corí dal mè maèstre;
Trovarì la panada e 'l pan biscot	Trovarí la panada et el pan biscòt	Trovarí la panada et el pan biscòt
Ch'a la fam brüta metrà 'l cavèstar	Que à la fam bruta metrà 'l cavèstre	Que à la fam bruta metrà 'l cavèstre
E 'l spìrit pürgarì, gh'avrì la scöla	Et el spìrit purgarí, gh'avrí la scœula	Et el spìrit purgarí, gh'avrí la scuela
Par tèsar on bon lin sensa la spöla.	Par tèsser un bon lin sença la spœula.	Par tèsser un bon lin sença la spuela.
A dsì diman? Diman sarà l'istess	A dixí diman? Diman sarà l'istess	A dixí diman? Diman sarà l'istess
Siben ch'on gióran sol n'al sia gran cosa;	Siben que un jorn sol n'al sia gran cosa;	Siben que un jorn sol n'al sia gran cosa;
Quand è rivò 'l diman, l'incö d'adess	Quand est rivau 'l diman, l'incœu d'adess	Quand est rivau 'l diman, l'encuey d'adess
L'è in füm, n'al torna pö, né 'l temp riposa;	L'est in fum, n'al torna plui, né 'l temp riposa;	L'est in fum, n'al torna plui, né 'l temp riposa;
Istess l'è dop diman e acsì par dìa	Istess l'est dop diman et axì par dia	Istess l'est dop diman et axì par dia
Press i ani dl'osi, e quel dal ben va via.	Press y ani dl'oçi, e quel del ben va via.	Press y ani dl'oçi, e quel del ben va via.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4.3 Tommaso Grossi (1790-1853)

From *La Prineide (dream)* (1816) (Milanese / Western Lombard) (Sargenti 1988, 77).

Original	**ORS (localised)**	**Hull's UPO (1989)**
S'era settada in terra col coo in man	Sera setada in tèrra col cau in man	S'era setada en tèrra col cau en maun
E i gombet sui genoeucc: me ziffolava	Et y gómbed suy geneugl: me sifolava	E egl gombed sugl genuogl: me zifolava
El vent in di cavij: demeneman	El vent ind y cavey: deman-en-man	El vent ent egl cavegl: demanamaun
Che vegneva on quaj bôff, el me portava	Que vegneva un quay bof, al me portava	Che vegneiva un quagl bof, el me portava
Come ona vôs che vegna de lontan:	Come una voux que venya de lontan:	Come una voux che vegna de lontaun:
La me pariva la soa vôs, alzava	La me pariva la soa voux, alçava	Ella me pareiva la soa voux, alzava
I oeucc, guardava intorna: ma l'è nott,	Y eugl, guardava intorna: ma al est noit,	Egl uogl, guardava entorna: ma el es nuoit,
L'è senza luna, e no se ved nagott.	L'est sença luna, et no se ved negot.	El es senza luna, e no se ved negot.
Ciami. Pedrin! Pedrin! Nissun respond	Clami. Pedrin! Pedrin! Nissun respond	Clame. Pedrin! Pedrin! Neissun respond.
E la vôs la se perd per quij pianur.	Et la voux la se perd per quiy planures.	—
Intrattanta me senti a piombà in fond	Intra tanta me senti à plombar in fond	—
Del coeur milla sospett, milla paur.	Del cœur milla sospeit, milla paures.	—

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4.4 Bruno Besta (20th century)

L'ultima föja (dialect of Teglio, Upper Valtellina, Lombard) (Canz. Lomb., vol. 3).

Original	**ORS (western like)**	**ORS (Ladin like)**
Sü canta por laù	Su canta pòr laur	Su canta pòr laur
Canta anca mu	Canta anca mó	Canta anca mó
Fin che cul fià el te resta	Fin que col flad al te	Fin que col flad al te
'n po' de vöja.	resta un po de veuya.	resta un po de vueya.
Sul tò ram l'è restat	Sul tò ram l'è restad	Sul tò ram l'è restad
noma na föja	noma 'na feuya	noma 'na fueya
Per fa sumbría;	Per far sombría;	Per far sombría;
S'el la bófa via	S'el la bófa via	S'el la bófa via
El vent	El vent	El vent
El resterà piü nient.	El resterà plui nient.	El resterà plui nient.
Del rest l'è ura uramai	Del rest l'è ora oramai	Del rest l'è ora oramai
de preparass	de preparar-se	de preparar-se
Anca a quel pass:	Anca à quel pass:	Anca à quel pass:
A ün a ün i va dré a	À un à un i va drer à	À un à un i va drer à
pasà fò	passsar fò	passsar fò
I amis	Y amis	Y amis
E anca i aversare da na	Et anca y aversares de	Et anca i aversares de
volta	'na volta	'na volta
Tant che fra l'ün e l'otro	Tant que fra l'un et	Tant que fra l'un et
differenza	l'otre diferença	l'otre diferença
El ghe n'è piü.	Al ghe n'est plui.	El ghe n'est plui.

4.5 Giovanni Maurizio

Beginning from *La Stria, ossia I Stinqual da L'Amur: Quädar de costüm da la Bragaia ent el secul* XVI (1875, *National Tragicomedy from Bregaglia*, Bregagliotto / Lombard-Romansh, Graubünden-CH) (Maurizio 1944).

Original: [...] cantan: Corrè, corrè, la mi ciära gent! /Ch'i menan davent/ La bela, la brüna dal sampoin d'argent;/ch'i la menan/ Giò per Nagiadina/ E'l tocca giò dree / Quela da la brunzina./

Menga. Vev cià lan vaca, Miot e Stasia? Dree i sampoin al vegn già är lan mia.

Miot. E ie am manca doma üna manzeta; quela függ sempar vi par ca d'Zanfeta.

Menga. Tü a bel fär, iss ch'è rivaa 'l Tumee, Quel at giüda gügent e 'i corar dree.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Miot. Oh, as ve ben ci ca quel panzeir tocca; Quel ch'ent al cor, al vegn or da la bocca. At giò mess ent e drizzaa mat'Anin! Ca tü vegn da la stala cul sunin?

Anin. Giò, ie sciün sempar la prüma da tücc: Ch'i a doma ün pair vacheta, cun ün sciücc. E giò ch'i a pach crasciun, e ch'ia pach lacc, Ie nu sun gnär turmantäda di macc.

[...]

ORS transcription: *[...] canten: Coré, coré, la mi chœra gent! /Qu'i menen devœnt/ La bela, la bruna dal sampòin d'argent;/qu'i la menen/ Jò per Nagiadina/ E'l toca jò dree / Quela da la bronzina./*

Menga. Vev cha lan vacas, Miot e Stasia? Drer y sampoin al vegn ja œr lan mia.

Miot. E ie em manca doma una manzeta; quela futg sempre vi par ca de Zanfeta.

Menga. Tu ha bel fær, iss qu'è rivad 'l Tomer, Quel et juda gugent e 'i córer drer.

Miot. Oh, es ve ben ci que quel panzeir toca; Quel qu'ent al cor, al vegn or da la boca. Et jò mess ent e driçad mat'Anin! Ca tu vegn da la stala col sunin?

Anin. Jò, ie sçun sempre la pruma de tuit: Qu'i a doma un pair vaquetas, con un sçutg. E jò qu'i a pac cresçon, e ch'ia pac lait, Ie no son gnœr tormentœda di matg.

[...]

4.6 Vivaldo Belcalzer

From the translation of the *De proprietatibus rerum* of Bartolomeo Anglico (ante 1309, Cisalpine Koiné / Mantuan) (Hull 1982, 36).

Original: Talpa è la topina fata a similituden de soreg et è çega e senza ocl e ha un musel a mod de porçel e con quel cava la tera et à in odiy la lus e 'l sol, né po longament durar sovra tera; sot tera habita, e manza le ragis ch'ela atrova sot tera et ha la pel pelosa, negra e molla, le gambe curte e y pè lad et ha partid ie did a mod de man. Aristotel dis: ongnunca animal inzenerant altr animal a sì simel ha ocl, aster la topina chi no ha ocl chi appara. Ma chi yi taia lo cor setilment atrovarà alguna significanza dey ocl ila topina, et è molt chi dis che quand la topina mor ela avre i ocl per angoscia dela mort.

ORS transcription: *Talpa est la topina fata a similitúden de sóretg et est çega e senza ogl et ha un musel a mod de porçel e con quel cava la tera et à in odiy la lux e 'l sol, né po longament durar sovra tera; sot tera habita, e manja les ragis ch'ela atrova sot tera et ha la pel pelosa, negra e molla, les gambes curtes e y pè lads et ha partid ie did a mod de man. Aristotel dis: ongnunca animal ingenerant altr animal a sì simel ha ogl, aster la topina qui no ha ogl qui apara.*

Ianua 7 (2007)
ISSN 1616-413X

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Ma qui yi taia lo cor setilment atrovarà alguna significança dey ogl ila topina, et est molt qui dis che quand la topina mor ela avre i ogl per angosça de la mort.

4.7 Anonimous, early 14th century

Canzon d'Auliver ll. 11-20 (Cisalpine Koiné / Venetian) (Hull 1982, 36).

Original	**ORS transcription**
Tut el servir pert e 'l son fait desconça	Tut el servir pert e 'l son fait desconça
chi serf Amor, con' quel ch'in pred(a) çàpega;	chi serv Amor, con' quel ch'in pred(a) çàpega;
plu sotilment che quel che vend ad onça	plu sotilment che quel che vend ad onça
inganna 'l math infin tant che lo tràpega;	inganna 'l math infin tant che lo tràpega;
el son calur, ch'ard plu che viva bronça,	el son calour, ch'ard plu che viva bronça,
con' l'om plù 'l sent, et adès in su ràpega;	con' l'om plù 'l sent, et adès in su ràpega;
tut altrui fait e plaisir li par nuglia.	tut altrui fait e plaisir li par nulya.
Con' ven de dred, fais aisì c'on che truglia,	Con' ven de dred, fais aisì c'on que trulya,
ch'in leu del pes prend serp ch'el pò percoder:	ch'in leu del pes prend serp qu'el pò percoder:
a mi par van chi cred d'Amor çoi scoder.	a mi par van chi cred d'Amor çoi scoder.

4.8 Anonimous, (c. 1150)

Subalpine Sermons, XXI, 132-142 (Cisalpine Koiné / Piedmontese) (Hull 1982, 36).

Original: Zo fo a dir: e' non ài mia zo fait, mas tu qui me donest la femena. Or dis nostre Seignor: «Tu di' que eu t'ai fait pequer, e eu troverai art e engeig per que tu seies delivré del pecá. Or t'en tornerás lá dun e' te fis, car ben est dreit e iustisia que zo que e' fis abia la penitencia e espeneissa zo que e' contradis.» Or seignor frere, vardem que noi no siam engignai, sí cum to lo nostre premer pare Adam; mas sí prenem isemple del segunt Adam, zo est nostre seignor Ihesu Christ, qui venqué lo diavol.

ORS transcription: *Ço fo à dir: e' non ài mia ço fait, mas tu qui me donest la fémena. Or dis nostre Seignor: «Tu di' que eu t'ai fait pequer, e eu troverai art e engeig per que tu seies delivré del pecá. Or t'en tornerás lá dun e' te fis, car ben est dreit e iustisia que zo que e' fis abia la penitencia e espeneiça ço que e' contradis.» Or seignor frere, vardem que noi no siam engignai, sí cum to lo nostre premer pare Adam; mas sí prenem ixemple del segunt Adam, ço est nostre seignor Jesu Christ, qui venqué lo diavol.*

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4.9 Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922-1975)

Three poems (Friulian).

4.9.1 «A Rosari», from *Suite Furlana*

Original	**ORS transcritpion**
Tu la ciera la ciar a pesa	Tu la tjèrra la charn a pesa
tal sèil a ven di lus.	tal ceil a ven di lux.
No sta sbassà i vuj, puòr zòvin,	No star sbassar y vuy, puor jovin,
se tal grin l'ombrena a è greva.	se tal grin l'ombrena a est greva
Rit, tu, zòvin lizèir,	Rid, tu, jovin lixeir,
sintìnt in tal to cuàrp	sintint intal to cuarp
la ciera cialda e scura	la tjèrra chalda e scura
e il fresc, clar sèil.	e il fresc, clar ceil.
In miès da la puora Glisia	In mies de la puora glexia
al è pens di peciàt il to scur	al è pens di pechat il to scur
ma ta la to lus lizera	ma ta la to lux lixera
al rit il distìn di un pur.	al rid il distin di un pur

4.9.2 «Dansa di Narcis», from *Suite Furlana*

Original	**ORS transcritpion**
Jo i soj neri di amòur	Yo i soy neri di amour
né frut né rosignòul	ni frut ni rosignoul
dut intèir coma un flòur	dut inteir coma un flour
i brami sensa sen.	i brami sença sen.
Soj levat ienfra li violis	Soy levad yenfra lis violis
intant ch'a sclariva,	intant que a sclariva
ciantànt un ciant dismintiàt	chantant un chant dismintiad
ta la not vualiva.	ta la noit vualiva.
Mi soj dit: «Narcìs!»	M'i soy did: «Narcìs!»
e un spirt cu'l me vis	e un spirt cul me vis
al scuriva la erba	al scuriva la erba
cu'l clar dai so ris.	cul clar dai so ris.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

4.9.3 «Cansion», from *La meglio gioventú*

Original	**ORS transcription**
Cansion	Cantion/Cançion
Lassàt in tal recuàrt	Lassad intal recuard
a fruvati, e in ta la lontanansa	a fruvar-te e inta la lontanança
a lusi, sensa dòul jo i mi inpensi	a lúser, sença doul yo i mi inpensi
di te, sensa speransa.	di te, sença sperança.
(Al ven sempri pì sidìn e alt	(Al ven sempre pi sidin et alt
il mar dai àins; e i to pras plens	il mar day ains; et i to prats plens
di timp romai àrsit, i to puòrs vencs	di timp romai arsid, i to puors vencs
ros di muarta padima, a son ta l'or	ross di muarta padima, a son ta l'orl
di chel mar: pierdùs, e no planzùs).	di quel mar: pierduds et no planzuds).
Lassàs là scunussùs	Lassads la scunussuds
ta ciamps fores-c' dopu che tant intòr	ta champs forestg dopu que tant intorn
di lòur ài spasemàt	di lour hai spaxemad
di amòur par capiju, par capì il puòr	di amour per capir-yu, per capir il puor
lusìnt e pens so essi, a si àn sieràt	luxent e pens so ésser, a si han sierad
cun te i to òmis sot di un sèil nulàt.	cun te y to hòmis di un ceil nulad.
[...]	[...]

References

Aaron, P.G.; Joshi Malatesha, R. (2006): «Written Language Is as Natural as Spoken Language: A Biolinguistic Perspective.» *Reading Psychology* 27 (4).

Anglade, Joseph (1921): *Grammaire de l'Ancien Provençal*. Paris: Klincksieck.

Beaugrande, Robert de (1999): «Theory versus Practice in Language Planning and in the Discourse of Language Planning.» *World Englishes* 18 (2): 107–121.

Bec, Pierre (1970-71): *Manuel Pratique de Philologie Romane*. Paris: A. & J. Picard.

——— (1978): *Manuel Pratique d'Occitan Moderne*. Paris: A. & J. Picard.

Brevini, Franco. (1984): *Lo stile Lombardo*. Lugano: Pantarei.

Canz. Lomb. = VV.AA. (1975): *Il Canzoniere Lombardo*. Varesina Grafica editrice. [3 vol.]

Carney, Edward (1994): *A Survey of English Spelling*. London: Routledge.

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Caverzasio, Clara (1983): «Girolamo Birago: Donna Perla, Edizione Critica e Commento.» Ph.D. diss., University of Zürich.

Cercle Linguistique de Prague (1929): *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague 1: Mélanges Linguistiques Dédiés au Premier Congrès des Philologues Slaves*. Prague: Jednota Československých Matematiků a Fysiků.

Cherubini, Francesco (1840): *Vocabolario Milanese-Italiano*. Milan. [Facsimile]

Chomsky, N.; Halle, M. (1968): *The Sound Pattern of English*. New York: Harper & Row.

Dell'Aquila, Vittorio (2006): «L ladin Dolomitan: Propostes de Svilup.» *Quaderni di semantica* XXVII, no. 1-2.

Fabra, Pompeu (1918): *Gramàtica Catalana*. Barcelona: Institut d'estudis Catalans. [facsimile 2006]

Fishman, Joshua A. (2007): «Rethinking the Ausbau-Abstand Dichotomy into a Continuous and Multivariate System.» *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, vol. to appear.

Frinta, Antonín (1909): *Novočeska vyslovnost*. Praha.

Hull, Geoffrey (1982): «The Linguistic Unity of Northern Italy and Rhaetia.» Ph.D. diss., University of Sidney West.

——— (1989): *Polyglot Italy*. Cis Educational.

IS (1995) = VV.AA. (1995): *Italia Settentrionale Crocevia di Idiomi Romanzi: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Trento 1993*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Jaber, K.; Jud, J. (1933): *Sprach und Sachatlas Italiens und der Südschweiz*. Zofingen: Ringier & Co.

Kloss, Heinz (1967): «"Abstand Languages" and "Ausbau Languages".» *Anthropological Linguistics* 9 (7): 29–41.

Linell, Per (2005): *The Written Language Bias in Linguistics*. London: Routledge (Taylor & Francis).

LSI (2004) = *Lessico Dialettale della Svizzera Italiana*. Bellinzona: Centro di Dialettologia e Etnografia. [5 vol.]

Maurizio, Landaman Giovanni (1944): *La Stria*. Samedan: Stamparia Engiadinasca.

Nicoli, Franco (1983): *Grammatica Milanese*. Busto Arsizio: Bramante editrice.

Phillipson, Robert (1992): *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Salvat, Josep (1943): *Gramatica Occitana*. Tolosa: Collègi d'Occitania. [Quinta edicion revista par Ernèst Negre, 1998].

Sanga, Glauco (1984): *Dialettologia Lombarda*. University of Pavia.

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)

Sargenti, Aurelio (1988): *Tommaso Grossi: Le Poesie Milanesi*. Milan: Libri Scheiwiller.

Schmid, Heinrich (1956): «Über Randgebiete und Sprachgrenzen.» *Vox Romanica*, vol. XV.

——— (1982): *Richtlinien für die Gestaltung einer gesamtbünderromanischer Schriftsprache Rumantsch Grischun*. Cuira: Lia Rumantscha.

——— (1994): *Wegleitung für den Aufbau einer gemeinsamen Schriftsprache der Dolomitenladiner*. Istitut Cultural Ladin "Micurá de Rü"; Istitut Cultural Ladin "Majon di Fashegn".

Stich, Dominique (1998): *Parlons Francoprovençal: Une Langue Méconnue*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Unesco: *Red Book of Endangered Languages*. Unesco. Available at the URL: `http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/Redbook/`.

Vachek, Josef (1959): *Two Chapters on Written English*. Praha. Brno studies in English, Volume One.

Valentini, Erwin. (2001): *Gramatica dl Ladin Standard*. Servisc de Planificazion y Elaborazion dl Lingaz Ladin, Union Generela di Ladins dles Dolomites, Istitut Cultural Ladin "Majon di Fascegn", Istitut Cultural Ladin "Micurà de Rü", Istitut Pedagogich Ladin.

Venezky, Richard L. (1999): *The American Way of Spelling*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Veny, Joan (1998): *Els Parlars Catalans (Síntesi de Dialectologia)*. Palma de Mallorca: Moll. Edició revisada i augmentada.

Vitali, Daniele (2004-05): «La Rivoluzione di Velluto dell'Ortografia Bolognese: da Tre a Uno.» *Ianua. Revista Philologica Romanica* 5:107–122. URL: `<http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/>`

Winograd, Terry (1980): «What Does It Mean to Understand Language?» *Cognitive Science* 4:209–241.

Zink, Gaston (1986): *Phonétique Historique du Français*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Claudio Meneghini
Institud de Studis Rhaeto-Cisalpins
Fermo Posta Chiasso 1
CH-6830 Chiasso
Switzerland

© Romania Minor
http://www.romaniaminor.net/ianua/

BDD-A5249 © 2007 Romania Minor
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:54:37 UTC)