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A RATIONALE FOR INCLUDING COLLOQUIAL FRENCH AS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF FRENCH LANGUAGE STUDIES

DISSertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Each year, especially during the summer, thousands of American students go abroad with the purpose of getting the "flavor" of the foreign land as they improve their command of the language. Stephan Freeman in his "Undergraduate Study Abroad" of 1964 and the 1965 Northeast Conference Report indicate that, at the time, 6,000 students were enrolled in college foreign study programs. There also existed 120 academic year programs and their estimated rate of increase was 20 a year. These figures did not include the hundreds of plans of foreign universities, those of American private, commercial and religious agencies nor the thousands of students who went abroad on their own, for individual study or travel. By 1969, the number of students participating in college and university sponsored foreign programs had risen to 26,000, according to Norman Stockle's figures\(^1\); and Freeman\(^2\) indicates that in 1970 a total of 350,000 passports were issued to American young people between the age of 15 and 24. The foreign study fever is so contagious that "most sizable institutions worthy of their coat of arms are now actively promoting their own foreign study programs or are on the verge of doing so."\(^3\) and the May 1969 issue of the Modern Language

\(^1\) Norman Stockle "The CIEE and Study Abroad: Purposes, Principles and Programs." FLA, IV, n°3, March 1971, pp. 299-305.


\(^3\) Norman Stockle, "The CIEE and Study Abroad," p. 300.
Journal was devoted to a discussion of how to derive the greatest benefits from study abroad.

These figures may reflect the greater emphasis placed by the teaching profession on language as communication and on the role of culture in the language program, both as a necessary referent for the linguistic signs and as an object of study per se. The writer applauds such choice of priorities and the enthusiastic response this shift of emphasis seems to have awakened in students and teachers alike, as evidenced by their growing interest in direct interaction with the foreign culture. However, going to a foreign country is not enough; as E.T. Hall puts it: "It is time that Americans learned how to communicate effectively with foreign nationals." This effective communication, obviously, depends on a variety of factors: attitudes, personality, maturity, cultural awareness, and, of particular interest here, ability to understand the language. The question raised here, is whether, prior to going abroad, these people have been adequately equipped with the language training that will enable them to communicate truly with native speakers, and to derive, from their sojourn, the greatest profit: human, cultural and linguistic.

The identification of the problem and the arguments below concern most language students: the college student, both undergraduate and graduate—language major or not—and the high school student as well as his teacher, assuming that most of them go abroad for the same general

---

purpose: to perfect their command of the language and to participate actively in the foreign culture; and they basically all encounter the same problems to a greater or lesser degree. However, the population of special interest here consists of language majors and prospective teachers because the fate of the teaching and learning of French in this country depends on them.

When language students do go abroad, what kinds of people, what type of situations do we as language educators wish them to encounter there? Obviously, we want them to become acquainted with the very people and social contexts that they would not encounter in the United States. If we expect them to talk only to professors with careful diction, or to hear only the television or radio speakers or the theater and movie performers, little will be achieved that they could not accomplish in an easier and cheaper way at home. When we say that they ought to get a "feel" for the French culture, we not only think of culture with a capital "C" but of the daily patterns of life and behavior in all strata of the society. We mean going shopping at the market, taking a bus or the subway at 6 p.m., sitting at a café chatting with a few friends or observing two pairs of "retraités" who "font une petite belote" before going home for supper. We mean playing a game of "boules" under the "platanes" on a hot summer evening, living in a family and a thousand other such direct experiences of the way the French live, eat, think, have fun, worry, and react to one another.

Educators perceive the problem, but state it in general terms: "Real immersion in the culture, genuine communication with the people,
from which the richest profit should come, is out of the question without adequate language preparation."\(^1\)

The question is, of course, what constitutes adequate language preparation when the criterion is the ability to communicate effectively with natives in the host environment. Educators from the Experiment in International Living, who seem to have gone to great length to foresee the problems involved in functioning in a foreign culture and to foster in their students the kind of attitudes and personality traits as well as the specific skills and knowledge necessary to make such an experience fruitful, are more articulate about the nature of the problem. Here is a warning they give their students:

Your first language experience with your family is apt to be discouraging. You will probably find that you cannot understand a thing that is not spoken directly to you, slowly and distinctly. The movies will be particularly difficult and the telephone will be a terror. You will try to listen to conversations not meant for you, not because you are an evesdropper but because of your language interest, and you will find that you recognize remarkably few words.\(^2\)

Powelson's statement, moreover, presents the advantage of identifying one of the key circumstances when comprehension fares worst: when listening to a conversation that is not directly addressed to the foreign student and therefore not artificially slowed down, simplified and carefully articulated for his sake, but a genuine ongoing interchange between natives. Yet, listening to what French people have to say to one another, and how they say it, is a very legitimate activity

\(^1\)1965 Northeast Conference Report on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, p. 33.

\(^2\)"How to Learn French with the Experiment," Brochure prepared by Jack Powelson, 1954, p. 4.
for whoever wants to experience the language and the culture in its natural and spontaneous manifestation rather than as an artificial and selfconscious performance.

The comprehension problem is even more acute if the foreigner finds himself in the middle of a discussion among his peers. He will want desperately to understand what they are so keyed up about, and even, in a moment of daring, to join in such a lively debate. Yet, it is at that very time that the replies will fly back and forth in a rapid cross-fire, that phrases will sound to him like uninterrupted gibberish and that, in general, the language will resemble least what he has been taught in school.

The student's comprehension problem can be illustrated by a few snatches of ordinary, informal conversations:

- J(e) sais pas c(e) qu'i(l) font: [ʃepaskifɔ]
- Et nous, on fait quoi c(e) soir? [enu / ʃfekwasswar]
- C'est c(el)ui-là qu'i(l) m(e) faut. [sɛsɥllaklɛmfo]
- J'ai pas assez d(e) fric. [ʒopasodfrɪk]
- T(u) aurais pas cent balles à m(e) prêter?[tɔɾepasɑbalamprete]

Trying to listen to these utterances, he finds out that they are not divided neatly into words he can identify or sounds he can recognize.

Ex:

[ʃepasylɪsɪ] instead of [sɔnepasɔɻlɪsɪ]
[ʃepaskifɛ] instead of [ʒɛnepasɔklɪfɛ]

1Phonetic transcription will not indicate the lengthening of vowels nor will it make the distinction between [a] and [ɑ] except when it has a phonemic value normally observed by native speakers. Also "je ne sais pas" can be said [ʃʃepa] or [ʃepa] depending on individuals and rate of speech.
He finds out that words he thought he knew do not make sense in this context, Ex: "cent balles"; or he encounters words he has never heard before, Ex: "fric". He further discovers that the structure of the sentence is not what he had been taught to expect, Ex: "Et nous, on fait quoi ce soir?" instead of "Que faisons-nous ce soir?".

Direct observations and countless testimonies from college students who have sojourned in France, have brought the writer to the conclusion that a large percentage of the American students who go to France for the first time, are unable to cope with the language in its ordinary, colloquial use. And this happens not only to students who have had a limited or poor preparation in the language. The frustration is all the greater when a language major—about to start teaching the language himself—and who has made all A's and B's, suddenly finds himself incapable of understanding what is said around him. His reaction has often been one of bafflement, frustration and self-doubt. Some even say that they experienced a feeling of having somehow been cheated by their teachers. The "real" language, i.e., the one used by people to communicate in real life situations, was different from what they had been told it was and what they had diligently practiced.

Il est inévitable que l'enseignement ... se porte. de préférence sur la langue choisie. Pour le jeune français qui, à la maison et à l'école entend et parle le français "de tous les jours", la chose ne présente guère d'inconvenient. Mais l'étranger qui débarque à Paris pour la première fois se trouve tout décontenancé quand il constate que nous parlons un français très différent de celui qu'on lui a enseigné. 1

Scrutiny of curriculum guides and observation of actual language programs, both high school and college, show that colloquial French is indeed sadly neglected in the sequence of French courses despite the so-called "conversation classes" and the worthy attempt of the audio-lingual approach to present linguistic material relevant to everyday life. American students and the average American teacher have little knowledge of that colloquial language, relaxed and carefree, sometimes popular, but always colorful, expressive, and functional. Their manner of expressing themselves is sometimes even too correct, too polished, too devoid of affective elements to have the proper impact upon the hearer. At the other end of the spectrum can be found the students who have learned from their readings, from their friends, or from a specialized book, a number of slang expressions and want to use them at all costs, thereby experiencing a sense of complicity with the natives. Unfortunately, these students have usually failed to perceive the network of socio-cultural connotations which is part of the meaning, and so they use them at the wrong time and wrong place. There are ways in which one can express oneself among peers, but which are not proper in more formal situations. However, the problem of the student's not expressing himself in the most appropriate manner for the situation is not the most crucial one since he will usually be understood anyway and forgiven for his "faux pas" because of his being a foreigner. Much more crucial is his frustrating lack of oral comprehension when people shift into the fast tempo colloquial speech which is characteristic of informal conversation.
All these frustrations added to those of not knowing one's way about, not knowing where and how to get things one needs, not understanding the reasons why people act the way they do, can build up into such culture shock that the student feels completely shut off and a failure. His reaction may be, at least temporarily, to hate and reject the way of life in which he seems unable to take part. The result may be having more of those students and teachers who have no real sympathy for or understanding of the culture and the people in whose language they claim genuine interest.

It is the writer's belief that this situation can be remedied. Language educators cannot pretend to give students a foretaste of all the situations they will encounter in the foreign land, but they can and must equip them to meet these situations with ease and self-confidence. Giving them a linguistic preparation in the spoken, everyday, colloquial language of the foreign country and acquainting them with the most common uses and taboos of the land, would be a major step towards achieving effective communication.

Restatement of the Problem

As will be shown in this study, 1) Colloquial French fulfills a socio-linguistic function that is different from that of standard formal French: it is the language style appropriate for most everyday conversational interchanges and is therefore representative of a large percentage of all oral communication (Chapter II). 2) Standard colloquial

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1 Edward T. Hall: The Silent Language, p. 44.
French is different from formal French in its phonology, its syntax and its lexicon. It displays its own features and systematic patterns of variations from formal French that can be described and even predicted in linguistic terms (Chapter III). Since colloquial French is indeed both widely used and significantly different from formal French, there is a breakdown in the oral comprehension of otherwise well trained students when they are confronted with the use of French in action, in its natural setting, as it is spoken daily by French people in their relationships with one another.

Objectives and Related Procedures

The main purpose of the study is to build a convincing argument for the teaching of colloquial French, especially at the level of oral comprehension. This will encompass the following procedures:

A. Elaboration of a rationale based on a review of literature and trends in the following areas:

1. Goals of language teaching; language as a means of effective communication with the native speakers of the language.

2. Relationship between language and culture. The privileged role of colloquial French as a vehicle of expression of the culture. The affective and social use of language.

3. Related implications for teacher training and qualifications. Study abroad as a means of achieving familiarity with the culture and language in situ.

4. Socio-linguistic definition, role and status of colloquial French in the French linguistic community.
B. Construction, administration, and analysis of a test of listening comprehension, to be given to French method class students in order

1) to assess their degree of comprehension of colloquial French

2) to find out which features cause the greatest comprehension problem, and

3) to gain evidence to support or deny the author's claim that colloquial French should be incorporated into language programs.

C. A comprehensive description of the main phonological, syntactical, and lexical features of colloquial French to be achieved by compiling the various research findings available. It will fulfill a double purpose: (a) to make explicit the body of knowledge and the linguistic phenomena on which the test will be based, thereby providing some evidence of its internal content validity; (b) to provide the target audience, namely language teachers, with a comprehensive overview of the ways in which colloquial French differs from standard formal French and to give them a better understanding of the problems in the oral comprehension of informal conversational French.

D. A brief exposé of the pedagogical implications of the study. These implications will be based both on the arguments developed in the rationale and on the empirical findings.

Outline of the dissertation

The literature-based rationale for the inclusion of colloquial French in the language program is developed throughout two chapters.
Chapter I focuses on the stated objectives, philosophy and practical suggestions of the profession as they relate to the topic at hand.

Chapter II defines what is meant by colloquial French in reference to the socio-linguistic parameters that have been applied to the study of language. It outlines the role colloquial French plays in a complex socio-linguistic system of communication and the extension of its usage.

Based on the facts set forth in these two chapters, the author will show the discrepancy between the stated objectives of the profession and its actual failure to present colloquial French as a vital part of the knowledge necessary to understand the language as it is currently spoken.

Chapter III provides an extensive description of the phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic features of colloquial French. The content and manner of presentation are directed to the needs of the language teacher who wishes to familiarize himself with the ways in which colloquial French differs from standard French.

Chapter IV describes: 1) the purpose and underlying principles which guided the construction of the tests; 2) the validation procedures used; 3) the actual content of the tests; 4) statistical data on the performance of the tests as measuring instruments; 5) the purpose and content of the questionnaire; 6) the choice of population and sample and the administration of the instruments.

Chapter V presents and interprets the results: 1) Comparison of scores attained by methods class students on tests of listening
comprehension of colloquial French on the one hand and standard formal French on the other. 2) Correlation between test scores and personal background and priorities in term of objectives. 3) The objectives to which future language teachers give priority and the correlation between their priorities and those of college language programs.

Chapter VI offers a summary of the findings and the writer's conclusions and recommendations.

The Appendix contains: 1) the test items and the answer sheets. 2) the questionnaire, and 3) a sample data card on a test item.
CHAPTER I

LANGUAGE LEARNING AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Since the advent of modern linguistics, language has been viewed primarily as a complex oral communication system. As a consequence, and especially since the heyday of the army language schools, the language teaching profession has almost unanimously recognized the ability to communicate in the foreign language as its primary objective. It is this leading preoccupation that has inspired the innovations in methods, programs, and materials, as well as countless research projects.

Publications of the major American educational organizations state that the ability to communicate in the foreign language should be the primary objective of the foreign language curriculum.¹

Educators in the business of training foreign service employees, business representatives, and other such people for whom this ability to communicate in the target language is vital, warn their students that "... one's effectiveness abroad depends on the ability to make accurate interpretations of the behavior of the people making up a 'foreign society!'..." and that 'knowing' the foreign language is the sine qua non requirement for such understanding: "You are not really profound in your interpretations of everyday events until you know it [the foreign language] well."²


What does it mean to know a language?

The act of communication can be broken down into two basic activities or skills, speech production and aural comprehension, depending on the role played by the language user. The message can be emitted and/or perceived at two different levels of accuracy: the linguistic level and the paralinguistic level. Thus, speaking a foreign language involves not only the ability to make the linguistically correct choice of lexical items, morphology, and sentence structure, to express the denotative meaning of the message, but also, knowledge of the connotative meaning of those linguistic elements and of the cultural appropriateness of the message, so that the transmitted message will be the same as the intended one. Understanding a foreign language, likewise, implies not only understanding the linguistic meaning of the utterances, but also making the correct inferences about the tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions, and perceiving the socio-cultural connotations of the particular words and syntax used by the speaker(s). As was pointed out by Oberg, a cultural anthropologist, one may very well understand what the foreigner is "saying" but be quite unsure about what he "means."¹ In addition, verbal communication does not take place in a vacuum. The difficulty of understanding accurately the meaning of foreign utterances is compounded by the necessity of making the correct interpretations of their non-verbal accompaniments and reinforcers,

such as tone of voice, mimics, gestures and more generally, the situational context. Gordon suggests the following model to account for the various components of the act of communication, and the types of knowledge called for to interpret them correctly.¹

¹Distributed by Professor Raymond Gordon at The Ohio State University, January 1972.
The discussion to follow will concern itself primarily with the verbal components of the act of communication, although it must be remembered that in speech there is a constant interaction between the two. The non-verbal elements can even change completely the meaning of the verbal elements; for instance, in humor, the situation itself or a simple wink will tell the listener that what is meant is the opposite of what is said.

**Communicative Competence**

First, one must keep in mind the distinction made by Chomsky between linguistic competence and linguistic performance. The listener uses the linguistic "competence" acquired through foreign language study in order to decode the "performance" of his interlocutor. But the "performance" is influenced by "... presumably non-linguistic factors such as inattention, limited memory, time pressure, emotional involvement and so on which interfere with the act of speaking and cause disfluencies, false starts, unfinished sentences, lack of grammatical accord, etc."¹ These "defects" or "errors" at the performance level are usually no barrier to comprehension for the native speakers. As was pointed out by Spolsky,² native language fluency includes

... knowledge of sequential probabilities of phonemes, letters and lexical items in strings, knowledge about how words are organized semantically in lexical fields, cultural facts (e.g. what it is appropriate to say under given situations) and psychological facts (e.g. what an individual is likely to say or think under given circumstances.


This kind of fluency, which allows the native speaker to supply the missing elements or to "read between the lines" as the expression goes, is especially evident in tests of comprehension of artificially mutilated speech, which leaves the non-native baffled. His dismay and bafflement, however, are no less vivid when he is first confronted with spontaneous informal speech taking place between a group of natives because it displays the features mentioned above (ungrammaticality, false starts, unfinished sentences, etc.) as well as reliance upon the hearer's ability to perceive the connotations and make the right inferences.

In the light of these facts, Jakobovits calls for a redefinition of what is meant by language competence. He points out that speakers of a language have a command of various codes that can be defined as "a set of restriction rules that determine the choice of phonological, syntactic and lexical items in sentences."¹ Since these selection rules are as necessary a part of the linguistic competence of the speaker as traditional syntax such as accord in gender, number, and tense, it seems arbitrary to exclude them from a description of linguistic competence.² This enlarged definition of linguistic competence is what he calls communicative competence. He further indicates that in order to account for the minimum range of linguistic phenomena in communicative competence, it will be necessary to incorporate three levels of meaning, namely, linguistic, implicit, and implicative. "Implicit meaning" refers to the elliptically derived conceptual event which the

¹Jakobovits, Language Learning, p. 151.
²Ibid., p. 152.
utterance represents. "Implicative meaning" refers to the information an utterance reveals about the speaker himself, e.g., his intention, his psychological state, his definition of the interaction and certain "claims," both intentional and unintentional, that he makes about the status of his utterance.¹

The "implicative meaning" as defined by Jakobovits, is of paramount importance in informal, everyday language. This is particularly evident if we compare two utterances linguistically synonymous, but conveying a very different implicative meaning, for instance, "cela m'est égal" versus "je m'en fous." The latter is laden with implicative meaning: it forcefully expresses the speaker's psychological state (disgust or anger) and his intention (to let it be known that he is angry or disgusted, or to startle the interlocutor, or to be rude); it reveals his definition of the interaction (either the exchange takes place between peers or the speaker intends to be insulting), and the status of his utterance (he is not trying to be proper, or to "put on airs," and he knowingly uses a colloquial, somewhat vulgar expression). It is to these affective and social aspects of language use that Hayakawa also wants to draw attention.

The Affective and Social Use of Language

According to Hayakawa,² communication of information accounts for only a small part of the use of language. Another important function of language is the expression of emotions and the establishment of

¹Ibid., pp. 155-157.
interpersonal relationships. Malinowski points out the social function of words independently of their symbolic meaning.

Are words in Phalic Communion ['a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words'] used primarily to convey meaning, the meaning which is symbolically theirs? Certainly not! They fulfill a social function and that is their principal aim, but they are neither the result of intellectual reflection, nor do they necessarily arouse reflection in the listener.¹

Starting from the observation of words that do not inform, usually occurring in social exchange, Hayakawa traces back this pre-symbolic use of language to the animal origin of man:

Although we developed symbolic language, the habit of making noises expressing rather than reporting our internal conditions has remained. The result is that we use language in pre-symbolic ways. That is as the equivalent of screams, howls, purrs, and gibbering.²

This does not mean that the words do not have a symbolic meaning of their own, but it is rather the way we use them which is pre-symbolic. Often in such cases the quality of voice itself has a power of expressing feelings which is almost independent of the verbal symbols used.

Human beings . . . do not ordinarily growl like dogs, but substitute series of words such as 'You dirty double crosser' or 'You filthy scum.' Similarly, instead of purring or wagging the tail, the human being again substitutes speeches such as 'She is the sweetest girl in the world' . . . This is not a statement about the girl but rather a revelation of the speaker's feelings . . . words expressive of our likes and dislikes are extremely complicated 'snarl words' and 'purr words.'³

²Hayakawa, Language in Action, p. 75.
³Ibid., p. 76.
Hayakawa\textsuperscript{1} points out that social conversation is extremely presymbolic in character since the purpose of talk is not communication of information but the "establishment of communion." What is being said matters little; what counts is expressing one's gregarious needs and showing awareness of others; it is the togetherness of the talking. The prevention of silence is in itself an important function of speech and failing to uphold this rule of social conversation is usually regarded as rude.

Presymbolic language has two purposes, according to Hayakawa: (1) To express the feeling of the speaker and is therefore an activity in itself, and (2) To affect the hearer rather than to inform him. (Ex: an insult calls for another insult.) A word has two types of connotations, some informative such as can be found in a good dictionary, some affective, and they consist in the aura of personal feelings or emotional associations it arouses, as for example the word in current American culture, "pig." Often words are used for their affective connotations alone (Ex: honey, skunk). Since we also want to affect the hearer, using words with the correct informative connotations is not enough; if the affective connotations are inappropriate, the result might be misleading or ludicrous. To the language teacher this means that language students need to be made aware of the cultural and affective connotations of words and expressions.

Because of their affective and social connotations, some words are regarded as taboo in certain situations or in certain levels of

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., pp. 74–101, passim.
society; for example, when a creditor sends a bill, he phrases it in such a way as not to use the word "money." Words referring to physiological or sexual functions are usually avoided. The deliberate use of verbal taboos act as "a kind of safety valve in our moment of crisis."

If we desire to cooperate with people, we want to avoid using words that will irk them. It is through the affective language that the flow of sympathy or simple good will, as well as feelings of hostility, will be channeled. Such affective language makes ample use of rhythm, tone of voice, and such rhetorical devices as repetition of words or structures, and even distortion of ordinary grammatical order.

Among people sharing in the same culture, the allusion is an extremely rich and effective device in communicating to the hearer or creating in him various shades of feeling. A foreigner will miss completely the point unless he is sufficiently familiar with the past and present history, literature, people, and events of the country. This is another reason why language, if taught for effective communication purposes, cannot be divorced from its cultural referent. Language and culture have to be learned simultaneously.

Another characteristic of social, affective "communication" is that the affective connotations of a word matter more than its informative connotations. For example, when we say, "he has tons of money," it is obvious that we cannot take literally the meaning of "tons."

This is why a language is so difficult to translate into another. As Wilga Rivers points out, "... one to one equivalence can rarely be established between words and expressions in two languages, once one has passed beyond the stage of physical identification ... Where
words seem to correspond lexically in their denotations, they may well
diverge considerably in their connotations or the emotional associations
they arouse.\textsuperscript{1} A language and its metaphors and similes can only be
understood fully from within. Rejecting these as inessential is a fal-
lacy against which Hayakawa warns us:

Metaphors are not 'ornaments of discourse.' They
are direct expressions of feeling and are bound to
occur whenever we have strong feelings to express.
They are found in special abundance, therefore, in all
primitive speech, in folk speech, in the speech of the
unlearned, in the speech of children, and in the pro-
fessional argot of the theater, of gangsters, and other
lively occupations.\textsuperscript{2}

Hayakawa goes on to make a plea in favor of the spoken, everyday
language. Such a plea gives colloquial style its "lettres de noblesse"
by elevating it to the level of folk poetry.

Adequate recognition has never been given to the
fact that what we call 'slang' and 'vulgarism' works on
exactly the same principles as 'great poetry' does.
Slang makes constant use of metaphors and simile such
as 'sticking his neck out' or 'out like a light,' .  .  .  The imaginative process by which phrases such as these
are coined is the same as poetry .  .  .  What is called
'slang' therefore, might well be regarded as the
poetry of everyday life since it performs much the same
function as poetry; that is, it vividly expresses
people's feelings about life and about things they en-
counter in life.\textsuperscript{3}

Charles Bruneau, professor history of the French language also
emphasizes the role it plays as a privileged vehicle of expression of
the culture of the people.

\textsuperscript{1}Wilga Rivers, \textit{Teaching Foreign Language Skills} (Chicago: Univer-

\textsuperscript{2}Hayakawa, \textit{Language in Action}, p. 192.

\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 193-195.
Le français de *tous les jours,* formé au cours des âges, par des créateurs inconnus, gens des villes ou gens des campagnes, ne s'est pas transmis par l'école ou par les livres, mais de bouche à bouche: il a été accepté par de nombreuses générations et nous pouvons considérer qu'il représente vraiment l'esprit — et peut être l'âme profonde du peuple français.1

**Language and Culture**

A discussion of the importance of the ability to communicate in the foreign language, and particularly to understand it in its natural, spontaneous use, cannot be divorced from a consideration of the relationship between language and culture. Fries was one of the first linguists to warn language teachers that the meanings of language are to be found in the common life experience of its native users.2 This view is confirmed by Osgood's theory of language "meaning" which maintains that

... the full meaning of a word for an individual is the result of the sum total of experiences which he has had with that word in the cultural environment in which he has grown up.3

The interrelation of language and culture4 and the fact that language is probably the best key to the corresponding culture is also attested to by Wilga Rivers: "The native language is learned along with the ways and attitudes of the social group in which one grows up and these ways

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1 Preface of *Du Tac Au Tac*, by Maurice Théron, p. 6.


4 Culture is used here in its anthropological sense, i.e., "the sum total of patterned manners, customs, norms, and values which are characteristic of a society." 1960 Northeast Conference Report.
and attitudes find expression through the language."¹ This means that culture is "an essential feature of every stage of language learning" not just an "... adjunct of a practical language course, something alien and apart from its main purpose, to be added or not as time may allow."² Translated into practical directives for the teacher, this implies that

... the insight into culture proceeds at the same time (underlinings added) as the language learning—in other words teaching for cultural understanding—is fully integrated with the process of assimilations of language patterns and lexicon.³

and it is essential that the students understand "... the cultural units of meaning attached to units of expression such as words, idioms and proverbs, as well as literary masterpieces."⁴ Therefore, a language can be fully understood only in terms of the culture it reflects and within which it functions; conversely, a culture can best be understood through the language both as a means of conveying information about that culture and as an expression of that culture. A great deal of thought has been given by linguists and language educators to the question of the place of culture in foreign language learning, and the best way to integrate the two.

¹Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 265.
³Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 273
The 1960 Northeast Conference Report\(^1\) was devoted to this theme. The authors stated that language, being part of culture, could profitably be viewed in the ways anthropologists view culture as a whole. Within a given society "there are different norms of behavior for different categories of people: age, sex, and kinship are universal bases for the expectation of some difference in behavior." Applied to language, it means that the ways of addressing a person, or of talking in his presence will vary according to these categories.

Viewing language as culture, a number of recommendations were made:

1. Language must be approached with the same attitude that governs our approach to culture as a whole.

2. Language conveys culture so the language teacher is of necessity a teacher of culture. Language is only in a very limited sense a medium for communicating "universal" messages. Far more significantly it communicates the whole complex of customs, attitudes, environmental factors, and beliefs that characterize its speakers. Language teachers "can and should work for and expect cultural reactions—as well as pronunciation and grammatical usage—sufficiently authentic so that students would be neither incompetent, irritating, or unduly conspicuous if they were suddenly to find themselves in an environment where their new language is natively used."\(^2\) "Whether or not students are ever going to work, study, ..

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\(^2\)Ibid., p. 34.
or travel abroad, language teaching must include careful attention
to the culturally conditioned aspects of spoken language usage.\textsuperscript{1}

Language is itself subject to culturally conditioned attitudes and beliefs. In the supplementary report, Henry Lee Smith also points out that "... speech does not take place in a vacuum. It is surrounded, as it were, by patterned bodily motions and by systematically analyzable vocalizations called para-language, but more simply described as tone of voice."\textsuperscript{2} Therefore, these should be taught concurrently with the language per se.

Finally, the committee made this recommendation regarding the training of the language teacher:

\begin{quote}
The first absolutely essential requirement is that he know how to speak, read, and write the language himself with some fluency and accuracy. The acquisition of this facility must include a sojourn in the country where the language is spoken ... And it is not sufficient to make a simple pilgrimage to the country; the trips must be frequent if one wishes to achieve the desired results ... Teaching the language effectively and understanding the culture are not going to be done very successfully until something is done about this problem.\textsuperscript{3}
\end{quote}

In 1961, the Institute of Language and Linguistics of Georgetown University held a seminar for future NDEA language institute directors to determine the "Meaning and Role of Culture in Foreign Language Teaching." Margaret Mead was one of the guest speakers; she insisted on the fact that "one learns about culture, in the anthropological sense, from watching people talk to each other, refuse to talk to each other, be

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1] Ibid., p. 35. Underlinings are added.
\end{footnotes}
polite to each other, insult each other, edge up to each other, embrace each other, not embrace each other." In other words, the best way to learn about a culture is to see it in action, as people react to each other verbally and by their attitudes. She also felt that the students should be brought into contact with the various social levels of speech. She points out that the anthropologists' contribution to foreign language teaching is in suggesting a way in which the language and the culture can be taught together, while the language is being taught. 2

On the same occasion, Robert Lado insisted on the idea that we want to prepare our students "to learn to function" in the foreign language; and that in order to achieve this aim, language teachers must have adequate familiarity with the language as it is used and felt by its speakers. "Obviously, the teacher must understand as fully and as vividly as possible the meanings and connotations that the members of the culture react to, if he is to transmit that understanding to the students . . . " 3

Michel Beaujour and Jacques Ehrmann 4 offer further evidence of the relationship between linguistics and anthropology. They oppose the synchronic, that is to say the anthropological daily life conception of the culture, to the diachronic or historic "noble" civilization one. They also note the relationship of the former to the audio-lingual

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2 Ibid., p. 8.

3 Ibid., p. 48.

approach. In their turn, they make a plea for the colloquial language: "Since our aim is to understand and analyze a social reality, we can only use the system of signs which opens onto it, that of ordinary language."\(^1\)

Michel Beaujour pleads for the teaching of culture as an independent humanistic discipline. Such a study would be done by means of the "stylistics" of culture which enable us to decode social messages and group cultural signs embedded in ordinary language:

In order to reach the cultural level of interpretation of signs, the linguistic sign, in its turn, becomes the cultural signifier which refers to a 'cultural' signified, both of which form the cultural sign . . .

Signs are not only provided by words either written or spoken but by image, gestures, sounds, etc. . . . All these types of signs give culture its uniqueness and provides its members with a common system of reference.\(^2\)

Beaujour conceives the task of the teacher of a semiotic approach to culture as somewhat similar to that of the translator who must provide the complement of explanation whenever there is a gap in the translation. For example, simply translating "Thursday" for "jeudi" leaves out an important part of the meaning that only knowledge of the culture can give us. Similarly, the expression "C'est la semaine des quatre jeudis" can be meaningful only if you know that on Thursdays there is no school in France. He recommends the use of Lawrence Wylie's "contrastive method" which consists in bringing simultaneously to the consciousness of the student the foreign culture and the presuppositions of his own, the primary value of teaching culture at the college level lying precisely in producing this double awareness. The materials studied in such a

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 153.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 154.
course should consist of: factual information about institutions, studies of attitudes and beliefs of a sociological or anthropological nature, and raw materials such as interviews, radio, and pictures.

Nelson Brooks\(^1\) gives further support to this case. He reminds us that we ought to make clear what we understand by culture since it is a very vague concept. Having distinguished five basic meanings of culture, he selects one as pertaining to our field, namely, culture as patterns of living, and proceeds to a more detailed definition and its implications in language teaching. Some of his remarks have a direct bearing on the topic of this study.

-A culture oriented language course must answer the question "Where is the bathroom" just as well as "Where is the bookstore."

-In culture what is central, is the interchange and the reciprocal effect of each upon the other.\(^2\)

-What is important is what one is "expected" to think, believe, say, do, eat, wear, pay, endure, resent, honor, laugh at, fight for, and worship in typical life situations.

According to Brooks, the best way to focus the student's attention on these characteristics of the target culture is through the understanding and use of the target language, "... the most typical, unique, and challenging, yet the most readily available element" of the culture; and "Its authentic use from the beginning is therefore a most valid cultural objective.\(^3\)

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\(^2\)Underlinings are mine.

Finally Nelson Brooks suggests a number of proposals, two of which are relevant to the subject under consideration.

Proposal V: That materials be prepared to show how elements of the target culture are embedded in the target language itself.

Proposal VI: That teaching dialogues be prepared that are based not only upon basic matters of linguistic structure and semantics but equally upon situations that are authentic and important in the target culture.¹

In a more recent article, Nelson Brooks² further investigates the relationship between cultural concepts and classroom techniques. Some of these concepts and suggestions are particularly relevant here. He points out that "... a cardinal concept is that of culture seen as a dialectic between self and life, an interaction that takes place in a matrix of language."³ This definition of culture seems very important to this writer because it reveals the role culture plays as a mediator between the needs of the self and the expression or fulfillment of these needs. Culture provides a channel and determines the manner in which basic human needs should express themselves or be fulfilled; and it also shapes, modifies, or sublimates these basic needs, or creates new ones. This definition also brings into evidence the fact that language is the context in which this interaction takes place, and therefore reveals the patterns of interaction. Brooks suggests a classroom technique which brings into play this interaction. It calls for the active familiarity

¹Ibid., p. 216.

²Nelson Brooks, "Teaching Culture Abroad; From Concept to Classroom Technique," MLJ, LIII (May, 1969), pp. 320-324.

³Ibid., p. 321.
with the connotative meaning of language and the socio-stylistics of interpersonal communication which this writer wishes to see emphasized in language teaching. The type of competence called for here is somewhat similar to Jakobovits' definition of communicative competence.

Another technique is related to idiom study and is recommended because idiom usually contains a significant weight of cultural appropriateness. It is really a game of utterance and rejoinder at a level of sophistication that demands a high degree of both linguistic and cultural competence.\(^1\)

**Pedagogical Implications**

It appears from this review of literature that learning to understand a foreign language involves a great deal more than simply the acquisition of a new linguistic competence as it is traditionally defined. Understanding a language when it is used in true life situations by its native speakers calls for the ability to perceive accurately the complex network of interrelated affective, social, and cultural connotations as well as the linguistic meaning of the utterances.

The pedagogical implications are twofold: (1) To realign teaching procedures and materials so as to foster in students true "communicative competence." It is within the context of this larger objective that teachers will have to make decisions about which "formality level" to emphasize (intimate, casual, formal) since "... each formality level requires a vocabulary, a sentence structure and a set of attitudes toward oneself and one's interlocutor different from those required by others."\(^2\) The writer wishes to add that this choice should also vary

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1. Ibid., p. 323.
in function of the role to be emphasized, speaking or understanding. (2) to develop language tests based on "... a model that com-

passes the full range of phenomena involved in communication compet-

ence ...",1 so as to assess the real communicative proficiency of

the students rather than just their ability to perform exercises that

have "... little significant relationship to the use of language in

real life situations."2 To this writer, it means that the ultimate, and

the only really "valid" test of the students' proficiency, is their

ability to understand the language as it is spoken naturally by natives

in real life situations and to respond appropriately both verbally and

non-verbally. It means that if language teachers take seriously the

officially recognized priority of the objective of developing the

students' ability to communicate in the foreign language, then a number

of consequences are to be faced. Among those, the following ones have

a direct relationship to the focus of this study: (1) The language

materials used to develop listening comprehension should be culturally

authentic and reflect the variety of language styles that native speakers

revert to depending on the nature of the situation, the relationship

between the speakers, the speakers' mood or intentions, etc. (2) These

materials should also reflect the relative importance, or frequency of

use, of the various language styles within the target socio-linguistic

system. All styles should be presented, but greater emphasis should be

placed on the ones most frequently encountered in oral communication.

1 Jakobovits, Language Learning, p. 157.

2 Ibid.
And, as will be shown in this study, colloquial French constitutes the standard style of informal spoken exchange. (3) The students should be given guidance and practice in interpreting correctly not only the linguistic meaning of the utterances heard, but also their implicit and implicative meaning. In other words, if teachers really believe that the ability to communicate in the foreign language is the primary goal of language learning, then it is their obligation to help students understand French as it is really spoken, rather than as purists and grammarians say it should be.

Implications for Teacher Qualifications and Training

If teachers are to impart to their students this kind of insight and skills it is only logical to assume that they must possess it. What are the positions and the suggestions of the profession regarding this aspect of the training of language teachers?

In the 1955 Modern Language Association's "Qualifications for High School Teachers of Modern Languages," it is stated that, in the area of aural understanding which is of primary concern here, to achieve a level of "good," the teacher must demonstrate "... the ability to understand conversation at average tempo, lectures, and news broadcasts." (The 1966 Guidelines acknowledged the same goal but viewed it as a "minimal" requirement.) In order to perform at the "superior" level, the teacher must show "... the ability to follow closely and with ease all types of standard speech, such as rapid or group conversation, plays and movies." These expectations are certainly quite reasonable. The weakness of the statement lies in the fact that the
term "standard speech" holds a different meaning for different people. Group and rapid conversations of an informal nature, which are given as instances of such standard speech, are more more likely to display the features of colloquial French, than those of standard French in the usual sense of the term. The examples given, plays and movies, also cover a wide range of language use depending on the situation and the relationship portrayed. From this, the writer concludes that standard speech should be taken to mean both informal, colloquial standard and formal standard, and that teachers should understand both with equal facility.

Mead\(^1\) conceives the "essential mission" of the language teacher as "the teaching and interpretation of two languages-in-culture" and such a mission requires that he should "understand the spoken language as though he were a cultivated native." Mills F. Edgerton's recommendations address themselves more specifically to the problem:

> There is also the matter of ignorance of the socio-linguistic dimension of language; most people who teach a foreign language are only very vaguely aware that there are a number of different varieties of that language and that those varieties are used in systematic ways corresponding to structured sets of circumstances within the foreign culture. Most teachers of a foreign language control only one variety of that language and use it for all purposes.\(^2\)

The problem is that not only do teachers use only one variety of French for all purposes, they also usually understand only one. This is a far

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\(^1\) Robert J. Mead's unpublished address to the 1971 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

\(^2\) Mills F. Edgerton, Jr., "Training the Foreign Language Teacher, FLA, V (Dec., 1971), p. 204."
more serious handicap in situations where the language is used in its
native context. Somehow native speakers take it for granted that a
foreigner will use a less varied, more formal type of speech. With some
good will, they will usually understand what he "means," even if what
he "says" is not quite appropriate. But the reverse is not true; those
same natives will revert to their natural styles when it is a question
of output and especially when they talk among themselves. The foreigner
has no power to decide on which style will be used by the native speak­
ers, and if they express themselves in a style other than the one he is
accustomed to, a large amount of the conversation will remain incom­
prehensible to him.

How then are teachers supposed to gain that exposure and famili­
arity with the language in action? The most frequently suggested means
is travel, study, and residence in the foreign country. This consensus
of opinion is evident in the literature.

Study Abroad

Freeman indicates that one aspect of teacher training which still
needs more emphasis is a period of study and living in the foreign
country. He recommends

... a summer of living, vagabonding, academic loaf­
ing ... in the foreign country ... Go by bus, or
rent a little car, stay in little inns and talk, really
communicate with every concierge, waiter, postman, bus
driver, or garagiste that you can find. Yes, talk with
them about what they want to talk with you about. You'll
learn more human 'culture,' more idiomatic language and
bring back more enthusiasm, more atmosphere to your
classes, than by spending months at the Sorbonne. A
language teacher needs to feel completely at home in the
other country, easily familiar with its ways of thinking, acting and talking.¹

Lado² advocates a full year of residence abroad followed by shorter visits from time to time. The Committee on Teacher Training of the American Association of Teachers of German recommends the establishment of a nationwide overseas program for all prospective teachers of German.³ Barrutia⁴ suggests a requirement of at least two semesters of study abroad for every accredited language teacher, and Bernardo⁵ advocates a required junior year abroad for all prospective teachers of modern languages. The CIPTE⁶ and its member institutions believe that the most effective and quickest way to achieve the three basic goals of linguistic fluency, cross-cultural proficiency and self-knowledge, is through a well conceived foreign study experience. They recommend "total immersion in the everyday activities of the culture itself" and "direct involvement with the local people in all walks of life."⁷ This active

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²Lado, Language Teaching, p. 154.
participation in the life of the speech community is also strongly
emphasized by Virginia F. Allen,¹ who says "... it is that life which
gives the language its meanings." In a statement endorsed by the
National Council of State Supervisors and by the ACTFL Executive Com-
mittee, Freeman indicates that

This Council recognizes the very great value of foreign
travel and study. The contact with a foreign culture,
when properly prepared and guided, can be a personal
experience of the greatest importance, broadening the
individual's cultural horizon and leading him to a better
understanding of other peoples.²

Empirical evidence seems to support this quasi unanimous advocacy
of study and residence abroad as an essential part of the language
teacher's training. Carroll³ found that one of the most important fac-
tors contributing to the development of foreign language skills in col-
lege language majors near graduation was the amount of time spent abroad.
Politzer and Weiss⁴ found that there is a positive correlation between
efficient classroom performance as reflected by students' achievement
and the amount of time spent in France by the teacher; however, they note
that it is difficult to determine "... to what extent residence in the

¹Virginia F. Allen, "Understanding the Cultural Content," MLJ,

²Stephen Freeman, "Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Study Programs

³John B. Carroll, "Foreign Language Proficiency Levels Attained
by Language Majors near Graduation from College," FLA, I (May, 1968),
pp. 131-154.

⁴Politzer and Weiss, The Successful Foreign Language Teacher,
(Philadelphia: The Center For Curriculum Development, Inc., 1971),
pp. 35-57.
foreign country produces the confidence and skill of the successful teacher, or to what extent it is in itself the result of characteristics which make a good language teacher.\textsuperscript{1}

While recognizing the positive aspects of residence abroad, a word of caution is needed against indiscriminately hailing it as the infallible panacea, and the question still remains as to how such an experience can be made most fruitful. Renzo Titone\textsuperscript{2} warns those ready to jump on a new bandwagon that time spent in the foreign country is by itself no guarantee of achieving linguistic mastery unless the immersion is accompanied by systematic instruction. He states that adequate enculturation requires systematic contact with the language "in situ" and that the following elements should be present in a foreign study program: (1) Systematic interaction with the foreign environment as a linguistic-cultural milieu. (2) This systematic interaction should be aided by a carefully articulated "situational syllabus" which would select, order, and present meaningful situations and provide practice opportunities. (3) A contrastive and comparative analysis of linguistic cultural patterns. (4) A well planned series of "life exercises," i.e., drills aimed at producing the appropriate linguistic expression called for by the circumstances as well as the accompanying gestures and other items of communicative behavior. This last suggestion is particularly relevant to the concerns of this study. If this type of training were

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 59.

given to the prospective teachers, not only during their stay, but also prior to their going abroad, and if more emphasis was placed on presentation and study of the informal language in general, they would be spared the frustrating and time wasting experience of discovering that French people speak a language quite different from the one presented in language classrooms and materials.

In conclusion, then, the writer recognizes the incomparable value of study and residence abroad and strongly supports the idea of a residence abroad requirement for certified teachers, for the reasons mentioned by the authors quoted and as a means of achieving a sophisticated level of familiarity with the spoken informal language used in daily social contacts and with the variations in styles that are called for by different situations. But leaving it at that would be a failure to assume our responsibility as language educators and trainers of language teachers. First, desirable as study abroad may be, it is not yet a requirement and therefore we cannot depend on it to give to teachers what is missing in their "home" training. Even those who do not have the opportunity to stay in France should be trained to understand French as it is spoken if they are to impart that knowledge to their students. Second, if and when residence abroad becomes a requirement, or if and when teachers choose to take this opportunity, much time and effort could be saved if they had had the necessary training to meet with ease and confidence the challenge of direct interaction with a foreign language and culture. In any case, students and teachers alike should not have to wait until they go abroad to find out what the ordinary spoken language is really like.
CHAPTER II

SOCIO-LINGUISTIC DEFINITION, ROLE AND STATUS
OF COLLOQUIAL FRENCH

Speech Registers and Situational Variables

It is perhaps an appropriate introduction to retell the often quoted story of the local train station employee who, upon being asked why the station's two clocks differed by 10 minutes, answered: "Well Sir, if the clocks indicated the same time, what would be the use in having two clocks?"¹ The same holds true for the different language styles. If they were interchangeable, there would not be any point in having them. Conversely, if several styles do exist, it must be that they fulfill different functions and that each is "right" or "correct" for certain specific situations.

The problem can best be viewed within the perspective of saussurian linguistics,² which distinguish between "la langue" as an abstract set of rules which represent the sum total of the "competence" of its speakers, and "la parole" or "le discours" which is the domain of the actual performance of the language and is conditioned by a variety of variables such as environment, topic, speaker, etc.


As Coste\(^1\) observed, the different language styles, also called registers, or "niveaux de langue," should be properly referred to as "niveaux de discours."

The discourse, in turn, includes two mediums of expression, written and oral, each of which has its specific code. Peytard and Genouvrier think that language registers can best be established and analyzed within each of these two forms:

"Mieux vaut considérer que langue parlée appartient à l'ordre oral, langue écrite à l'ordre scriptural, chaque ordre possédant son code spécifique. C'est à l'intérieur de chaque ordre que s'établiront les divers niveaux.\(^2\)"

They further state that within each form, three basic registers can be found:

"On admet communément qu'il existe un niveau médian, dénommé langue commune, parfois, français standard; au dessus de ce médian, le niveau soutenu; au dessous, les niveaux familial et relâché.\(^3\)"

Colette Stourdze\(^4\) views these differentiations from another angle. Her analysis divides contemporary French into three categories. At one end, there is the literary language, at the other, the popular language; the vast area in between constitutes what she terms "le bon usage." The "bon usage," in turn, is divided into three sub-levels ("sous niveaux"):

---


\(^3\) Ibid.

"langue soignée" (formal language), "langue courante" (everyday common language), and "langue familière" (colloquial language). The "bon usage" thus encompasses a wide range of language usages. While remaining within the dictates of the "bon usage," a French person may, according to the situation, use a form which would appear out of place in another context. For instance, "chô pas" (je ne sais pas) or "j'en sais rien" are proper when used among peers, but to a stranger or a superior, one would say "je n(e) sais pas" or even "excusez-moi monsieur, je ne saurais vous le dire."\(^1\)

As shown by Stourdze's schema literary and popular\(^2\) language represent two opposite forces that influence the "bon usage," the formal language being, of course, the most directly affected by the literary language, whereas colloquial French is more directly influenced by the popular language. The common language lies at the juncture of these two influences. The written form of the common language tends to fall under the influence of the formal and literary language which are permeated with style and grammar. The spoken code, on the other hand, tends to be more influenced by the colloquial and popular language, which are more instinctive. As an illustration of this, Stourdze indicates that in a conversation in "common language," the elision of the "ne" part of the negative has become so common that one hardly notices it (Ex: j'crois pas), but when writing a letter, also in

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 20.

\(^2\)"Popular" will henceforth be used in the sense of "of, or pertaining to the common people," Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 657.
NIVEAUX DE LANGUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Langue Contemporaine</th>
<th>Bon Usage</th>
<th>Langue Classique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langue Populaire</td>
<td>Bon Usage</td>
<td>Langue Littéraire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familière</td>
<td>Langue courante</td>
<td>Langue soignée</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parlée</td>
<td>écrite</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1Ibid., p. 21.
"common language," one would not think of dropping the "ne."

It is evident from Stourdza's analysis of the "niveaux de langue" that the colloquial language is just as much within the range of the "bon usage" as the formal language; the appropriateness of one rather than the other depends upon the situation or the medium, not on some absolute quality or correctness criteria. She also views colloquial French as a sort of popular language which would have been filtered and purified by the linguistic habits acquired through education.

Crystal and Davy¹ provide a very comprehensive analysis of the various language styles, their function, characteristics, and relationship to one another. They first acknowledge the fact that at the level of discourse, each language possesses a number of varieties of that language, so that a speaker of English is in fact "multi-lingual" and knows intuitively which variety to use according to the circumstance:

Each of us, as an educated speaker of English, is, in a sense multilingual; for in the course of developing our command of language, we have encountered a large number of varieties, and to a certain extent, have learned how to use them: A particular social situation makes us respond with an appropriate variety of language . . . . A test of a successful education is whether it has brought us to the position whereby we can communicate, on a range of subjects, with people in various walks of life, and gain their understanding as well as understand them. But to be in such a position requires a sharpened consciousness of the form and function of language, its place in society, its power.²

These different varieties of English can be distinguished from one another by the presence or absence of certain features:

²Ibid., pp. 4-5.
Any utterance, spoken or written, displays features which simultaneously identify it from a number of different points of view. Some features may provide information about the speaker's regional background, or his place on a social scale of some kind, for example; other features may reveal aspects of the social situation in which he is speaking, the kind of person to whom he is speaking, the capacity in which he is speaking, and so on.\(^1\)

Styles are rarely distinguishable, however, by the absolute presence or absence of certain features; more precisely, it is their relative frequency of appearance which makes the difference. As indicated by Crystal and Davy, the presence of these features is related to extra-linguistic, situational variables, but there is no one-to-one correlation between a set of linguistic forms and a particular situation. Although this relation may sometimes exist, these authors think that it is a mistake to talk in terms of "one language, one situation" and they suggest that it would be more meaningful instead "... to talk of 'ranges' of appropriateness and acceptability of various uses of language to given situations."\(^2\) From this can be derived the concept of significant feature: the more important stylistic feature in a "text" will be (a) that which occurs more frequently within the variety in question and (b) that which is shared less by other varieties.

Crystal and Davy break down the concept of situation into what they term "dimensions of situational constraint," also referred to as situational variables. In their system, the role played by every feature is described in terms of one or more of these dimensions. For instance,

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 60.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 62.
feature A may be correlated with the geographical area of origin of the speaker and will be referred to as a feature of the dimension of regional variation; feature B may be seen as a result of the social relationship existing between the speakers and is referred to as a feature of the "status" dimension. Those features which have no situational correlates at all and can be equally found in any variety of English are referred to as "common core features."¹

Crystal and Davy identify eight major dimensions of situational constraint, which can be grouped in three broad types:

Individuality
Dialect
Time

Discourse
a) Simple/complex medium (speech, writing)
b) Simple/complex participation (monologue, dialogue)

Province
Status
Modality
Singularity²

¹Ibid., p. 64.
²Ibid., p. 66.
Among these, the dimensions that hold the greatest relevance for the socio-linguistic description and function of colloquial French are Dialect and Status, and to a lesser degree, Discourse, Province, and Modality. Crystal and Davy describe them as follows:¹

- **Dialect.** This dimension refers to the feature that reveals the geographical origin of the speaker (Regional dialect) or his position on the social scale (Class dialect).

- **Discourse.** The discourse dimension refers to two kinds of variability in language: a) the difference between speech and writing, i.e., the difference in the medium. b) the difference between monologue and dialogue which results from the nature of the participation in the language event.

- **Province.** This dimension refers to features that can be correlated with the kind of occupational or professional activity being engaged in, rather than to the speakers themselves. The occupational role of the speaker imposes upon him certain restraints as to what may be said or written. For instance, the language of public worship, of advertising, of science, of law.

- **Status.** This dimension refers to "the systematic variations which correspond with variations in the relative social standing of the participants in any act of communication, regardless of their exact locality." Factors intuitively associated with status include formality/

¹Ibid., pp. 66-77.
informality, respect and politeness, deference, intimacy, kinship, business, and hierarchical relations in general.

- Modality refers to "those linguistic features correlatable with the specific purpose of an utterance which has led the user to adopt one feature or set of features, rather than another, and ultimately to produce an overall, conventionalized spoken or written format of his language, which may be given a descriptive label." The modality dimension then has to do with the suitability of form to subject matter. For instance, a written monologue could take the form of an anecdote, a proclamation, a poster, a testimonial, etc.

This conceptual framework should allow the linguist to list the features or set of features that pertain to a certain dimension, and conversely, given a configuration of features to describe a "text," spoken or written, in terms of these dimensions, or even to predict its origin. In humor and literature, however, it is impossible to predict what the configuration of features will be because in such contexts, features from other varieties can be used for a particular effect. An illustration of this, which is of relevance to the study of colloquial French, is the presence in many modern novels and plays, of features characteristic of spoken colloquial usage. The pedagogical implication is that familiarity with colloquial usage may be necessary even for literary pursuits and appreciation, and, on the other hand, literature may provide both materials and a meaningful context for the study of colloquial speech and stylistic variations.

The relevance of the conceptual framework provided by Crystal
and Davy can best be appreciated in their own summary.¹

We may summarize this discussion by saying that, in any text, the stylistically significant characteristics can be classified into types which correspond to the set of questions outlined below. Putting it crudely, the general question to be asking is 'Apart from the message being communicated, what other kind of information does the utterance give us?' There are at least thirteen sub-questions here:

Does it tell us which specific person used it? (Individuality)

Does it tell us where in the country he is from? (Regional dialect)

Does it tell us which social class he belongs to? (Class dialect)

Does it tell us during which period of English he spoke or wrote it, or how old he was? (Time)

Does it tell us whether he was speaking or writing? (Discourse medium)

Does it tell us whether he was speaking or writing as an end in itself, or as a means to a further end? (Simple v. complex discourse medium)

Does it tell us whether there was only one participant in the utterance, or whether there was more than one? (Discourse participation)

Does it tell us whether the monologue and dialogue are independent, or are to be considered as part of a wider type of discourse? (Simple v complex discourse participation)

Does it tell which specific occupational activity the user is engaged in? (Province)

Does it tell us about the social relationship existing between the user and his interlocutors? (Status)

Does it tell us about the purpose he had in mind when conveying the message? (Modality)

¹Ibid., pp. 81-82.
Does it tell us that the user was being deliberately idiosyncratic? (Singularity)

Does it tell us none of these things? (Common-core)

Within the "status" dimension described by Crystal and Davy, Martin Joos identifies four main usage scales, and within each scale, five distinct levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Breadth</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>senile</td>
<td>frozen</td>
<td>genteel</td>
<td>best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mature</td>
<td>formal</td>
<td>puristic</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teenage</td>
<td>consultative</td>
<td>standard</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child</td>
<td>casual</td>
<td>provincial</td>
<td>fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baby</td>
<td>intimate</td>
<td>popular</td>
<td>bad</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This study is primarily concerned with the styles of communication, particularly the consultative and casual styles which Joos also labels the two colloquial styles. Thus, colloquial French refers to the consultative and casual uses of French. From the other scales: mature, teenage, child; standard, provincial, popular; good, fair; could be selected as appropriate aspects of the type of French of interest here. Among these, the notion of greater interest may be "standard." What is usually referred to as standard French is the rather formal French used in writing and heard in careful speech; it is the one presented in textbooks and taught in schools. But as early as 1948, John Kenyon argues that we should recognize a colloquial standard and a formal non-standard, as well as a formal standard and a colloquial non-standard. This concept provides a useful delimitation of the type of


2Ibid., p. 13.

language use which is the focus of this study: not far out slang and highly regional pronunciation (colloquial non-standard), but rather the type of language style that the average educated and less educated Frenchmen use in everyday, informal situations (colloquial standard).

In addition to the distinctions made by these authors, the French linguists Wagner and Quemada\(^1\) suggest the following parameters on which research on the state of contemporary French should be based:

- Formal criteria, based on the form of the act of communication; e.g., oral/written.
- The types of channels of communication which condition the modes of exchange, e.g., direct/indirect, and the modes of transmission, e.g., private/public; individual/collective.
- Socio-cultural criteria such as age, sex, level of education, profession and geographical origin of the speakers.
- The tone of the message. For instance, there is an opposition between didactic messages which rest upon the cognitive-objective use of language and affective messages which rest, on the contrary, upon the expressive-subjective use of language.

Applying these parameters to a working definition of colloquial French, it would yield the following description: (a) oral; (b) direct, private, individual; (c) practically the whole gamut of socio-cultural milieus; (d) some cognitive expressive use of language in consultative situations and mostly affectively colored messages resting on the expressive-subjective use in casual style and occasionally in consultative style.

Pierre Guiraud proposes his own list of parameters which he opposes by pairs, thus defining two distinct types of language use:

Il est légitime de distinguer deux formes limites de la langue, conditionées par un ensemble de variables complexes dont les unes tiennent à l'histoire, à la culture, à la société, les autres aux conditions de l'acte de communication ou à la nature du message. Ainsi s'opposent:

- populaire / bourgeois
- relaché / soutenu
- libre / prescriptif
- spontané / stylisé
- oral / écrit
- héréditaire / savant
- dialectal / national
- expressif / cognitif
- locutif / prédicatif
- naturel / cultivé

The column on the right represents the attributes of the formal French that has traditionally been described in grammar books and taught in language programs. The column on the left describes and defines colloquial French. Guiraud claims that although in theory eight different speech registers could be identified, in fact, "On constate une étroite corrélation entre populaire, oral, relâché d'une part et de l'autre, cultivé, écrit, soutenu (sic.)."2 "Populaire," "oral," "relâché" are three major aspects of colloquial French.

Guiraud3 goes on to explain in greater detail how these two forms differ. On the level of the code, popular hereditary French is the product of the natural laws governing all linguistic systems, whereas learned French is the artificial product of rules derived from a reflection on the language and on its social and technical function. From the

2 Ibid., p. 23.
3 Ibid., pp. 23-27.
point of view of the nature of the message, familiar and formal French reflect the double function of language: expressive-subjective versus cognitive-objective according to whether the message simply designates or describes the object or whether it provides information at the same time about the speaker, his feelings, his profession, his origin. From the point of view of form, locutive is opposed to predicative. The latter describes the normal sentence with its subject and its predicate; the former represents an array of exclamative and jussive constructions typified by the "mots phrases." The locutive is an attribute of the spoken language and plays a primordial role in colloquial French. Regional, dialectal differences are systematically eroded by schooling, by social pressure and by the spread of the media; however, familiar French is more hospitable to local pronunciations, expressions or even constructions.

**Definition of Colloquial French and Related Terms**

Through the process of investigating the parameters and conceptual frameworks applied by linguists to the study of stylistic variation, a definition of colloquial French has progressively taken shape, and some of its attributes have been identified. At this point, it may be useful to pause and recapitulate what is meant by colloquial French and the terms used in connection with it.

a) Definition of attributes of colloquial French and related terms.

- **Styles.** Freeman Twaddell's definition of styles corresponds to the sense in which the term is used in this study:

  For linguists, style refers to differences that are correlated with the social situation, and with the relation between speaker and hearer(s). We do not use the same pronunciation, syntax,
lexicon (and perhaps even morphology) in speaking to a sibling or a spouse on the one hand, and in addressing a large meeting on the other.¹

-Code labels. How does the listener identify the style used or perceive shifts of styles? This is done by means of words that serve to typify the style used, for instance, in English "ain't" is typical of a certain style of speech. These words are referred to as code labels, which Joos explains thus:

"Each style has its own list of . . . conventional formulas which we may call 'code labels' because they serve both to carry part of the message and to identify the style."² The concept of 'code labels' is closely related to that of "significant features."

From Joos' analysis, it appeared that consultative and casual styles were the two main components of colloquial language; a more detailed description of what is meant by these terms is then called for:

-Consultative style. According to Joos

The two defining features of consultative style are: (1) the speaker supplies background information . . . (2) The addressee participates continuously. Because of these two features, consultative style is our norm for coming to terms with strangers—people who speak our language but whose personal stock of information may be different.³

³ Ibid., p. 19.
By listener participation, Joos\(^1\) means that at regular intervals the listener indicates to the speaker by words, grunts, or nods, that he either follows the argument, or that he disagrees, or that he wants further background information, or that he is calling for a reversal of speaker-listener roles.

**Casual style**

Casual style is for friends, acquaintances, insiders; addressed to a stranger, it serves to make him an insider simply by treating him as an insider. Negatively, there is absence of background information and no reliance on listeners' participation . . . On the positive side, we have two devices which do the same job directly: (1) ellipsis and (2) slang, the two defining features of casual style.\(^2\)

Joos, then identifies slang as one of the defining features of the casual style which falls within the colloquial usage. Indeed, there is a high incidence in colloquial French of terms and expressions commonly referred to as slang, and to many people, colloquial language is often synonymous with slang. Slang being a highly esoteric language, the question arises whether terms that are widely used in conversational styles can still be called slang, since their being known and used commonly denies the secretive purpose of slang:

*Quand un mot d'argot subsiste longtemps, c'est qu'il a cessé d'être un mot d'argot proprement dit pour tomber dans le vocabulaire du langage familier.*\(^3\)

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\(^1\) *Ibid.*

\(^2\) *Ibid.* *(Underlinings are mine.)*

-Slang.

Language comprising certain widely current but usually ephemeral terms (especially coined or clipped words, or words used in special senses, or phrases, usually metaphors and similes) having a forced, fantastic or grotesque meaning or exhibiting eccentric or extravagant humor or fancy. ¹

The ephemeral nature of slang, along with the fact that it varies with social groups, makes it a very elusive subject matter for language teaching. It will be included in the operational definition of colloquial French only insofar as it is widely used by the social groups American students would be likely to encounter in France or insofar as it would be current enough to fit the definition of colloquial standard style.

b) Summary definition of colloquial French. Each of the authors quoted thus far has helped to formulate the operational definition of colloquial French on which this study is based. The concepts elucidated by their analyses are adequately summarized in the dictionary definitions of the English word "colloquial" and the French word "familiär." ²

-Colloquial.

pertaining to, or used in, conversation, especially familiar conversation; acceptable and correct in ordinary conversation, friendly letters or informal speeches but unsuited for formal speech or writing; hence, informal. ²

Webster equates colloquial with informal. According to Crystal and Davy,

¹Webster's New International Dictionary.

The term 'informal' is readily correlatable with certain linguistic variables, operating at all levels and reflecting the parity of the social status of the participants and the spontaneity of their expression.\(^1\)

The English "colloquial" corresponds to the French "familier," the term used by the French authors quoted.\(^2\) It is defined in Le Petit Robert dictionary in the following manner:

> Qu'on emploie naturellement, en tous milieux, dans la conversation courante et même par écrit mais qu'on évite dans les relations avec les supérieurs, les relations officielles et les ouvrages qui se veulent sérieux.\(^3\)

Robert's definition has the advantage of pointing out (a) the spontaneous, natural use of colloquial French, (b) its freedom from social stigma; it is not the language of the uneducated, but the spontaneous means of expression of all social levels in (c) the type of linguistic communication in which it is appropriate: ordinary, everyday conversation, but not official speech or writing.

**Function and Status of Colloquial French**

How does colloquial French fare on the socio-linguistic scale and what is its specific function as a style of communication? First, it must be firmly stated that colloquial French is not a language used exclusively by the lower classes.

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Mais, si chaque individu, à quelques exceptions près, utilise simultanément plusieurs variantes de la langue, il n'existe pas une langue qui serait le moyen d'expression exclusif d'une classe déterminée de la population.¹

Guiraud points out that the historically distinct "français populaire" which used to be the language of the "peuple" and the "français relâché" or informal French, of bourgeois origin, are now merging into one type of speech common to the whole linguistic community:

Il en resulte qu'on peut parler d'un français relâché commun à l'ensemble de la collectivité, mais qui, historiquement, tire en très grande partie sa forme de son origine populaire.² (sic.)

The opposition of the "parlure bourgeoise" and "parlure vulgaire" on socio-cultural grounds is no longer accurate. The two functional registers identified by Guiraud correspond, therefore, not so much to a difference in the social origin of the speakers, as to a different situational context and a different function of the message. When the situation is formal or the speech intended for precise, predetermined purposes, the language will be "soutenu," whereas the free and spontaneous speech or everyday conversation will be "relâché."

In another study, Guiraud explains why this merging of two historically and socially distinct language uses is now taking place:

. . . la parlure bourgeoise dans son usage familial présente de nombreux traits communs avec la parlure vulgaire. Il est notable, par ailleurs, que l'écart entre le français populaire et le français familier (d'usage cultivé) se réduit chaque jour. Cela tient, d'une part, à l'accès à la culture des classes


populaires (scolarisation, information); au fait d'autre part, que beaucoup de locuteurs bourgeois adoptent ou acceptent des formes vulgaires, voire argotiques.¹

This is corroborated by Wagner and Quemada:

... le français actuel, profondément marqué par les formes de la communication linguistique dans une civilisation audio-oraie et audio-visuelle qui assure à l'omnipresence de la langue parlée une prééminence reconnue, d'une part, et par les conditions sociales qui multiplient les brassages sociaux, classes, ages, niveaux de culture, etc., d'autre part, a en fait perdu ses normes traditionnelles.²

and by J. Dubois, et al.:

L'interpenetration des diverses classes sociales se traduit sur le plan linguistique par une atténuation importante des niveaux de langue. Les mots d'argot sont presque tous popularisés les termes familiers ne sont plus sentis comme tels.³

Two main factors then, contribute to this reduction of the difference between the "niveaux de langue": the breaking down of social barriers between classes, creating a large "middle class" whose speech is also mid-way between traditional, cultivated, and popular French, and the omnipresence of the spoken language in a civilization of radios and television sets, sound films, and telephones.

Colloquial French, although it is the product of two socially opposed origins (bourgeois and populaire), may not be exactly midway between the two; as attested to by the previously quoted linguists, it


²Wagner and Quemada, op. cit., p. 61.

seems to be more influenced by popular French; a simple explanation could be that working people have always been more numerous than the social and intellectual elite so that their access to the mainstream of French life has had a greater impact on the language. The social recognition they were gaining extended to their language. They may have been less apologetic about their "coarser" idiom while at the same time the bourgeois elite felt less secure in their disdain of the popular ways, and even thought it fashionable to adopt some of them.

Due to the superiority in numbers of the working people and the large scale social mixing that takes place in school, in the neighborhood, and at work, the prominence of colloquial French is likely to gather momentum and to become established as the basic and most enduring speech of the community if the following is true:

It is an important socio-linguistic principle that the most consistent and regular linguistic system of a speech community is that of the basic vernacular learned before puberty.\(^1\)

According to Guiraud,\(^2\) colloquial French is not only widely used, it may be linguistically more authentic than formal French and therefore more enduring. He claims that what happens in relaxed, carefree speech, abides by the rules of "natural" French; that is to say, rather than conforming to imposed, artificial rules made by grammarians who tried to freeze the evolution of French three centuries ago and to apply to it the rules of Latin grammar, colloquial French behaves according to the natural, organic, and historical laws of the evolution of French. For

\(^1\) Labov, The Study of Nonstandard English, p. 35.

that reason he and other linguists think the familiar language can be said to represent a more advanced stage of French (le français avancé).

Wagner and Quemada\(^1\) confirm the relationship of colloquial French to a popular French expurgated of its early vulgarisms and to the "langue naturelle." They also state that the language teacher must be aware of the fact that contemporary French has become a complex and changing entity and that the old concepts of "bon" or "mauvais usage," of norm and standard which are used to prescribe language use, have now weakened to the point of having lost all precise meaning.

Martin Joos firmly rejects "the quality theory holding that usages are intrinsically good or bad under a taboo rule without inquiring into what good or evil it performs in real life."\(^2\) However, a problem of social status does exist because, as Joos points out, although the community's choice of what shall be rated as good or bad is apparently an arbitrary one, and although language usage is never good or bad per se thinking that it is bad can make it so.\(^3\) Furthermore, the very people who are the most inclined to use the colloquial forms will generally be the most ready to label it "incorrect."

In general, it is an important sociolinguistic principle that those who use the highest degree of a stigmatized form in their own casual speech, are quickest to stigmatize it in the speech of others.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) R. L. Wagner and B. Quemada, "Pour une analyse des français contemporains," pp. 61-63.


\(^3\) Ibid.

\(^4\) Labov, The Study of Nonstandard English, p. 32.
This may explain why there is still substantial resistance to the idea of teaching colloquial French, even among native French teachers and educated Frenchmen in general. Their casual speech abides strictly by the rules of colloquial French and many spontaneously or deliberately sprinkle it with slang to show that they are with the "now generation"; when they have to use formal French, it is not infrequent that they fumble and lapse back into casual patterns as has been shown by Aurelien Sauvageot. Yet they keep equating "good" and "correct" with the formal French they were taught in school. Wagner and Quemada claim that in fact this preoccupation with the rules of formal French has a paralyzing influence on the speaker and may stunt the language development of children. Moreover, people are often unaware of their true speech patterns. Sauvageot says that almost everyone perceives himself as using the norm which guides his speech production in most formal styles. He does not realize, or does not want to admit, that as soon as he stops watching himself he lapses back into those forms that he has labelled "incorrect." The discrepancy between people's purist attitude and their own speech pattern can best be illustrated by an anecdote well known in French linguistic circles. A young linguist was telling his father how he had observed that many speakers actually


3 Wagner and Quemada, "Pour une analyse," p. 62.
dropped the "l" of the pronoun "il," "ils." To which the father replied, with almost virtuous indignation: "Qu'est-ce que tu me racontes là?! Ceux qui parlent comme ça, i(1s) savent pas ce qu'i(1s) disent."

The problem, nevertheless, is one of understanding French as Frenchmen DO speak it, not as they think they ought to speak it. And by all linguistic accounts reviewed, colloquial French—is widely used in all social strata. It is no longer appropriate to talk and think in terms of "educated" and "uneducated" French with the usually accompanying social stigma. Instead it must be recognized that:

1. Different situations of communication call for different speech styles, and such stylistic shifts are determined by:

a. The relationship of the speaker, addressee, and audience and particularly the relations of power and solidarity among them.

b. The wider social context or "domain": school, job, home, neighborhood, church.

c. The topic.¹

2. Each individual has at his disposal several styles or registers of speech which he may use more or less frequently and master to different degrees.

En règle générale, chacun a à sa disposition plusieurs registres morphologiques et syntaxiques qu'il maîtrise d'ailleurs ordinairement de façon inégale.²

There is no single style speaker. By this we mean that every speaker shows some variation in phonological and syntactic rules according to the immediate context in which he is speaking.³


The mastery of the different registers is all the more important since inappropriateness of register may be perceived as affectation, or undue familiarity or even rudeness, depending on the case.

D'une manière générale, le locuteur français tient à s'adapter aux interlocuteurs auxquels il a affaire; il est soucieux de ne se rendre coupable d'aucune affectation, ni dans un sens, ni dans l'autre. Il est tout aussi déplacé de dire devant des gens cultivés 'je m'en balance' que de dire devant des familiers 'cela m'est indifférent'.

3. The types of situations in which colloquial French is natural and proper are those of daily, informal social intercourse, accounting for a large percentage of all oral linguistic communication and forming the backbone of social interaction with other members of the speech community.

In summary, then, it must be said that spoken French possesses two basic registers whose originality is that they constitute distinct linguistic systems. The choice of register is governed by the situation of the act of communication and is translated, on the linguistic side, by the use of a different set of phonological, syntactic, and lexical features.

Hormis certains milieux ruraux, hormis, également quelques cercles de la haute bourgeoisie ou quelques cenacles d'intellectuels, la plupart des français parlent et écrivent plusieurs français. Au moins deux. L'un est une langue soutenue qui sert dans les communications officielles ou publiques, chaque fois qu'il y a lieu de faire montre de l'éducation qu'on a recue ou de l'instruction acquise; l'autre est employée pour les

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communications avec les proches et les familiers.
Cette sorte de diglossie ne se manifeste pas seule-ment par l'emploi de vocabularie différents mais aussi par l'utilisation de formes grammaticales différentes et même par une prononciation différente.¹

Pedagogical Implications

Since at least two linguistic systems do coexist, since they fulfill different socio-linguistic functions and since the informal system is the vehicle of most everyday linguistic interaction, why is it that only the formal system is taught or even mentioned in most textbooks and language programs? Could it be because of some misplaced intellectual snobism that the less prestigious language of "everyday people" for everyday interaction is ignored?

Whatever may be our own preferences or biases as language teachers, it seems to be a simple matter of intellectual integrity to present our subject matter as it really is, not solely that aspect of it which appeals to us. If two types of language use do exist, should we not recognize that fact, and make our students aware of it? And if we elect to teach one system rather than the other, should we not inform our students of its proper realm of application, its advantages and limitations? And if, as most of the language teaching profession claims, our aim is to teach language as a means of effective communication in daily situations, is it not our obligation to our students to, at least, teach them to understand the type of language use that is normal and proper for these situations?

The problem seems to present a striking parallel with the controversy over the teaching of deep culture versus the teaching of formal Culture. Anthropologists have convinced us that the literary, artistic, and institutional achievements of which a country is rightly proud are only a part of that culture and that the humble, daily patterns of living of the common people—not just of the great men—, their value systems, form the very fabric of that culture and are eminently worthy of our attention. Although linguists have long been trying to awaken us to the same fact about language, it seems that awareness and acceptance of the common, daily patterns of speech has not yet reached the language teacher.

On a more specific level, a number of conclusions or pedagogical implications have been suggested by the authors reviewed:

1. The question of acquiring appreciation and/or mastery of the various speech registers of French comes after the basic forms of the common language (langue courante) have been acquired.\(^1\)

2. The rules set out in grammar books represent the abstract "competence" shared by the speakers of a language, which is to be acquired by the foreign learner. To it, must be added the understanding of, and eventually the ability to produce, the variations that occur at the level of performance and which are conditioned by the situational variables.\(^2\)

3. It is not a matter of teaching colloquial French instead of formal French. Rather, it is a matter of developing two paralleled sets of

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\(^1\)Stourdze, "Les Niveaux de Langue," p. 18.

language performance and an awareness of the dictates of the situational variables, or, in other words, to be familiar with the various language styles and the situations in which their use is expected or proper. Teachers and students must be familiar with the stylistics of interpersonal relationship.

Crystal and Davy offer a very convincing argument in favor of such linguistic training. They point out that the native speaker of a language possesses a lot of intuitive knowledge about the linguistic appropriateness, thanks to his direct experience with the language in action during his formative years. But the foreign learner, who also needs to react appropriately to language if he wants to be accepted, is very much at a loss because he has not had the opportunity to develop that intuitive sense of appropriateness and awareness of conventions. The only language he knows how to use is the one taught in the classroom, and more dangerous still, it is the only language he knows how to recognize or understand and therefore to react to appropriately. Hence, say Crystal and Davy, it is important that the syllabus for foreign language teaching should be so ordered that it includes instruction in those varieties of English (or any foreign language) that the language learner will be likely to meet and need most frequently.

He (the foreigner) needs to be fluent, and fluency should here be measured by his ability to conform in the approved manner to many disparate socio-linguistic situations. He needs to develop a 'sense of style,' as it is often called—a semi-instinctive

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knowledge of linguistic appropriateness and taboo, which corresponds as closely as possible to the fluent native speaker's. But this ability does not come easily, and in many language training institutions, there is insufficient training for it ever to be gained at all.

\[1\text{Ibid.}\]
CHAPTER III

LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION OF COLLOQUIAL FRENCH

Preliminary Remarks: Objectives, Limitations, Sources

The purpose of this chapter is to present a comprehensive overview and description of the linguistic features of everyday colloquial French. It is specifically geared to the needs of the language teachers who would like to know in what ways colloquial French differs from standard French, so that they may select teaching materials accordingly, or sensitize their students to these differences. It also aims to provide textbook writers with an inventory of the linguistic features of colloquial French which could be incorporated into the presentation of the language. Selection of content and manner of presentation will reflect this objective. This presentation, then, does not purport to be original research. Rather, it is a compilation and synthesis of the observations made by various linguists and researchers.

Several limitations should be pointed out. The most important one is that despite the attempt made in the previous chapters, there exists no clearly circumscribed definition of colloquial French. An illustration of this vagueness is the labels attached to words in various dictionaries of contemporary French. What one calls "populaire," others may call "familler" or "très familler"; inconsistencies can be found
even within the same dictionary. The lack of clear-cut separations between the different language styles and their relationship to one another can be compared to that of the colors in the spectrum where one color gradually changes into another. The difference between the language styles depends on the relative frequency of appearance of certain features, rather than their absolute presence or absence. Colloquial French merges with standard spoken French on its "upper" limit and with popular French in its "lower" one. It fluctuates between these two extremes according to the speakers and the situation:

D'un sujet parlant à un autre, la langue familière oscille entre deux extrêmes: une variante toute proche de la langue normale (rigoler pour rire, bouquin pour livre) et une autre, toute voisine de l'argot.²

Furthermore, the laws of the evolution of the language are such that there is a constant upward current from popular French to standard French. Many of the terms or speech habits which have originated in popular French are progressively reaching general acceptance, and what is colloquial today may well be standard ten years from now.

Related to this aspect of the problem, is the fact that studies fall into two categories: 1) those describing "le français populaire" and 2) those describing contemporary spoken French and making only occasional notations of features frequently encountered in informal speech. The area in between, which constitutes colloquial French, does not seem to have ever been explored systematically.


²A. Sauvageot, Les procédés expressifs du français contemporain, p. 217.
This presentation is an attempt to fill this gap and will rely on both types of sources, for the following reasons: 1) Descriptions of modern spoken French do present features that are unequivocably labeled as colloquial; 2) in addition, other features which are simply common features of spoken informal French (upper boundary) may be usefully included in this description, because they are so rarely mentioned in the grammars and textbooks from which teachers learned their French or which they use in their teaching. Teachers may actually need to be told or shown how common some of these features are. In this perspective, the elision of the mute e which is a common aspect of spoken French, can justifiably be included in the description of informal, colloquial French so that, hopefully, students will no longer be taught to say 

[ʒɛ̃lɛʁɛzɛmɛd̯] instead of [ʒɛlɛʁɛzɛmɛd̯] which is the standard "correct" pronunciation. 3) At the other end of the spectrum the boundaries are just as vague, and descriptions of popular French also do present many features that are or have become part of colloquial French because of their widespread use in the informal speech of most French people.

Native French people were consulted as to what they thought was acceptable in colloquial French. However, due to the absence of formal guidelines, in the final analysis, it had to be the writer's responsibility to make the final judgment as to what could qualify as colloquial French. It should be emphasized, though, that instead of trying to adhere strictly to a definition, the first criterion for selection was how frequent a feature seemed to be and how likely the foreign visitor would be to encounter it in his dealings with native French people.
when they are not consciously "watching" their speech. The second criterion for inclusion of otherwise somewhat popular features, was, to what degree linguists thought these aspects followed the internal logic of the language and could be taken as forms of "le français avancé"; in other words, how likely these features were to become the norm in the relatively near future. Guiraud makes a sharp distinction between the rule imposed by grammarians to freeze the language in a given stage of its evolution, and the law of the language which governs its whole natural evolution. According to him, many divergences from the rule are actually the consequence of submission to the natural law which will triumph in the long run and become accepted as the norm.

La règle - archaïque et conservatrice - n'est donc plus en accord avec la réalité; elle est en contradiction avec la loi, la tendance naturelle qui déroule de la forme de la langue et de son fonctionnement. Or, ce sont ces lois qui gouvernent le français populaire dans son ignorance de la règle. Aussi beaucoup de fautes contre la règle sont la conséquence d'une soumission à des lois naturelles qui à la longue, finissent par triompher et par être acceptées par la norme. C'est dans ce sens qu'on a pu parler d'un français avancé, la faute d'aujourd'hui annonçant la norme de demain, comme l'attestent les nombreux soléculsmes du passé qui sont désormais acceptés.¹

General Aspects of Colloquial French

The most striking general characteristics of informal spoken French and indeed of most informal and colloquial speech² are the following:

¹P. Guiraud, Le Français populaire, p. 30.

A. The "ungrammaticality," brevity and "choppiness" of the sentences and the high percentage of "misfires" or bad starts.

Quiconque a enregistré du parlé spontané sait que l'énonciation habituelle est faite de phrases ébauchées, interrompues, reprises, souvent laissées inachevées dès que l'interlocuteur manifeste d'une manière ou d'une autre qu'il a compris ce qu'on désirait lui dire.¹

B. The frequency of hesitation pauses, fill in words (euh, ben, tu sais, etc.) and exclamations—all of which serve to shape the rhythm of the sentence and to emphasize certain elements of the utterance—often used simultaneously with the appropriate gestures and facial expressions.²

C. The deficient syntax, especially in the area of articulation between propositions, is taken over by the supra-segmental features which assume a key role.

On peut même ériger en règle que le style parlé n'est souvent qu'une succession de propositions sans articulation ou plutôt de propositions dont l'articulation dépend exclusivement des moyens modulatoires.³

D. The importance of the affective element, the mood and intentions of the speaker being strongly expressed through a wide array of expressive ressources of the language: the rhythm and intonation, the choice of words with affective connotations, the syntax or word order which

¹ A. Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 29


³ A. Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 39; see also Sauvageot, "L'articulation du discours," FDM n° 57, p. 67 and P. Léon, "Aspects phonostylistiques de l'articulation" FDM n° 76, p. 18.
can be manipulated to emphasize the importance of given elements of the utterance.

E. The rather careless articulation of sounds and the elision of many sounds--particularly the mute e--resulting in a reduction of the number of syllables.

**Supra-Segmental Features**

In informal spoken French, the supra-segmental features assume major importance because they may replace deficient elements of the syntax and because they are specially well suited for expressing the speaker's affectivity.

The most striking instance of intonation taking over the role of the syntax probably occurs when it serves to oppose an enunciation to an interrogation, since a statement can be transformed into a question solely by changing the intonation pattern.\(^1\) For instance: "Vous venez demain." said with a falling intonation is a statement, whereas it becomes a question if it is said with a rising intonation.

Instead of using articulation words such as "parce que," spoken informal French tends to rely on the intonation to indicate the relationship between two ideas. Sauvageot\(^2\) points out that instead of:

"Il n'est pas venu parce qu'il était malade"

one is likely to hear:

"Il n'est pas venu; il était malade"

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\(^2\)Sauvageot, *Français écrit, français parlé*, p. 38.
The casual relationship is expressed by maintaining the voice on a rather high note at the end of the first proposition, followed by a short pause, then by a lowering of the voice which ends on a relatively low note. This phenomenon is also pointed out by Von Wartburg:

Si l'on prononce les deux parties de la phrase rudimentaire' plus de joie, plus de chanson,' sur le même ton, ce n'est qu'une simple énumération de ce qu'on a perdu; mais si on laisse tomber la voix de la première à la deuxième partie, on établit entre les deux un rapport de cause à effet. C'est ainsi que l'intonation devient un instrument extrêmement subtil de la pensée.¹

The intonation can likewise serve to indicate an "aside," in the way commas or brackets do in writing. Ex: "Un accident (imprévisible) a interrompu l'opération." The qualifier is separated from the preceding word by a short pause and it is said on a rising intonation of a different pitch from the rest of the sentence; it is followed by another short pause before the remaining of the sentence is said with a normal falling intonation.²

Given a certain word order, the intonation can even change completely the meaning, depending on which words it singles out. In so doing it reveals the deep structure of the sentence. Compare:

C'est bien ce que tu dis?
meaning: "You agree, don't you, with what I just said," and:

C'est bien, ce que tu dis.
in which case, the accentuation of "bien," followed by a short pause

¹Von Wartburg, Evolution et structure de la langue française, p. 254.
²A. Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 41.
transforms the message into an emphatic, favorable judgment passed upon what the other person has said.¹

The intonation, then, can either assume full responsibility for differentiating several possible meanings of a given word order, or it can simply be used to stress the message already expressed by the word order. Often the spoken style is so halting; repetitive or full of missing links, that many sentences would not be understandable without the intonation.²

This, however, is not the only function of the intonation; it is also a very effective means of expressing the affectivity of the speaker:

Ces mêmes structures prosodiques ont enfin dans notre langue des fonctions spécifiques. Il se trouve que les mots, ordonnés selon les exigences de la grammaire, ne révèlent souvent que la situation ou, si l'on veut, le thème du message, dont le contenu (c'est à dire le plus souvent, la réaction du locuteur à cette situation.) est manifesté dans une large mesure par la prosodie.³

At this point, it may be useful to clarify the concept of accentuation and to see how it functions in French. First, it must be noted that French has no phonemic stress, only a non-morpheme bound prosodic one. It is commonly assumed—and taught—that words, in French, are accentuated on the last syllable and that, when placed in a sequence of words, the accentuation is transferred to the last syllable of the breath group. This normal accentuation has a function which is purely rhythmic,


and it has no expressive value. This is all true, but it is only part of the whole picture.

Contrary to what most textbooks say, French can use the accentuation to stress a syllable other than the last one of the breath group. Sauvageot\(^1\) notes that although the "accent dynamique" is usually considered unimportant in French, in ordinary spoken French, one can constantly hear accents that stress more or less strongly certain syllables of the words regardless of their position in the breath group. Von Wartburg\(^2\) also indicates that alongside normal accentuation on the last syllable of the breath group, French also possesses another type of accentuation which may fall upon a syllable other than the last one. In fact, he identifies two other uses of stress which he labels: "l'accent d'insistance" and "l'accent d'émotion."\(^3\)

The "accent d'insistance" (also called "accent intellectuel" because it is frequently displayed in lectures and speeches and affects mostly the speech of intellectuals) occurs when one wants to stress a word, for clarity's sake, or in order to make sure the audience clearly understands and grasps the importance of the distinction being made. Von Wartburg gives these two examples:

\begin{quote}
C'est une vérité relative, ce n'est pas une vérité absolue. La république d'Athènes était une démagogie, celle de Venise une aristocratie.
\end{quote}


\(^2\) Von Wartburg, Evolution et Structure, pp. 251-252.

\(^3\) Not all linguists make this distinction, and most usually refer to the general phenomenon as: "accent emphatique."
According to Von Wartburg and Sauvageot, this "accent d'insistance" always falls on the first syllable of a word, even if that syllable has no contrastive function and is devoid of semantic importance. (Ex.: officiel et officieux.)

The "accent d'émotion" expresses the feelings of the speaker about certain elements of his message. Thus, under emotional stress one will not say: "c'est épouvantable." but: "c'est épouvantable."

Von Wartburg further notes that it is usually found in expressions which suggest an idea of something extreme, in size, in beauty, in quality, etc., and that it usually (but not always) falls upon the second syllable of the word. It is also characterized by a more forceful articulation of the stressed syllable. The force of the articulation can, in turn, affect the pronunciation of the syllable; if the syllable starts with a consonant, the latter is lengthened; if it starts with a vowel, the vowel is usually preceded by a glottal stop.

Sauvageot claims that although some researchers believe that the "accent emphatique" regularly falls on the second syllable if a word starts with a vowel and on the first if a word starts with a consonant, analyses of recordings do not support this theory. For instance one can either hear:

\[ \text{[setynjozepuvatb]} \]

or

\[ \text{[setynjozepuvatb]} \]

\[\text{1} \]

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\[\text{1 Sauvageot, } \text{Procédés expressifs du français contemporain, p. 28.} \]
These emphatic accents are usually combined with the use of a preceding pause and they are characterized by a greater articulatory energy and a higher voice pitch. Ex.: "C'est une chose effroyable" [sɛtɛnyɔz-ɛf rwaʒabl]. However, neither of the emphatic accents eliminates the usual accent; as a result, the breath group may bear two accents: the normal one on the last syllable and the emphatic accent.¹

From what precedes, it appears that accentuation patterns assume the following functions in French:

a) A demarcative function by indicating how the sentence is subdivided into breath groups which represent one idea each.

b) A contrastive function, by means of the emphatic accent (intellectual or affective) which brings out a word and makes it the center of attention.

c) A distinctive function when this accentuation gives to the sequence of words a different semantic content² and reveals the deep structure of the sentence.

The relationship between the intonation patterns and expressivity in informal spoken French displays the following features according to Pierre Léon.³

a) The exaggeration or the deformation of any normal intonation pattern reflects a search for greater expressivity.

b) The intonation pattern clearly reflects the emotional

¹Von Wartburg, Evolution et structure, p. 272.
state of the speaker. It is even possible to identify several typical affective patterns.

c) The intonation takes over the role of the deficient syntax.

The importance of the intonation in informal French, then, is related, on the one hand, to the lack of grammatical coherence, and, on the other hand, to the emotional state of the speaker:

Il nous paraît possible d'entrevoir les lois suivantes:
a) Sur le plan linguistique, le rôle de l'intonation est en fonction inverse de la grammaticalité du discours.
b) Sur le plan phonostylistique, le rôle de l'intonation est en fonction directe de l'état psychique, réel ou feint.¹

Other aspects of the suprasegmental system which are relevant to colloquial French are the rhythm and speed. The rhythm is frequently choppy and halting, fraught with hesitation pauses, or fill-in sounds spoken in a trailing voice.

Les pauses et les phénomènes d'hésitation semblent très caractéristiques du ton familier... Les pauses involontaires sont presque toujours comblées par des éléments de remplissage dont le "euh" représente plus de la moitié des occurences... en dehors de "euh" on rencontre des mots d'appui d'une syllabe (bien, bon, donc) ou des polysyllabes (alors, enfin, par exemple) souvent considérablement altérés (bien > ben; mais alors > malor; mais enfin > menfin; c'est à dire > stadire). La spontanéité du niveau phonique familier est encore marquée par l'allongement d'hésitation.²

The pauses can also be used for demarcative or for emphatic purposes. Trailing endings likewise can serve an emphatic intention. Although it seems that groups of words may often be said with greater speed than in

¹Ibid.
²Léon, "Aspects phonostylistiques des niveaux de langue," p. 70.
normal speech, the overall rate does not seem to be considerably greater
because of the many pauses and trailing sounds mentioned above.

Phonological Aspects

Whether linguists condone or condemn the important phonetic
changes that French is now undergoing all recognize that these changes
do exist, that they are irreversible and that evidence of departures from
the established rule can be witnessed daily, not only in the informal
speech of the "ordinary" people, but even in that of public figures and
television and radio personalities.

Celle-ci [la prononciation] va s'altérant de jour en
jour. Il est frappant d'entendre même les plus hautes
personnalités de l'Etat prononcer j au lieu de lj (dans
million par exemple), d'innombrables personnalités de
tous range dire i pour il (dans il reste, ils restent),
d'autres presque aussi nombreuses, laisser tomber l'r
final (dans mettre par exemple). L'o ouvert inaccentué
passe a un e plus ou moins informe . i . Et personne
ne réagit contre ce relâchement . . .

Many people are in fact quite unconscious of having adopted these feat­
ures in their speech habits:

... bon nombre de Francais cultivés seraient fort
surpris d'entendre au magnétophone les enregistrements
de leurs conversations de tous les jours. Ils découvri­
raient des p(eu)t-êt(re), quat(re) francs, e(lle) vient,
i(1)s ont, y en a p(1)us, que(l)que chose . . . etc.

According to Sauvageot, the causes of this evolution are many,
the two most important ones being a) the fact that the common language

1 A. Sauvageot, "Problèmes du français contemporain," FDM, n°38


3 A. Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 153.
is now used by the whole population b) the international exchanges which bring together native and foreign users of the French language. The writer assumes that Sauvageot is referring here to emigrants from Algeria, Spain, Italy, etc. rather than foreign visitors.

To examine the whole range of phonetic variations in French, Pela Simon suggests considering vertical differentiations according to age and social status of the speaker, and horizontal differentiations due to his region of origin. To these should be added situational variations the formality or informality of the situation having a direct bearing upon the language style used. Simon thinks that in today's French pronunciation, regional factors are much less influential than social ones. However, René Lagane seems to hold the opposite opinion:

Les différences de prononceation sont pour une part conditionnées par les facteurs sociaux, mais ceux-ci jouent, au total, un rôle moindre que les facteurs géographiques.

Lagane justifies his opinion in the following manner:

... si la régression des dialectes régionaux proprement dite, se fait à un rythme accéléré, la persistance des "accents" régionaux a des chances d'être longue, surtout dans les milieux ruraux. Chacun peut bien, en effet, se familiariser avec un parler différent du sien, tout en conservant ses propres traits de prononciation.

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3 Ibid.
The most striking difference is, of course, that between the pronunciation of the South of France and the rest of the country. The other distinction pointed out by Lagane himself, is that regional differences affect mostly rural areas; they are much less noticeable in the urban populations.

Simon characterizes popular pronunciation as follows:

La prononciation populaire se différencie par des articulations négligées — plus le niveau est bas, plus on tend à l'élision et au relâchement — ses intonations traînantes, ses accents fortement marqués, ses nombreux accents d'insistance, en particulier affectifs, sur la première syllabe des mots.¹

Nevertheless it must be noted that both social differences and regional differences assume an increasingly smaller role, due to high social and physical mobility and intermingling of the population.

On constate par ailleurs que l'écart entre la prononciation populaire et la pronunciation familière est de moins en moins grand.²

Regional and social differences do not constitute a comprehension barrier between native French speakers, because the important phonemic oppositions are maintained, even when the middle vowels are reduced to their archiphonemes.³

In general, it can be said that the phonetic aspects of colloquial French are, like other linguistic aspects, characterized by a) a need for expressivity which accounts for the extreme importance of the suprasegmental features, and b) a need for brevity and facility which accounts

¹Simon, "Différenciations phonétiques," p. 32.
²Ibid.
for the many elisions of sounds and the resulting sound modifications. This latter tendency affects the phonology directly and will now be presented in detail.

I. Influence of the informal speech style upon the vowel system.

The French phonological system possesses a series of mid-vowels having two possible realizations distinguished by their degree of aperture.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
[e] & [o] & [o] \text{ closed} \\
E & EU & 0 \\
[e] & [o] & [o] \text{ open}
\end{array}
\]

However, the opposition between the closed and the open counterparts has phonemic value only in some rare cases. Generally, they are in complementary distribution according to the syllabic structure (closed syllable \(>\) open vowel; open syllable \(>\) closed vowel) or to the spelling (for instance in an open syllable \(e\) \([\varepsilon]\), but \(ai\) \([\varepsilon]\)) or to the phonetic environment (\(o\) is always pronounced \([o]\) before a \([z]\)).

These middle vowels are the most affected in informal French, the general tendency being to neutralize the oppositions, especially in unstressed syllables. Instead of being clearly open or clearly closed, one hears an intermediary sound. Capelle\(^1\) indicates that these unstressed vowels are also easily affected by the following stressed vowel and tend to assume its quality. For instance, if an unstressed \(o\) is followed by a closed vowel, it tends to be closed (i.e. aussi \([\text{osil}]\)). If it is followed by an open vowel it tends to be open (i.e. moteur \([\text{motor}]\)).

In the case of the E, this change is quite systematic; whenever an unaccentuated E is followed by a closed accented vowel, it also becomes closed. Thus one says "j’aime"[ʒɛm], but "j'ai aimé"[ʒeem]. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as vocalic harmonization.

Some middle vowels can even be affected when they occur in an accented position. It is especially the case of the E ([ɛ] [ɛ]). The distinction between "je serai"[ʒɛsrɛ] and "je serais"[ʒɛsrɛ], is rarely observed. It could be said that unless a sound sequence is strongly ingrained in the speech habits (ex: [o] is always closed before a [z] regardless of the syllabic structure), the exceptions tend to be overruled and brought back to the general rule, stated earlier. Another observation is that the "timbre" of the vowel tends to be unstable when in an open syllable, especially in an unstressed one.

Thus, in an unstressed position:
- [e] and [ɛ] are heard as a middle E,
- [ɛ] tends to open > [œ]
  Ex: heureusement[œʁœzma]
- [o] tends to open > [ɔ]
  Ex: automobile[ɔtɔmɔbl]

Two other types of oppositions tend to be completely abandoned in modern spoken French: the opposition between the nasals [ŋ] (spread) and [m] (rounded). Most people no longer have the [ŋ] in their spontaneous speech and use only the [m]. This loss does not really impoverish the phonemic system of the language since it hardly ever has a

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1A. Sauvageot, "Les divers français parlés," FDM No. 69, p. 18.
distinctive value (brun [brɔ̃] versus, brin [brɛ̃] is about the only one to be found), and [œ] occurred anyway, in only a small number of words.\(^1\) The other opposition which is disappearing is between [a] anterior, and [œ] posterior. The posterior [œ] tends to be replaced by the anterior [a]. Cases when this opposition plays a discriminatory function are rare; therefore this loss does not affect the phonemic system to any considerable extent.\(^2\)

More serious is the confusion now occurring between [œ] and [œ], especially in the Paris area. According to Sauvageot\(^3\) the open [œ] in an unaccentuated syllable tends to open so much that it resembles a mute [œ]. For instance, the first eu of peureux, malheureux, jeudi, pneumatique. On the other hand, the mute [œ] when in an accentuated syllable, as it occurs when the object pronoun is placed after the verb, tends to open and sound like [œ].

Les choses en sont venues au point que les enfants des écoles primaires dans leurs dictées écrivent constamment e pour eu et inversement.\(^4\)

This problem does not seem to be present in the center of France where the tendency is instead to close the middle vowels, ex: [mezɔ̃] rather than [mɛzɔ̃], [pœφ] rather than [pœʁφ].

In informal allegro speech, vowels can even be completely dropped, especially in short grammatical or punctuation words like:

\(^1\)A. Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 157.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 155.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 156.
\(^4\)Ibid.
The phonetic reduction in allegro informal speech may even lead to the elision of complete syllables: *maman > [mã], monsieur > msieur [msjœ]*

"Tu" is reduced to "t" before a vowel: "t'as vu ça."

The weakest vowel of the French phonological system, the so-called mute è is, of course, the most affected one. In old French all the e's used to be pronounced. Even standard French has long abandoned this practice. Informal and colloquial French carry this evolution one step further. It can be said that the more informal the style, the more likely it is for the mute è to be dropped. This phenomenon has been very thoroughly explored by the researchers; the mechanisms of its elision and the resulting effects upon the phonetic environment will be presented in detail.

II. The elision of the mute e

-Definition and situation in the French vocalic system:

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- Historical perspective:

In old French the mute e used to be pronounced. In the sequence "une petite fille" all the mute e's used to be pronounced, as they still are in the South of France [y̞a nepələtəfɪlə]. Progressively, they have been dropped more or less systematically from French pronunciation, depending on their position in the word or in the breath group and the phonetic environment. Thus we say:

un tube [ə̃tyə]
le chemin [ləʃmɛ]
la petite fille [ləpələtʃɛl]  
But: une petite fille [y̞a nepələtʃɛl]  

This apparent inconsistency is due to the fact that French is a language which "likes" to alternate vowels and consonants and therefore tries to avoid a succession of consonants. In modern French, the phonetic function of the mute e is precisely to avoid the formation of heavy consonantal clusters. In view of this fact, the pattern of elision of the mute e in informal French will be studied according to its position in the breath group and the phonetic environment.

A. The mute e occurs at the end of a word or of a breath group.

In this position the mute e is never pronounced in spoken standard and informal French. (The only time it is pronounced at all is in poetry, when the next word starts with a consonant.) It must be kept in mind though, that a mute e at the end of a word may be interior to a breath group and therefore cannot be considered as final, Ex:

une table [yn tabl] (the final e falls)
B. The mute e belongs to the first syllable of a word. Two cases are possible depending on the position of the word in the breath group. If the syllable containing the mute e is inside the breath group the e falls. Ex:

venez demain  [vənedmɛ]
est-ce que vous venez  [ɛskəvuvno]
j'ai mangé du melon  [ʒɔmɑʒɛdymlɔ]
il bat la semelle  [ilbalasme]

If the syllable containing the mute e is the first one of the breath group, it will tend to remain. Ex:

demain c'est dimanche  [dəmɛseдimɑʃ]
je me le demande  [ʒæmɛlədmɑd]
demandez-lui  [dəmɑdəlɥi]
vez nous voir  [vənenuvwar]

This rule, however, is by no means always observed in colloquial French, where the mute e tends to be dropped any time it is possible to do so from an articulatory point of view. The sequence dm, zm, vn, etc., presenting no great articulatory difficulty, one will frequently hear in colloquial French

venez donc demain  [vnedɔdme]
demandez-lui  [dmədəlɥi]
je mange  [ʒmɑʒ]
In other cases, the elision of the mute e would bring together consonants that are hard to pronounce in a sequence; for instance mr, ml. So if the following words are uttered alone or at the beginning of an utterance, the mute e will remain:

- melons à vendre [melɔavadʁ]
- meringues fraîches [məʁɛɡfrɛʃ]

C. The mute e is inside a word or a breath group. If it is preceded by only one consonant, it falls automatically, both in standard and colloquial French:

- samedi [samdi]
- on vous demande [ɔvudmãd]
- vous le mangez [vulmãʒe]

If it is preceded by two consonants and followed by one, it usually remains:

- appartement [apartemã]
- vendredi [vãdʁãdi]
- ça ne me dit rien [samnãdɔʁjã]

The rule governing the elision of the mute e in consonant clusters was first expressed by Grammont in 1914:

La règle est qu'il (le E muet) se prononce seulement lorsqu'il est nécessaire pour éviter la rencontre de trois consonnes ... Son maintien ou sa chute dépend essentiellement de ce qui précède. 1) Quand il n'est séparé de la

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2 In standard French, it is compulsory to drop the mute e only when it occurs inside a word (ex [samdi]). If it is inside a breath group but in the first syllable of a word, it may be kept in formal style (ex [ɔvudemãd]).
voyelle qui précède que par une seule consonne, il tombe toujours . . . 2) Quand il est séparé de la voyelle qui précède par deux consonnes, il se prononce toujours.¹

This law is generally known as "règle des trois consonnes" and is interpreted as meaning that the mute e remains any time its elision would produce a sequence of three consonants.

Martinon² was among the first linguists to voice disagreement and point out that it was only a general tendency, not a law. Then Pierre Fouché³ and Pierre Delattre⁴ showed that, taken literally, the "règle des trois consonnes" would lead one to believe quite erroneously that the mute e should be maintained in sequences like: "une visite stupide," "un grave scrupule," etc. In fact, in these as in similar cases, the mute e is normally dropped despite the fact that it brings three or even four consonants together:

- une visite stupide  [œ̃nvisɛtstypid]
- dans ce train  [dãstrɛ]
- on ne croit pas  [œ̃nkʁwapa]
- nous le prenons  [nu̯lprønɔ]
- un grave scrupule  [œgɾavskrɔpl]

¹Maurice Grammont, Traité pratique de prononciation française, p. 105-106.
²Martinon, Comment on prononce le français, p. 157-158.
The number of consonants which follows the mute e then has no effect upon its elision or its maintenance. The law had to be refined and restated as follows: the mute e is dropped when preceded by only one consonant regardless of the number of consonants that follows, and conversely, it is kept when preceded by two consonants and followed by at least one.

Although the law now applied quite generally, it still left unexplained the fact that in fast, informal speech, one could and would often say: Il march(e) vite [ɪlmɑʁʃvɪt] or un port(e)-crayon [ɑ̃ pɔʁtkrɛjo]. To explain this exception to the rule, Delattre came up with the law of phonetic aperture: the mute e, preceded by two consonants, is all the more stable if the aperture of the first consonant is smaller than the aperture of the second one. Thus the mute e will tend to stay in "apprenez" [ɑ̃prɛne], the aperture of [p] being smaller than that of the [ɾ]; and it may fall in "fermeture" [fɛrmtyʁ], the [ɾ] being more open than the [m].

Delattre also stated that the mute e is more likely to remain if the two consonants that precede it belong to the same syllable (ex: 

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1Ibid., p. 341.
ven/dre/di) than when it is possible for the syllabic division to fall between the two consonants (ex: jus/te/ment) and especially if the first consonant is an [r] (ex: portefaix [porˈtefɛ]). In this case, says Delattre, the mute e does not really lean on two consonants, and therefore it is not as stable. "Marche vite" can be pronounced [marcheviti] in careful speech, or [marchviti] in informal speech.

Malécot, in turn, brought a new insight to the problem. To the consideration of aperture he added that of the points of articulation of the sequence of consonants. He found that if the consonants are in a linear, back to front sequence, the articulatory difficulty is not too great and the mute e can then fall in informal speech. (Ex: fortement, r→t→m). If the sequence is different, especially if it is not linear, the consonants would be much harder to pronounce together, and thus the mute e is more stable (ex: flasquement, s→k→m). Combining his findings with those of Delattre, Malécot stated:

The French mute e, supported by two consonants, is dropped most easily and most frequently when the following conditions occur simultaneously:
1) when the aperture of the first consonant exceeds that of the second; 2) when the sequence of points of articulation of the two preceding consonants and the one following lie in a back-to-front and linear sequence. As the difference between the apertures of the first two becomes less marked, the mute e becomes more stable . . . It will never be dropped when the aperture of the second consonant exceeds that of the first and

1A. Malécot, "The Elision of Mute e within Complex Consonantal Clusters," Lingua, V, no. 1, 1955, pp. 46-60.
when, at the same time, the sequence of points of articulation is other than from back to front and linear.¹

Pierre Léon² was still not completely satisfied with the explanations of his predecessors, because they left a number of cases unexplained. For instance, the theory of Delattre failed to explain the fact that the mute e would always remain in "il te dit" although the order of aperture conforms to his specifications and the syllabic division falls between the two consonants. He also found fault with the theory of Malécot because it does not apply to cases of external juncture. For instance "une barbe curieuse" can easily and often will be pronounced without the mute e—as tests done by Léon proved—despite the fact that the sequence is not linear:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{r} & \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{b} \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{k} \\
\text{back} & \quad \text{front} & \quad \text{back}
\end{align*}
\]

On the contrary, in "garde-fou" where the sequence r→d→f is linear from back to front, the mute e was always pronounced by the subjects tested.

Léon then suggested a number of other considerations:

- Articulatory factors: a series of occlusives, as in "il te connait" (lít̪k) requires a greater articulatory effort than a series of constrictives (fricatives) as in "on ne se rase pas" (n,s,r). Thus despite the aperture, it is easy to say ŋnsrzp̪, but one has to say [litékɔ̃z̪].

- Distributional factors: even in light consonant clusters (only two consonants) the mute e will not be dropped if its elision would lead to an association of consonants unknown or rare in the language. Ex:

¹Ibid., p. 60.

Role of the juncture and potential pauses. Léon says that, inside a
breath group, the mute e is all the more likely to be dropped if it is
placed at an external juncture, i.e., at the end of a word. Studies
done by Léon at the University of Toronto have shown that:

- 90% of the subjects pronounced the mute e in "appartement"
  (internal juncture)
- 76% dropped the mute e in "porte manteau" (external juncture)
- 96% dropped the mute e in "porte manquée" (external juncture,
  plus lack of semantic cohesion)

Accentuation and rhythmic factors. Tests done by Léon indicated that,
at the external juncture, the mute e tends to be dropped if it is fol­
lowed by more than one syllable and retained if it is followed by a mono­
syllabic word:

un porte-crayon [ãporto krejɔ]
versus:
un porte-clé  [ãportelɛ]
un porte-plume [ãportaplum]

and

un garde-côtier [ãgardkotje]
versus
un garde-côte  [ãgardakot]

Léon's analysis now seems to have taken into account all the
aspects of the problem. From it, it appears that the mute e may indeed
fall frequently in informal speech, even though its elision leads to
consonantal clusters. It must be remembered though, that whenever the speech delivery slows down, or the speaker is intent on making himself understood, these mute e's may reappear.

In fact, a mute e may appear where the spelling does not indicate the presence of one. In a telephone conversation one may well say "vingt(e)-neuf"[vɛ̃tɔnøf]. This also takes place quite frequently both in standard and in informal speech in order to avoid a heavy consonantal cluster:

- un film tchéque [œfɪlməfɛk]
- un ours blanc [œnœrsɛblɔ̃]
- un arc boutant [œnarkəbutɔ̃]

In these cases, the added mute e works as a buffer which allows the speaker to break the consonant cluster.¹ In some words, a mute e is added to avoid a difficult consonant cluster, yet, another mute e may be dropped in the next syllable whenever the sequence of consonants is more familiar; a case in point is the popular pronunciation of "Arc de triomphe" [arkdetrɪʃøf] instead of [arkdetrɪjøf].

In consonant clusters where the second consonant is an r or an l (liquids), the mute e is reduced to a very small vowel, [œkær̥pat] [ynəbœzir] [ynlvrədepf] in standard French. In informal or in colloquial French however, the r or the l are simply dropped along with the mute e.²

D. Consequences of the elision of the mute e. The elision of the mute e has several effects upon the sound sequence.

1. Reduction of the number of syllables in the breath group:
   - je vous le dis \([3vu/ldl]\]
   - cela ne se voit pas \([sa/svwa/pa]\]
   - je te l'avais bien dit \([ft1a/ve/bjɛ/di]\]

   Du point de vue de la prononciation, le langage familier fait plus "raccourci" parce que la plupart des e muets sont abolis et leur disparition donne lieu à des assimilations qui rétrécissent le mot et le "tassent," ainsi que ses dépendances, en séquences plus brèves, plus homogènes phonétiquement parlant.\(^1\)

2. Change in the nature of the syllables. If one considers the utterance "il s'est repris," in informal French it will be said \([llsɛ̃rprɛ]\); not only is there a reduction of the number of syllables, there is also a heavy consonantal content in the last syllable: \([rpɛ]\). (It must be remembered here that French has a tendency toward open syllabification: \([ll/sɛ̃rprɛ]\))

   The consonant cluster may also occur in the first syllable:
   - je te l'ai dit > \([ʃtɛlɔd]\) > \([ʃtɛd]\)

---

Thus this breath group is reduced from four syllables in standard formal French to only two in colloquial French, and the result is a heavy accumulation of consonants which changes the phonetic aspect of French.

Ainsi, le parle-négligé réduit d'une part le nombre de syllabes, mais d'autre part, il alourdit celles-ci d'accumulations de consonnes, diminuant par là la fréquence des voyelles. La langue acquiert alors un aspect consonantique très marqué.¹

The elision of the mute e may also lead to a syllabification which runs counter to the general tendency for open syllabification. Ex: il a cédé [i/la/se/de]; il cèdera [iI/sèd/ra]; an added consequence being the opening of the vowel. (The general rule being, closed syllable > open vowel; open syllable > closed vowel.)²

3. Assimilation. The elision of the mute e brings together at least two consonants. This contact may cause them to react to each other. If both are either voiced or unvoiced, nothing is changed. But if one belongs to the voiced series [b,d,g,z] and the other to the unvoiced series [p,t,k,f,s], the first consonant loses its quality and adopts that of the second one. This phenomenon is known as assimilation. Thus:

If the first consonant is voiced and the second is unvoiced, the first one assumes the quality of the second and becomes unvoiced:

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² Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je pense</td>
<td>[ʒapɑ̃s]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je suis</td>
<td>[ʒəsy]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je l'ai jeté</td>
<td>[ʒələsəte]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le dessus</td>
<td>[lədɔsy]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the first consonant is unvoiced and the second is voiced, the first one also becomes voiced (although this does not happen quite as systematically as the reverse):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ce garçon</td>
<td>[səgarsɔ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ce bateau</td>
<td>[səbato]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je viens de terminer</td>
<td>[ʒavjeɗeɾmɛn]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This phenomenon, however, is not the exclusive property of informal French; for instance, it governs the pronunciation of the written letter x, which, depending on the phonetic environment, can be pronounced [ks] or [gz] Ex: expliquer [ɛksplikɛ], exister[ɛgzistɛ].

The consequences of the elision of the mute e upon the sound sequence may be summarized as follows: a) reduction of the number of syllables, b) diminution of the frequency of the vowels, c) increase in the proportion of consonants, d) changes in the voiced-unvoiced quality of the consonants.

III. Influence of the informal speech style upon the consonants.

A. Assimilation. It has been shown that consonants can be assimilated as a result of the elision of the mute e which occurs in informal speech. However, there are cases when the mute e falls regardless of the sty]
(inside a word, when preceded by only one consonant) or where there is no mute e at all between two consonants that differ by their voiced-unvoiced quality. Two pronunciations are possible. In fast, informal speech a full or partial assimilation takes place:

medecin [mɛdsɛ] anecdote [anɛgdɔt]
sauveteur [softœʁ] Strasbourg [strazbur]
absent [apsã]

But, when the speed slows down, or the articulation becomes more careful, the assimilation more or less disappears:

medecin [medse] anecdote [anekdɔt]
sauveteur [sovœʁ] Strasbourg [strasbur]
absent [absã]

The assimilation of consonants, then, is closely related to the informality of the speech style and the speed of the delivery.

B. Elision: In colloquial French consonants may not only be assimilated, they may be dropped altogether. This phenomenon effects the following consonants:

1) The l of the pronoun subject "il" or "ils" is often dropped when the next word (verb or pronoun or negative particle) starts with a consonant. Ex:

   il va venir [ivavnir]
   il chante bien [ifatbje]
   il me l'a dit [imladi]

---

1Sauvageot, Les procédés expressifs du français contemporain, pp. 30-31.
il faut qu'il vienne [ifoklvjen]
il n'a rien dit [1narje1]
ils sont habitués [isotabityo]
ils feraient [ifrε]

When the plural form, "ils" is followed by a vowel, the 1 is dropped and the liaison maintained:

ils iraient [izire]
ils ont [izɔ]

In the group, "il y a," the elision of the 1 also brings a reduction of the vocalic content:

il y a > [ja] (instead of [ilija])

The elision of the 1 in the above mentioned cases is very frequently observed:

Cette chute de 1'1 du pronom masculin de 3e personne est tellement généralisée qu'il est impossible de prendre l'écoute d'un poste de radio-diffusion française sans en entendre des suites ininterrompues. 1

The disappearance of the 1 of "il" may lead to some grammatical confusion since the difference between "qui" and "qu'il" is no longer apparent in many relative clauses (Ex: c'est ce qui faut dire.) According to Sauvageot this "mistake" can even be found in written journalistic style.

Although Sauvageot thinks the feminine pronouns "elle" and "elles" are not yet affected, Léon notes instances of "elle" being reduced to "e" in fast speech. Ex: e' vient. 2

1 Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 159.
2) The final, preceded by a consonant, especially a [b] is also frequently dropped. Ex:

   Ne jouez pas dans le sable [nɛʒwepadãlsab]
   Mettez-le sur la table [mɛtəlɛylatalab]

3) The medial 1 disappears in the word "quelquechose" [kɛkfoz]

4) The final r, preceded by either b, v, t, d also falls:

   il y en a quatre qui sont venus [jãnakatkišovnɪ]
   c'est un pauvre type [sãtãpovtɪp]
   il y a des arbres dans le jardin [jadezarbdãlʒardɛ]
   vas mettre ton manteau [vamɛtiomato]
   il faut être là [ɪfoɛtla]
   elle n'a rien à se mettre sur le dos [ɛlarjɛnasmeɛtsyldo]

This very common feature, affects the infinitive of many verbs with an "re" ending. Sauvageot claims that this elision is creating a new category of infinitives which linguists call "infinitif à désinence zéro" (with a zero infinitive marker) and that most of the infinitives in RE are in danger of disappearing from spoken French.¹

5) The r, in median position also disappears regularly in the word "parce que" [pasko].²

6) The group [lj] as in "soulier" is frequently reduced to [j] :

   escalier > [ɛskajɛ]   milieu > [mɪljɔ]
   million > [mɪljɔ]   particulier > [partɪkyje]
   milliard > [mɪlar]

In some cases this reduction can create new homonyms:

¹Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 159.
Cette prononciation est très répandue. Des ministres et des personnalités de haut rang nous en ont gratifié même dans des discours ou allocutions qui étaient par ailleurs de haute tenue.¹

On the other hand, spoken and colloquial French may pronounce consonants which are not usually pronounced in standard French; this happens especially in monosyllabic words. Frei² gives the following examples:

- des buts [dебьyт]  
- les moeurs [лемœрс]
- des faits [дeфєт]  
- hier [iɛr]
- le joug [lэзюг]

It may be noted that this pronunciation has now become quite common and accepted as the norm. Frei thinks that the need for differentiation accounts for this feature since the shorter the word is, the easier it is to mistake it for others that resemble it.

C. Liaisons: In general a liaison may occur when a word ending with an unpronounced consonant is followed by a vowel; the consonant is then pronounced and linked syllabically to the next vowel. In standard French there are cases when the liaison is forbidden (in general after any accentuated word); cases when it is compulsory (between a derminant and the word it refers to, which Guiraud calls closed syntagms, or in some frozen groups); and cases when the liaison is optional. It is in this latter case that modern colloquial or simply informal French differs from standard formal French.

¹ Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 160.
² Frei, La Grammaire des fautes, p. 70.
The liaison is compulsory, only within closed syntagms where determinants (articles, possessive adjectives, pronouns) are linked to the main word. Ex:

- des amis
- un ami
- vous êtes
- ils arrivent

But:
- je suis arrêté
- il est abruti
- le premier avril
- le troisième avril

The liaison also remains with some adjectives placed before the noun and which are closely linked to it semantically. Ex:

- des bons amis
- des grands enfants

It may also remain when it carries the plural morpheme or when it is within a stereotyped construction or frozen group. However, even in these cases Léon notes that there is a
tendance à désamalgamer les groupes figés en supprimant une liaison autrefois caractéristique de la cohérence syntagmatique.

and he gives the following examples:

- de plus en plus
- de moins en moins
- de haut en bas
- rien à dire

To which we can add:
- vous n'êtes pas aimable

---

commen(t) allez-vous

mentioned by Doppagne, who concludes:

le moins de liaisons possible semble, aujourd'hui, être le mot d'ordre du langage parisien populaire.

Lexical and Semantic Aspects

I. Role and place of the colloquial lexicon in everyday French.

It is probably in the lexical domain that the most striking difference can be observed between the various users of the French language, says René Lagane. In the same line of thought, Sauvageot affirms that it is the lexical elements which most clearly differentiate colloquial French from standard French.

Ce qui caractérise au plus haut degré la langue familière c'est le vocabulaire, qui n'est pas du tout celui de la langue normale.

As an illustration of his thesis, he gives the following examples with their conceptual counterparts in colloquial and standard French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>colloquial (but not slang)</th>
<th>standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Il a bu un bon coup de pinard</td>
<td>Il a bu un bon verre de vin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le toubib l'a mis à la flotte</td>
<td>Le médecin lui a ordonné de ne boire que de l'eau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il ne pige pas</td>
<td>Il ne comprend pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je vais me ballader</td>
<td>Je vais me promener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J'ai acheté un bouquin</td>
<td>J'ai acheté un livre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Countless examples could be added to this list. Sauvageot's assertion

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1 Doppagne, Trois aspects du français contemporain, p. 60.
3 Sauvageot, Le procédés expressifs de français contemporain, p. 216.
is supported by the research presented in this dissertation. In the evaluation of the test items (presented in Chapter IV) the colloquial utterances which the native French judges rated as most typical of everyday French, were those containing colloquial vocabulary. Furthermore, analysis of the test results as well as conversations with the subjects, show that the area of colloquial French which presented the greatest barrier to comprehension—for students who had mostly been trained to understand standard French—was the lexical aspect.

Considering the French language in general, it cannot be said that the lexicon varies greatly according to region or to social class. One of the conclusions of a study of the evolution of French vocabulary between 1949 and 1960 was that:

_L'atténuation des différences dans le mode de vie d'une région à une autre, et surtout entre la ville et la campagne, l'influence décisive de Paris . . . les relations économiques multipliées aboutissent à faire disparaître les régionalismes._

Instead, most people have at their disposal three types of vocabularies, corresponding to the formal style, the common standard style and the colloquial style (familier). They use one style rather than the other according to the type of situation in which the communication takes place.

_Les sujets parlant ne se servent pas constamment du même ensemble de vocables. Selon les circonstances où il leur arrive de s'exprimer ils recourent à des termes de valeur conceptuelle identique ou analogue mais de tonalité différente._

_Les enregistrements au magnétophone de conversations saisies sur le vif dénoncent que le sujet parlant français, dispose d'au moins trois variantes de_

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vocabulaire: le style soutenu, le style courant, le style familier.

The semantic or conceptual content may be equal or at least roughly equivalent, from one style to the other, but the social and affective connotations are different; the choice of a colloquial word expresses the speaker's intention not to stand on ceremony, to deal with his interlocutor in a direct, unpretentious way, or on equal footing, so to speak. The affective overtone also allows the speaker to exteriorize what he feels about the object or the concept represented by the word. This may be one of the characteristics of colloquial vocabulary: the object and the feelings of the speaker toward that object are bound together in the sign. In this respect, colloquial words are a way to express verbally what would otherwise need to be said by mimics or other non verbal means; a new dimension is added to the content itself and it is not readily translatable into standard vocabulary:

L'existence de plusieurs vocabulaires permet à la langue de concurrencer par ses propres procédés les gesticulations, mimiques et autres procédés extra-linguistiques dont sont complétées les énonciations... Ainsi, se débiner n'est pas l'équivalent de s'enfuir, pas plus que roupiller ne vaut dormir.

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1 Sauvageot: Portrait du vocabulaire français, p. 239.
2 Ibid., p. 244.
3 Ibid.
The speech of an individual makes use of several registers; it is not homogeneous, but neither is the colloquial speech style:

Le langage familier est lui aussi, hétéroclite. Il est fait d'un mélange instable de termes d'allure argotique, d'emplois métaphoriques, et aussi de bons vieux vocables du fond commun.  

Sauvageot goes on to show that the concentration of colloquial words in informal speech varies according to the speaker, to the situation or even from one moment to the next, without any apparent reason. In the same recording a speaker will say:

Moi, le toubib m'a mis à la flotte.

and a few minutes later:

Tu sais, boire de l'eau, c'est pas fameux. Mais le médecin a été formel; il faut que je m'y mette.

The choice of words, of course, varies according to the person being addressed. To his office mate, the office clerk may say:

Il fait drôlement froid ce matin!

but to a customer who walks in shivering, he may say:

Il fait très froid ce matin, n'est-ce pas?

whereas a student meeting another one, may say:

Eh bien, mon vieux, ça caille vachement ce matin!

As Doppagne puts it: "Les mots, comme les notes (de musique) doivent être justes par rapport au contexte." He shows how one action—

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1 Ibid., p. 240.

2 Doppagne, Trois aspects du français contemporain, p. 72.
eating—may be expressed differently, according to the context:

... elle (l'action de manger) se traduit par une foule de verbes et d'expressions—les façons de s'exprimer se situent à des niveaux très différents: qu'il s'agisse de l'intensité de l'action (manger peu, beaucoup, souvent) qu'il s'agisse du niveau affectif de l'expression (neutre, pittoresque, péjoratif); qu'il s'agisse aussi de l'échelle sociale du langage (noble, familier, populaire, vulgaire, trivial).\(^1\)

II. Ascension of words from popular to standard usage.

Where do colloquial words come from and what is to be their fate? The genesis, selection and ascension process of words is an interesting one. Many words originate from slang or from popular speech. Slang is a closed esoteric language designed to be understood only by the "in" members of a given group. When the word becomes known or used outside the group it can no longer serve its secretive purpose, it is then abandoned and a new term is coined. Many words die right then. Some become more and more widely used in larger strata of society, and can, therefore, no longer be called slang; they may be popular, or belong to a wide occupational group (students for instance). Further selection may take place and some words may become accepted in informal speech by the general public. A few of these may ultimately make it all the way to standard French and, supreme recognition, enter the dictionary. Dictionaries then are always one step behind common usage, so to speak. However, it must be acknowledged that recent dictionaries like Le Petit Robert or Le Dictionnaire du français contemporain have made a serious

\(^{1}\)Ibid.
effort to reflect the wide variety of present day usages. This upward
trend is readily recognized by linguists:

Tous les jours nous pouvons noter l'ascension progressive des termes populaires. Les formes nobles disparaissent, usées, démodées et un mouvement d'ascension continu d'occupe de les remplacer.

This trend may be better understood in relation to a fundamental "need" of a language: the need for expressivity. Words that have been commonly used for a long time may become very handy to carry conceptual information but they may also lose their power to strike the imagination, to express forcefully the feelings of the speaker. When the speaker wants to do more than just transmit information, he will then seek new words that still have the "greenness" and powerful flavor of their popular origin. This is only one way in which words are created. As will be seen later, words may also have "noble" origins and slowly filter down to the common people; this is specially true today of scientific terms. But the spread of this phenomenon does not seem to be quite as extensive.

Writers play an active part in the up-grading of popular and colloquial words, largely because they try in their plays and novels to reproduce the speech of the characters they portray; also they occasionally borrow popular terms to give more punch to the expression of their own emotions or opinions.

Sauvageot sees this ascension of words from popular to standard use not only as a way of "renovating" the language and maintaining its

1 Ibid., p. 74.
level of expressive capacity, but also as a means of enriching and diversifying it.

Du point de vue de la consistance du lexique de la langue la coexistence de ces différents étages du vocabulaire a les conséquences les plus importantes. Les étages communiquent entre eux et tel vocable monte ou descend, selon le cas. Ainsi le mot rafistoler ressenti comme familier il y a encore quelques années, est en passe de fournir un terme qui vient s'ajouter à raccomoder. Rafistoler, c'est raccomoder maladroitement ou grossièrement. Ou bien, le rafistolage est une opération peu réussie etc. En pénétrant dans la langue commune, le mot a gardé de ses origines une nuance péjorative qui traduit l'appréciation du locuteur.¹

Linguists then, seem to be in agreement on the distinctiveness of colloquial vocabulary and its importance as a means of renovating the expressive resources of the language; however, it must be stated that there have not been any systematic studies of the colloquial lexicon. In fact, the only large scale frequency study based on a spoken corpus is the one which led to the elaboration of "Le français fondamental."² Some recent dictionaries have made an effort to include colloquial and even popular terms that are commonly used, (Le Petit Robert, for instance). Others have tried to make a systematic inventory of colloquial terms (Cassell's Beyond the Dictionary in French) and are very valuable in that respect, but dictionaries do not indicate the relative frequency of the terms they present. The dictionaries of popular French that one often sees in bookstores can in no way be taken to represent the common colloquial lexicon. These present mostly very

¹Sauvageot, Portrait du vocabulaire français, p. 242.

rude terms used by the shadowy characters of what is known as "le milieu" (thieves, pimps and prostitutes) or by the people who used to form the lowest layers of society. The average French person does not understand a third of these terms. Unfortunately, this is the kind of work which usually falls into the hands of the foreigner who wants to familiarize himself with colloquial French. However entertaining the reading may be, it will in no way prepare him to understand the everyday informal language of the "average" French people, and even much less to express himself in an appropriate manner.

III. Origin of new words in present-day French.

A portrait of the colloquial lexicon cannot be divorced from a consideration of the factors at work on the common vocabulary in general, especially since the limits between the two are so tenuous and because of the high degree of interaction between the two.

One of the most striking features of the commonly used vocabulary, is the high incidence of new words. These words come from three types of origin:

A. Popular origin. The ascension and access to acceptability of a large number of popular terms can be linked to the democratisation and higher mobility of the French society. People of all social levels work and talk together more than ever before. In addition, the proletarian classes have gained a new self pride which is reflected in their attitude toward their own language; they are no longer apologetic about their speech. Conversely, the more educated or affluent classes have abandoned the haughty disdain which the bourgeois society used to display,
and seem to seek to abolish class differences and awareness even in their speech. Doppagne dramatizes this revolutionary ascent in these words:

\[\ldots\text{une foule compacte de mots populaires qui marchent à l'assaut des mots parvenus, des mots bourgeois, des mots nobles pour les détroner, les évincer, les supplanter.}^1\]

B. Scientific or technical origin. The importance of these words seems to be in direct relation to the impact that science and technology has upon everyday life. Doppagne refers to these as "vagues de termes savants qui déferlent avec d'autant plus de vigueur que les sciences sont plus à la mode,"\(^2\) and Lagane\(^3\) indicates that the common vocabulary is a function of the knowledge shared by the members of a society as well as a function of their need to communicate about the actuality which affects their lives, even though the scientific terms may evoke for them only very vague notions.

C. Foreign origin. Words of foreign origin may fall into two semantic categories: a) those which reveal a fascination with the lifestyle of another culture which the French try to emulate; b) those representing new concepts or techniques which are borrowed along with the concepts they represent. Examples of the former, are to be found especially among the "hip" language of the younger generation, but are in no way limited to its exclusive use, as is attested by the popularity of words such as dancing, snack bar, drugstore, blue jeans (which incidentally is an American adaptation of a French term: "bleu de gênes"!),

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1 Doppagne, Trois aspects, p. 6.
2 Ibid.
folksong, brain storming, pop music, dressing room, etc. Examples of
the second are even more numerous and they fill pages of professional
magazines: management, brain trust, boom, budget man, building disease,
marketing, bulldozer, flash, script, cameraman, etc. This form of
borrowing seems to be the simplest solution since the concept, process
or technique it designates is also new to the French culture, and there
is no "made in France" word for it; "le mot vous est apporté avec la
chose qu'il désigne."2

These new words are overwhelmingly of English or American origin—
although there are a few of Spanish, Italian or arabic origin (Ex: un
bled)—to the point that Etiemble felt compelled to wage a campaign
against the intruders in his best-seller book: Parlez vous Franglais?
Sauvageot thinks that this "invasion" is a natural consequence of the,
preeminence of English speaking countries. (It should be remembered that
in the 17th century when the French civilization was at its peak there
was massive borrowing from the French into the English language.)

Il se trouve que nous sommes présentement dans
une période où les pays de langue anglaise montrent
une activité particulièrement intense dans tous les
domaines de la vie et nous sommes contraints de les
rattraper dans la course au progrès, surtout au
progrès technique. 3

Not all borrowings are justified however. Words may already exist in
French (Ex: conduite for pipe-line; mazout for fuel) or earlier borrowings

1 J. Giraud, P. Pamart, et J. Riverain, Les mots dans le vent (Paris:
Larousse, 1971).

2 Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 17.

3 Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 18.
would suffice. Sauvageot attributes these unnecessary borrowings to commercial and advertizing gimmicks; some tending to make a product appear more appealing; some trying to bring French terminology into harmony with that of the country where it is either sold or imported.

English words may pass into the French language textually or they may be adapted (heavy duty motor > moteur de fatigue) or carbon-copied, so to speak (joint-communique > communiqué conjoint). Most of the borrowed words are substantive and, more rarely, adjectives; very few of them are verbs. Sauvageot explains the reasons for that preference:

Le nom peut être utilisé dans une phrase française avec un minimum d'adaptation, il suffit de le construire avec le déterminatif voulu. Pour un verbe, il n'en est pas de même . . . il faut le doter d'un infinitif (flirt > flirter) et puis il faut l'intégrer au système de la conjugaison en le rangeant presque toujours parmi les verbes en infinitif ER et participe passé E. L'expérience prouve que cette adaptation n'est pas volontiers consentie par l'usager qui préfère une construction nominale (Ex: ça va faire clash). ¹

According to Sauvageot this has a number of consequences: a) it confers upon the French language a predominance of the noun over the verb, b) it increases the number of words without any etymological links to a family of related words, which constitute separate items to be learned one by one, c) it causes a certain dislocation of the semantic fields and a breach in the internal harmony of the language. ²

¹ Ibid., p. 20.
² Ibid., p. 21.
IV. Influence of colloquial and popular usage on the French lexicon: effects of the "need" for assimilation.

The appearance of the everyday French lexicon is affected not only by the borrowing process, but also by the way words evolve within the language, through popular and frequent handling. In a way, this is the reverse process of the upgrading of popular words. Here, instead, words in good standing will be subjected to deterioration or shifts in their form, their usage or their meaning as a result of their being used by the less educated people, who may not be familiar with their etymology. Most of these changes proceed from assimilation and analogy:

Tous ces barbarismes ont pour fonction d'éliminer des formes mal intégrées dans le système hérédi- taire, en les rattachant analogiquement à des mots ou à des familles de mots connus qui les structurent et en soutiennent le sens.¹

A. Learned or archaic forms tend to be assimilated to better known ones. This is a case of formal analogy which Frei defines thus:

L'analogie formelle est la forme nouvelle donnée à un signe simple ou à un syntagme d'après le modèle d'un autre signe ou d'un autre syntagme prédominants dans la conscience linguistique par suite de l'impossi- bilité, de l'ignorance ou de l'oubli de la forme correcte.²

Guiraud³ gives the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Form</th>
<th>New Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>il s'en est emparé</td>
<td>il s'en est accaparé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agonir d'injures</td>
<td>agoniser d'injures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>une belle denture</td>
<td>une belle dentition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 28.
² Frei, La grammaire des fautes, p. 48.
³ Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 27.
Bayer aux corneilles > Bailler aux corneilles
Il me rebat les oreilles > Il me rabat les oreilles
Il a recouvré la vue > Il a retrouvé la vue.

B. In other cases, the form of the word is not affected, but it is the meaning which has changed. This is a case of semantic analogy whereby a new interpretation is given to a sign; it affects mostly words that are not well known, like learned or technical words. Ex:

un magasin bien achalandé (bien approvisionné)
une journée sans avatars (sans mésaventure)
avoir un air bête (bête, niais)
primordial (de première importance)

Some of these changes in meaning may proceed from a false etymology, for instance the adjectif "accidenté" which used to mean "présentant des accidents" (Ex. terrain accidenté) has come to mean "avoir été la victime d'un accident" (Ex. il a été accidenté dans la catastrophe de chemin de fer).

Guiraud explains that the meaning of a word resting upon both etymology and usage, semantic shifts are especially likely to occur when a word is isolated in the system (it cannot be related to a morpho-semantic family of words) or when its etymology is somewhat disguised or unclear to those who have not been initiated to Latin and Greek.

Dans ce dernier cas - qui est général dans la langue populaire - le sens ne repose plus que sur les emplois du mot et ces derniers sont le point de départ d'analogies qui gauchissent les valeurs sémantiques initiales.₁

Giraud gives this illustration of his thesis: Originally the verb "s'avémer" meant "prouver être vrai," but it has undergone a progressive


semantic shift so that now one may commonly hear: "l'affaire s'avèra fausse," instead of "l'affaire se révéla fausse." Many other similar results of semantic shifts can be heard daily:

éviter un ennui à quelqu'un (épargner un ennui)
fixer quelqu'un (regarder fixement)
il risque de gagner (il a des chances de gagner)

C. New words are created on the model of known ones. According to Guiraud\(^1\) one of the most frequent means of lexical creation in popular French is to build a verb upon a substantive. This process exists in standard French but is limited to cases where there exists a precise semantic relationship between the verb and substantive (for instance the relationship between the instrument or the product and the action). Popular French extends this means of creation to cases where this relationship does not necessarily exist (Ex.: queuler, zieuter, blairer).

Popular French builds a verb upon a nominal root in cases where standard French reverts to a verbal locution with "faire" (Ex.: chuter, nocer, auditionner, court-circuiter) or in order to avoid irregular verbs (Ex.: solutionner [résoudre]).

Most of these usages which used to be considered as mistakes are now so common, that they are hardly noticed any more, except perhaps, by the grammarian with a keen eye for such improprieties.

V. "Need" for expressivity in colloquial speech and its effect upon the French lexicon

The need for ever renewed expressive capacity is one of the forces which conditions the evolution of the language in general; it is

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 57-58.
especially characteristic of the colloquial lexicon. Henri Frei offers this insight into the dynamics of the process:

... plus le signe est employé fréquemment, plus les impressions qui se rattachent à la force et à la signification, s'emoussent.¹

and conversely

... plus le signe s'use, plus le besoin d'expressivité cherche à le renouveler, sémantiquement et formellement.²

It has been repeatedly noted by linguists that one of the characteristics of colloquial speech, and the key to its expressivity, is the close union between the object named and the feelings and emotions it arouses, the two being conveyed simultaneously by the sign. Thus "un rossard" not only means "very mean" or "a mean person" (objective level) but also "a person that I despise because of his meanness" (subjective level). Likewise "Une enfant palote" conveys less the idea of "un peu pâle" than the speaker's reaction to this state of affairs: "une fillette pâle, la pauvre petite."³ According to Guiraud, this need for expression of the subjective element is the mainspring behind the numerous means of lexical and syntactic expressivity to be found in popular and colloquial speech.⁴

Frei⁵ suggests that these means of expressivity fall into two categories: semantic expressivity and formal expressivity.

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¹Frei, La grammaires des fautes, p. 233.
²Ibid.
³Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 80.
⁴Ibid.
⁵Frei, La grammaire des fautes.
A. Semantic means of expressivity. Frei suggests the following instances:

-Animal versus person. One resource frequently drawn upon in colloquial speech is to use for people terms normally reserved for animals; Ex.:  
  
  Bas les pattes.  
  Quel vilain museau.  
  On finira tous par crever.  

-Inanimate versus animate; use of an impersonal pronoun for a person:  
  c'est jeune et ça ne sait pas!

-3rd person versus 2nd person; use of the 3rd person form to designate the person(s) one is talking to:  
  Dites donc, la vieille . . .  
  Hé les enfants, pas de tapage.  
  Alors, on ne s'en fait pas!

-Substance versus quality; using a substantive in the place and function of an attribute:  
  Etre désordre, chagrin, colère, etc.  
  Etre tout chose  
  C'est pas sorcier  
  elle est jolie fille  
  Avoir un succès monstre

-Subjective loading of pronouns:  
  Celui-là!  
  Ça, c'est bien lui! . . .  
  C'est quelqu'un cette petite! . . .  
  Ça, c'est quelquechose!

-Use of "ce que" in place of an adverb of manner (comme, comment):  
  Ce qu'on s'est amusé!  
  Ce que je suis vexé!  
  Ce que j'ai soif!  
  Ce qu'il écrit mal!

1The analysis and most of the examples presented in this section are borrowed from Frei's La grammaire des fautes, pp. 239-261.
-Pronominal constructions which give an idea of subjective participation in a process:

Il se fait vieux

-Repetition of the pronoun to implicate the listener or the speaker into the action:

Prends moi cette brique.
Ça vous a un de ces fumets . . .
Tu vas voir ce que je te vais lui passer!

-Verb of action (faire) versus verb of state (avoir)

faire une maladie  
faire de la température

-Verb of action (faire) versus verb of state (être)

Ça fait gentil.
Ça fait jeune;
Ça fait distingué.
Ça fait vilain.

-Use of the adverb "toujours" in the sense of "cependant" or "en tous cas"

C'est toujours ça de pris.
C'est toujours pas en se tournant les pouces que vous y arriverez.

-Expressive use of "autrement"

C'est autrement intéressant!

-Imperfect versus conditional verb tenses:

Si tu avais avancé, je frappais.
Sans vous, je partais.
Sans vous, j'étais mort.

B. Formal means of expressivity:

Hyperbole, répétance, tautologie, pléonasme, dérivation parasitaire, figures de sens ou de syntaxe concourent à mettre en relief l'idée exprimée. ¹

¹ Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 79.
Instances of formal means of expressivity in colloquial French are the following:

- Pléonasme and redundancy:
  
  *achever complètement*
  *sortir dehors*
  *c'est la vérité vraie*
  *une petite maisonnette*

  The expression may even swell up into a series of redundant signs which are empty of specific semantic value and only serve to reinforce the expression:

  *on pique un roupillon*
  " " *un petit roupillon*
  " " *un bon petit roupillon*
  " " *un bon vieux petit roupillon*
  " " *un bon vieux petit roupillon des familles*¹

- Use of suffixes with affective connotations. Guiraud² shows that popular French displays a definite hypertrophy of this type of construction. It makes frequent use of the suffixes to be found in the standard language, for instance the diminutives -et, -ot, -on; the augmentatives -ard, -aud; the frequentatives -aille, -ille, -ouille, (which in any case have a popular origin). In addition popular French has its own series of suffixes: -asse, -oche, -iner, etc. Ultimately, these suffixes may be void of any semantic content and serve only to carry an affective load. He gives the examples of -flard in "pantouflard" or petit in "un petit pernod." Pierre Daninos, in the *Carnets du Major Thompson*, poked fun at this tendency the French have to call "petit" anything they like and feel comfortable with: sa petite femme, sa petite maison, son petit pernod, un bon petit vin, faire son petit boulot,

¹ _Ibid._, p. 79.
² _Ibid._, p. 81.
mener sa petite vie tranquille, boire un petit coup, etc. Laurence
Wylie, in turn, commented upon this affective predilection:

Le mot "petit" péjoratif en anglais, évoque par contre de grandes qualités dans le petit peuple français, qui aime parler de son "petit" pays, son "petit" village, sa "petite" ville; il vante son "petit" vin blanc; il mange un "petit" gâteau; les femmes se font faire un "petit" shampooing; on vous offre un "petit" verre. Pays, verre, vin, etc., n'ont rien de spécial, mais ils donnent un plaisir fort apprécié de possession et d'humble bonheur.¹

Frei claims that the expressivity of suffixal constructions is largely due to the contrast with the word normally expected:

écrabouiller (écraser) cuistot (cuisinier)
parigot (parisien) chauffard (chauffeur)²

or, to the intrinsic expressivity of the phonic combinations:

dingo barbouiller
louftingue gribouiller
vadrouiller bafouiller
écrabouiller

Guiraud further claims that these suffixes tend to form a system of alternances by which the acute vowels assume a diminutive value and the grave ones an augmentative value:

... l'ensemble de ces suffixes et de ces finales parasitaires tend à s'organiser en un système d'alternances dans lesquelles les voyelles aigües prennent une valeur diminutive par opposition aux graves: -ille/-aille/-ouille; -isse/-asse/-oussse; -iche/-ache/-ouche. ³⁴

A case in point is the opposition between "babiller (the chatter of a

²Frei, La Grammaire des fautes, p. 269.
³Ibid., p. 280.
⁴Guiraud, Le Français populaire, p. 82.
child and "bafouiller" (to sputter and talk nonsense); "rondouillet" and "rondouillard."

It is not infrequent either to find a reduplication of the suffix (diminutive, augmentative, frequentative). The result is a double suffix like: -elet; -onnet; -illet; -ichon; -illon. Often these suffixes may combine a diminutive and an augmentative, for instance "maigrichon," "grassouillet." (This combination is not unlike the present trend in English to forge words like "superette.")

Other formal means of emphasizing the expressivity of the message are:

-The repetition of a word:

C'est kif-kif
Y aller dare-dare

or the repetition of the idea under the form of a synonym:

à tort et à travers
il en dit des vertes et des pas mûres.

-The use of euphemisms (which according to Frei, is another form of expressive substitution, the listener expecting from the beginning of the word and from the situation, a stronger or more vulgar term):

enguirlander (engueuler)
mince! (m....)
ficher (foutre)

-Adverbs lend themselves especially well to intensive forms:

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1 Ibid., p. 83.
2 Frei, La Grammaire des fautes, p. 277.
3 Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 84.
très beau
extrêmement beau
formidablement beau
vachement beau
bougrement beau

-Adverbs of quantity are likewise emphasized by figurative expressions:
beaucoup > une foule, une masse, des tas.

-Emphasizing the negation:
pas > pas du tout, absolument pas
rien > que dalle, peau de balle, des clous, des nèfles

-Emphasizing the affirmation:
Tu parles...
et je veux...
et alors...

-Emphasizing the command form. The imperative is frequently reinforced by the adjunction of expletive elements such as:
The dative pronoun "moi" which emphasizes the speaker's involvement and interest in the action contemplated, his desire to see his opinion respected:
Faites moi ça.
Fiche moi ça camp d'ici.
Regarde moi ça.

The adverb "voir" which usually accompanies a suggestion or a request:
Attends voir que je réfléchisse...
Voyons voir...
Essaie voir de soulever ce meuble.

1 Ibid., p. 85.
2 Ibid., pp. 85-86.

Examples presented in this section are largely drawn from Lagane's article: "Eléments Explétifs," FDM no. 35, p. 36-37, and to a lesser degree from Guiraud's Le Français populaire, p. 86.

4 Guiraud reminds us that "voir" in this case does not come from the verb "voir," but from an adverb related to the adjective "voir" which in old French meant "vrai." Le Français populaire, p. 86.
The adverb "donc," the most commonly used expletive and which may express different shades of meaning:

- a friendly exhortation: Ne vous souciez donc pas de ça. T’en fais donc pas.
- a pressing request: Ne vous fatiguez donc pas tant.
- irritation: Taisez vous donc!
- a challenge: Essaie donc si tu oses!
- resignation: Eh bien, payons donc!

In frozen imperative expressions, it may assume the following connotations:

- incredulity or challenge: Allons donc!
- surprise or reprobation: Eh ben, dis donc! Dites donc, vous!
- announce an insult: Va donc, fainéant!
- serve as an attention getter: Dis donc...

Finally, these various expletives may combine with one another:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{essayez donc} & \quad \text{essayez donc voir d’en faire} \\
\text{essayez voir} & \quad \text{autant.} \\
\text{faites moi ça} & \quad \text{faites moi donc ça.} \\
\text{faites donc ça} & \quad \text{regardez moi ça} \\
\text{regardez moi ça} & \quad \text{regardez donc ça.}
\end{align*}
\]

"Mise en relief" by means of expressive brevity. Frei\(^1\) claims that the expressivity can be emphasized by implying rather than saying in full what one means:

\(^1\)Frei, *La grammaire des fautes*, p. 269.
Toi et ton cinéma! (The implication being: "Tu nous ennuiés.").
Vous avec vos cartes!

This also applies to most of the common exclamations:

Tu parles! (...si j'étais content)
Vous pensez! (...comme ça doit l'amuser)
Et comment? (...qu'elle est rusée)
Si on allait se promener (...qu'en dites vous?)

Non mais des fois! (...vous m'avez bien regardé?)

Brevity is not only an expressive device; it is also a general tendency of the fast informal language and it is responsible for the use of many common abbreviations:

un dico (dictionnaire)
un mécano (mécanicien)
un apéro (apéritif)
un transat (transatlantique)
une perm (permission)
les accus (accumulateurs)
le vel d'hiv (véloodrome d'hiver)
le bac (baccalauréat)
le prof (professeur)

The results of the need for brevity and assimilation, as well as the means of expressivity analyzed here, deal essentially with what the colloquial language does with the words and resources already existing in the common language. In addition, there exists a horde of words, presenting the expressive characteristics outlined here and which are specific to colloquial French (Ex.: marrant, bouquin, moche, etc.). It would take a dictionary to begin to give a picture of their number and variety.

1 Ibid., p. 270.
In summary, then, the colloquial lexicon presents two types of words which may create a particular difficulty for the foreign visitor: words belonging to the standard vocabulary but used with a different meaning and emotional charge (Ex. un tuyau, une tuile, un pépin) and words which belong specifically to the colloquial language and have to be learned in addition to their standard counterpart.

**Morpho-Syntactic Aspects**

**Purpose and limitations of the description**

It is not the writer's purpose to present a comprehensive linguistic interpretation and analysis of the whole morpho-syntactic system of colloquial French. That is properly the domain of the linguist. Occasionally, the writer has encountered features that could not be satisfactorily accounted for under a single heading or within the framework chosen for presentation, and linguists may well disagree with the labels and order of presentation selected. However, it must be pointed out that many of these problems of classification are still points of controversy among linguists. The general scheme of presentation adopted here is that suggested by Frei rather than one based on grammatical categories. The various features observed or recorded by researchers will be presented as illustrations of the different tendencies or underlying "needs" that structure and condition the syntax of colloquial French. Complex problems, like the question formation patterns, will be presented separately, because there may be a combination of influences at work and it would not be pedagogically practical to deal with this topic under several different headings.
The role of this writer then, is more that of a reporter than of a linguist, and the presentation will focus only on the points of departure from standard French, the purpose of the presentation being precisely to acquaint language teachers with the ways in which colloquial French differs from standard French.

Regional and Social variations

Lagane notes that in the area of syntax, socio-cultural factors may have a greater influence than in other areas.

... l'importance des facteurs socio-culturels y est proportionnellement plus grande que dans celui de la prononciation ... Aux différences de condition sociale, de culture, de situation de communication correspond souvent la diversité de l'outillage grammatical et des constructions.1

Regional variations seem to be negligible, according to Sauvageot.

Refering to his work in the elaboration of "Le français fondamental" he says:

Nous avons été frappés par l'homogénéité relative de la langue. Un texte enregistré à Paris, dans le Jura, en Savoie, dans le Midi méditerranéen, à Bordeaux ou sur les bords de la Loire présente la même allure en ce qui concerne le schéma grammatical. Les différences d'accents et de modulations ne semblent pas exercer d'influence profonde sur la structure de la phrase, l'agencement des mots.2

The syntactic particularities of colloquial French are evident especially in comparison with written French but the laws with which it abides are conspicuously absent from the grammar.

1 Lagane, "Le français commun." p. 8.

2 Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 10.
l'expression orale courante obéit, chez un grand nombre de locuteurs, à des règles morpho-syntaxiques différentes sur bien des points de celles du code écrit. L'absence de la plupart de ces règles particulières dans les grammairies n'interdit pas de croire que beaucoup sont communes à tous les franco-phones.¹

It must be noted though that many of the idiosyncrasies of spoken colloquial French are now beginning to invade the written code, and interestingly enough, by the channel of the most style conscious branch of writing, the literature. As mentioned before, many writers want the speech or inward monologues of their characters to reflect real life verbal expression.

Si... par syntaxe, on entend surtout l'ordonnance des phrases, on ne dira pas que le français standard est en train de modifier sa syntaxe, mais ce qui était à cet égard le propre du français parlé, tend à pénétrer dans la langue écrite par le chenal de la littérature.²

According to Sauvageot, the aspect of the traditional syntax which is the most affected in spoken informal French, is the order of the words; spontaneous speech no longer seems to mold itself easily into the word order prescribed by the grammars:

... le sujet parlant français éprouve de plus en plus de difficulté à se soumettre à l'ordre rigide des mots... Il recourt de plus en plus fréquemment à un ensemble d'expédients d'efficacité variable pour s'y soustraire, il faut reconnaitre qu'il y parvient dans bien des cas.³

¹Lagane, "Le français commun," p. 9.
²Martinet, La français sans fard, p. 40.
³Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 36.
Underlying "needs" that condition the morpho-syntax of colloquial French

According to Henri Frei, the morpho-syntax of popular and, by extension, of colloquial French is conditioned by a number of underlying "needs": a) a need for differentiation, that is to say, for making explicit relations that are not evident in the traditional syntax; b) a need for assimilation and invariability. This need is expressed by an avoidance of irregularities and "marked forms" (cf. Roman Jacobson) and a reduction of these irregularities by analogy to known forms or regular patterns; c) a need for economy and brevity, the speaker trying to express his message in a concise form, and d) a need for expressivity. Individual morpho-syntactic features of colloquial French will then be presented according to this framework and as evidence of the said trends.

A. Need for differentiation and clarity.

Le besoin de différenciation cherche à distinguer les éléments linguistiques les uns des autres pour éviter les confusions, latentes ou réelles, qui surgissent dans le fonctionnement de la parole.¹

This need is evidenced by:

1. Use of analytical adverbs instead of traditional adverbs where the relationship between the subordinator and its complement was invisible:

   après ça  |  for  |  ensuite
   avant ça  |  "    |  auparavant
   comme ça  |  "    |  ainsi
   avec ça   |  "    |  de plus, en outre²

¹ Frei, La grammaire des fautes, p. 63.
² Ibid., p. 203.
2. Tendency to substitute an analytical verb:

- être là for exister
- avoir peur " for craindre
- avoir mal " for souffrir
- devenir vieux " for vieillir
- devenir grand " for grandir

3. Tendency to explicate the abstractor:

- tu crois ça qu'il est malade?
- j'aimerais voir ça qu'on me fasse payer!
- je voudrais voir ça qu'on me fasse descendre.  

4. Creation and use of a new verb tense, the "passé antérieur surcomposé." Guiraud explains this fact as follows: The decline of the "passé simple" has lead to the loss of the opposition between an indefinite or undetermined past (the former passé simple) and a definite or determined past (the passé composé). Instead of the "passé simple" popular French uses a "passé antérieur surcomposé" in the major clause, whereas, in literary French it was found only in subordinate clauses:

- Il a eu coupé ce couteau.
- J'ai eu fini de bonne heure aujourd'hui.
- J'en ai eu acheté des fois du fromage.
- J'ai eu vendu des cartes postales à cinq sous la douzaine.

Guiraud points out that "j'ai eu vendu des cartes postales ..." actually means: "il m'est arrivé, autrefois, à une certaine époque, non déterminée, de vendre des cartes." This is an indefinite past which has a

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1. Ibid., p. 174.
2. Ibid., p. 212.
contrastive function with the definite past: "J'ai vendu mes cartes cinq sous . . . " which means: "J'ai vendu cinq sous, les cartes que tu sais, dans les circonstances que tu connais." The writer has observed that this verb tense is quite commonly used in the Lyon and Southeast areas of France.

B. Need for assimilation and invariability. Frei indicates that the need for invariability, assimilation and reduction of irregularities or marked forms, manifests itself through formal analogy and conformism which he defines in these terms:

L'analogie formelle est la forme nouvelle donnée à un signe simple ou à un syntagme d'après le modèle d'un autre signe ou d'un autre syntagme prédominant dans la conscience linguistique par suite de l'impossibilité de l'ignorance ou de l'oubli de la forme correcte.¹

Le conformisme embrasse tous les procédés par lesquels le besoin d'assimilation cherche à adapter les uns aux autres les divers éléments, grammaticaux aussi bien que phoniques, qui se suivent le long de la chaîne parlée.²

The need for assimilation affects the following grammatical elements:

1. The partitive article. In colloquial French the form of the partitive does not usually vary when an adjective is placed before the noun. Whereas in standard French one would say:

de grosses larmes
de grands avantages
de magnifiques résultats

in ordinary conversation we have:

des beaux enfants
des bons livres
des autres nouvelles.

¹ Frei, La grammaire des fautes, p. 48.
² Ibid., p. 56.
and by extension:

des autres
il y en a des grands, des moins chers, des jaunes . . .

Sauvageot even found instances of this in the well known daily newspaper, *Le Figaro*:

Des jeunes français sont partis pour l'Angleterre. Kennedy favorable à des premiers contacts.

Sauvageot concludes:

On peut même aller jusqu'à dire que la plupart des sujets parlant ne connaissent presque plus l'emploi de "de" dans les cas mentionnés.¹

2. Irregular plural forms of nouns and adjectives.

Guiraud notes that in popular French there is a tendency not to observe the irregular plurals and to pronounce the final consonant in the plural form of monosyllabic words such as:

- des oeufs  [dezøf]
- des boeufs  [deboef]
- des os     [dezøs] or [dezøs]

However, in colloquial French only [dezøs] is common, the others would be taken as evidence of ignorance. Still, the tendency to conform to a simple pattern of plural marking is evidenced by the mistakes frequently made, even by educated speakers:

[On note] . . . une répugnance à utiliser une forme nominale variable pour indiquer le nombre dans des mots tel que journaux, boeufs, brutaux. Cette répugnance est mise en évidence par les nombreuses fautes faites même par des gens instruits à l'occasion: les résultats finals (sic) (France III, 9, 11, 1960).²

¹Sauvageot, *Français écrit, français parlé*, pp. 118-119.
3. Agreements.

The past participles show a tendency towards invariability, especially with pronominal verbs:

Elle s'est mépris
Elle s'y est mal pris
Elle s'est plaint

Spoken colloquial French usually ignores the rule of the agreement of the past participle with the direct object of the verb "avoir":

La boîte qu'il a ouvert
Les injures qu'on s'est dit
La lettre que j'ai écrit

However, one may also find an agreement of the adverb, possibly by analogy with the adjective which it modifies:

je me suis toute salie ma robe.
c'est elle qui est la mieux habillée.
c'est la blonde qui est la mieux.
c'est chez le relieur que les livres sont les mieux relisés.
c'est eux qui sont venus les plus tôt.

Although "la loi générale du français parlé va dans le sens de l'invariabilité" it may be said that French people find the whole question of agreements in standard French so confusing, that in carefree speech they either react by avoiding the agreement altogether, or by adding it where it should not be (hyper-correction).

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1 Guiraud, Le français populaire, pp. 33-36.

2 Frei, Le grammaire des fautes, p. 57; Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 36.

3 Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 35.
4. Substitution of "ça" for the impersonal "il."

The impersonal "il" in expressions like "il pleut," "il neige," etc., has nothing to do with grammatical gender; in reaction to this inconsistency, colloquial French generalizes the use of "ça" for impersonal cases, the same way English uses "it":

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ça flotte} & \quad \text{ça se peut} \\
\text{ça va} & \quad \text{si ça se trouve} \\
\text{ça colle} & \quad \text{ça monte} \\
\text{ça dégringole} & \quad \text{ça descend}\textsuperscript{1}
\end{align*}
\]

5. Use of "on" instead of "nous."

This practice, extremely common in colloquial French may also be viewed in the context of avoidance of irregular or difficult forms. Not only does the "nous" form introduce a new ending to the paradigm of regular verbs (Ex: je, tu, il, elle, on, ils, elles [sə], but, nous [so] vous [sə]). With irregular forms, it triggers the use of a different root form:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ex.:} & \quad \text{Nous allons} \\
& \quad \text{vous allez} & \quad \text{versus} & \quad \text{je vais} \\
& \quad \text{tu vas} & \quad \text{versus} & \quad \text{il va, on va} \\
& \quad \text{ils vont}
\end{align*}
\]

By using "on" instead of "nous" the speaker avoids the marked ending "ons" and the irregular root "all . . . ," which are the most difficult forms of the conjugaison, and uses a form which is already phonetically known. It is not surprising then that "on" is so commonly used in place of "nous."

Dans le peuple, "on" a ni plus ni moins remplacé "nous."
Si le pronom "nous" est encore employé, c'est pour renforcer "on" qui est devenu le vrai sujet, c'est à dire celui qui détermine la forme du verbe.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{2}A. Doppagne, Trois aspects du français contemporain, pp. 157, 161.
Examples:

qu'est-ce qu'on boit?
quand est-ce qu'on part?
nous, on va à la mer, et vous autres?

This last example where "nous" is actually used to reinforce "on," points out another function of the "on"; that of restoring the regularity of the stressed subject pronoun paradigm. As Guiraud\(^1\) indicates, the opposition between stressed and unstressed pronouns is incomplete. We have, "moi, je . . ."; "toi tu . . ."; "lui il . . .," but the opposition fails when we come to "nous nous . . .," "vous vous . . ." Colloquial French restores the contrastive effect by using "on" instead of "nous"; in popular French, the pronoun "autre" may also be added. Thus we have:

moi, je . . .
toi, tu . . .
lui, il . . .

nous on or nous aut' on
vous aut', vous . . .
eux, ils . . .

With reflexive verbs, the use of "on" helps to avoid cacophonous sequences such as: "nous, nous nous ennuyons" and further maintains the distinction between stressed, unstressed and object pronouns:

moi je m'ennuie

nous on s'ennuie (as opposed to "nous, nous nous ennuyons")

6. Prepositions and conjunctions.

Guiraud\(^2\) notes that popular French has only a limited number of prepositions and conjunctions and the way they are used is noticeably different from standard French. Some of these "mistakes" have become quite common in colloquial French:

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\(^1\) Guiraud, \textit{Le français populaire}, p. 41.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 68.
-se rappeler de quelqu'un: by analogy with "se souvenir de quelqu'un"
-the use of "à" to express direction is generalized to cases where it is not considered acceptable in standard French:

-"à" can also be used to indicate the agent:

-colloquial French generalizes the use of the infinitive as a complement of relation introduced by "à."

-The preposition "à" is frequently used with transitive verbs:

-Sauvageot also notes that the reverse may happen and intransitive verbs may be used transitively:
"après" is frequently used to indicate the interest felt toward an object or a person:

elle lui court après. (in the sense of seeking his company)
ils sont tout le temps après lui. (bothering him)

-a parasitic use of the preposition "de" appears in expressions like:

c'est pour de rire
c'est pour de vrai

7. The use of the adverb "très" is extended to nominal phrases:

c'est très dommage
il fait très attention
j'ai très faim, très soif, etc.

8. Transposition of grammatical categories. Prepositions and adverbs are used interchangeably.

... il n'y a plus de différence formelle entre prépositions et adverbes le statut du signe n'étant plus indiqué que par sa place dans la chaîne parlée. C'est pourquoi de même que l'adverbe fonctionne comme préposition, on peut utiliser les prépositions comme adverbes.

Phrases like the following are very common in colloquial French:

c'est étudié pour.
il a voté pour, il a voté contre.
c'est selon; c'est suivant; c'est tout comme.
prends ton chapeau, je ne veux pas que tu sortes sans.

Guiraud says that when these constructions can be perceived as adverbial forms, they are even more easily accepted:

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2 Guiraud, *Le francais populaire*, p. 60.
3 Frei, p. 218.
9. The use of the relative "que" instead of "où" is very frequent:

Le jour qu'il est parti

or instead of "a," or "qui"

Elle est là qu'elle attend
Les voilà qu'elles viennent

10. Verb forms.

(a) Tendency toward the invariability of the verb root. Guiraud explains that a source of irregularity in the conjugation of French verbs resides in the apophony or alternation of the vowels of the root. Apophony used to be present in all verb forms but the reduction of the apophony has been one of the fundamental laws of the evolution of French. However, it has remained in two types of verbs, the verbs ending in oyer and uyer (je noie, nous noyons) and those ending in eler, eter (j'appelle, nous appelons).

Popular and occasionally colloquial French reduce the apophony by dropping the accentuated [ɛ] whenever it is phonetically possible.

Elle se decoll'te
elle épouss'te les meubles
il empaqu'te

In this manner, the alternation: "nous feuilletons" [nuʃɛlɛtɔ]
"je feuillette" [ʒəfɛlɛt] is uniformly reduced:

1Ibid., p. 185.
2Ibid., p. 189.
3Guiraud, Le français populaire, pp. 21-22.
4Frei, La grammaire des fautes, p. 170.
In a similar fashion, the alternation "je paie," "nous payons" has been reduced by adjunction of a yod to the singular forms:

\[ [\varepsilon\varphi\varepsilon\varphi\jmath], \quad [\nu\nu\varepsilon\nu\jmath]\]

\[ [\varepsilon\varepsilon\nu\varepsilon\jmath], \quad [\nu\nu\varepsilon\varepsilon\nu\jmath]\]

Le phénomène est conforme à la règle phonétique du français et il a été d'ailleurs accepté par la norme en ce qui concerne le type en -ayer; la prononciation je paye, j'essaye étant sinon très distinguée, en tous cas admise par la règle.\(^1\)

(b) Avoidance of verbs of the third groups by means of synonymic substitution. Historically the tendency of popular French to replace an irregular verb by a synonym belonging to the first group has been responsible for the elimination of many verbs or their archaic aspect:

\begin{align*}
\text{ardre} & : \quad \text{brûler} \\
\text{ceindre} & : \quad \text{entourer} \\
\text{choir} & : \quad \text{tomber} \\
\text{clore} & : \quad \text{fermer} \\
\text{quérir} & : \quad \text{chercher}
\end{align*}

and the process is still going on:

\begin{align*}
\text{vêtrir} & : \quad \text{habiller} \\
\text{luire} & : \quad \text{briller} \\
\text{hair} & : \quad \text{détester} \\
\text{faire} & : \quad \text{effectuer} \\
\text{faillir} & : \quad \text{manquer} \\
\text{se mouvoir} & : \quad \text{remuer; bouger} \\
\text{jaillir} & : \quad \text{gicler} \\
\text{ensevelier} & : \quad \text{enterrer} \\
\text{aller} & : \quad \text{marcher}
\end{align*}

(c) Avoidance of irregular conjugations by using a verb phrase instead.

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 22.
frîre  >  faire frîre  
nuire  >  être nuisible  
craindre  >  avoir peur  

(d) Creation of a new verb flexion based on the root of the verb.

agonir de sottises  >  agoniser de sottises  
conclure une affaire  >  conclure une affaire  

or on the root of the corresponding substantive:

voir  >  visionner (vision)  
décevoir  >  déceptionner (déception)  
intendre  >  intentionner (intention)  
résoudre  >  solutionner (solution)  
émouvoir  >  émotionner (émotion)  

All these processes are summarized by Guiraud as follows:

Substitution synonymique (faillir > manquer) transfer 
flexionnel (moudre > mouler); décumul (craindre > avoir 
peur); dérivation régressive (choir > chuter), contam-
ination sémantique (échoir > échouer). Tous ces 
phénomènes tendent à éliminer les formes irrégulières 
et sans valeur distinctive pour réduire le système 
du français à un paradigme unique.¹

This general trend toward a simple and regular verb paradigm 
is also noted by Martinet:

On finit par s'accoutumer des bizarreries des verbes 
vraiment fréquents (je vais, nous allons). Mais des 
adultes de tous milieux sont susceptibles d'achopper 
sur les formes de mouvoir, d'acquérir, d'émouvoir et 
de résoudre. Aussi préfère-t-on utiliser des équiva-

tens "réguliers" à radical unique comme bouger, se 
procurer, émotionner et solutionner. . .²

11. The use of verb tenses.

The remarks which are to follow concerning the use of the 
various verb tenses in colloquial French may not all support the 
trend toward assimilation and invariability; however, after

¹ Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 21.
² Martinet, Le français sans fard, p. 42.
having presented the verb forms, it seems appropriate, and
more to the reader's convenience, to present also the verb
tenses under the same heading.

(a) Disappearance of certain verb tenses from spoken French. A de-
scription of the French verb system based on "Le français
tondelaln" indicates that:

—In the indicative mood, the "passé simple" is no longer used
in the spoken language, nor is the "passé antérieur." This is
a widely observed fact, which many grammarians have testified
to:

... quoi qu'on ait pu dire et écrire ... le
passé simple est mort dans le français parlé
commun: son emploi en dehors de la langue écrite
fait pédant ou provincial.2

—In the subjunctive mood, the imperfect and the pluperfect have
completely disappeared and are expressed by the present and the
past tenses. This shift is also very widely observed in written
French and the few forms that are still used are homonyms of the
indicative.3 Although tenses of the subjunctive have disappeared
it is inexact to say that the subjunctive mood is being phased
out. Guiraud, points out that the present of the subjunctive is
still very widely and commonly used especially after verbs of
volition or desire. In other cases it tends to be replaced by the
indicative, in popular French at least:

1Peytard et Genouvrier, Linguistique et enseignement du français,
p. 27.
3Doppagne, Trois aspects du français contemporain, pp. 154-156.
(b) Creation of a new tense: the periphrastic future. Peytard and Genouvrier indicate that alongside the simple future (je chanterai) the periphrastic future (je vais chanter) is becoming widely used. Frequency studies show that spoken French uses one periphrastic future for two simple futures.² Sauvageot also notes this fact and states that in foreign language classes, the French periphrastic future is usually explained as an imminent future whose specific function is to signal an action due to happen in a very near future. However common usage does not follow this pattern, as can be seen from the examples given by Sauvageot. If we are sitting in a café and the waiter says:

Un instant s'il vous plaît, je vais venir.

his reply does not convey the idea that he will serve us right away. If that had been the case, he would have said:

Je viens tout de suite.

or simply (with the proper intonation):

Je viens.

Sauvageot further shows that the present tense is much more commonly used to indicate the immediate future,

Nous partons à la campagne.

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¹Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 37.
²Peytard et Genouvrier, Linguistique et Enseignement du français, p. 27.
³Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, pp. 94-95.
whereas neither the simple future nor the periphrastic future convey this feeling of imminence of the action to come:

Nous partirons à la campagne.
Nous allons partir à la campagne.

Sauvageot also states that frequency studies have shown that one reason for the common use of the periphrastic future as a synonym of the simple future, is in order to avoid having to use forms that seem difficult to conjugate.

(c) Emphasis placed on the expression of simultaneity. The spoken language shows a marked affection for "être en train de" the French equivalent of the English progressive form. It is used with all tenses to emphasize the process taking place:

Je ne veux pas le déranger, il est en train de manger.
Nous avons dû attendre, elle était en train de téléphoner.
N'arrive pas trop tôt, ils seront encore en train de dîner.¹

It is the writer's opinion that this tendency can be related to the avoidance of marked endings mentioned by Sauvageot. In this way, only the auxiliaries need to be conjugated and they are, by necessity, so well known that their use presents less difficulty than selecting the proper verb root and ending. Compare:

Je vais acquérir une maison and j'acquerrai ...
Je suis en train d'acquérir ... et j'acquiers ...

¹Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 89.
C. Need for economy and brevity. The need for economy and brevity in colloquial French expresses itself in the following ways:

1. Elision of the "ne" of the negative forms.

La langue familière et populaire au contraire montre une tendance à se passer complètement de "ne" et à employer seuls les divers auxiliaires de négation.¹

In colloquial French, one commonly says:

Je sais pas.
Il y a personne.
J'en vois aucun.
ça fait rien.

Guiraud² and Doppagne³ explain that, in old French, the negation was first expressed only by means of "non" or "ne" as can still be seen in forms such as "je désire du vin et non de la bière."

Then it was felt necessary to emphasize or reinforce the negative by adding to it a substantive related to the idea expressed by the verb:

je ne mange mie.
je ne bois goutte.
je ne vois point.
je ne marche pas., etc.

In a third stage, some of these words, by virtue of their frequency of use, became the normal completion of the negative:
ne...pas; ne... point; ne... rien; ne... personne.

In the fourth stage, these substantives have become the principal terms that express the idea of negation, in spite of all

¹ Von Wartburg & Paul Zumthor, *La syntaxe du français contemporain*, p. 149.
grammatical logic and etymology: "pas d'argent, pas de chanson."

The final and present step is that "ne" is now felt as inessential; it is seen as being only the completion of "pas" and it is therefore frequently dropped. Only "pas" and the other specifiers of the negation remain (personne, rien, guère, aucun). "Pas" having totally lost its emphatic function, when the speaker wants to emphasize the negative, he now resorts to various adverbial complements:

j'en crois pas un mot.
j'en veux pas du tout.
ça vaut pas un clou.¹

2. Expletive use of the preposition "de," or use of the partitive as an attribute of the subject:

Il y a des projets de prévus.
J'avais eu huit jours de tranquilles.
J'ai une chambre de libre.
J'ai une casserole de trouée.

This construction also reduces the length of the sequences necessary to express the same idea:

Il y a des projets qui ont été prévus.
Il y a des projets de prévus.

J'ai une chambre qui est libre.
J'ai une chambre de libre.

3. Use of the conjunction "que" as a minimum generic term which implies all the others:

¹Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 66.
on mettra un simple 'que' là ou la norme
exigerait 'parce que', 'puisque', 'sans que',
'au point que', etc., le seul contexte précisant
la nature de la correlation.

Examples:

Approchez que je vous cause. (pour que)
Voilà bien longtemps qu'il est venu. (depuis)
Elle est bête que c'est à ne pas y croire. (au point que)
Qu'est-ce qu'il a donc qu'il ne dit rien. (puisque)

4. Use of adverbs as "presentators"

Sans doute qu'il viendra. (instead of il est probable
qu'il viendra")
Vivement qu'on se tire!

Use of the adverb "quand" in place of the adverbial locution
"en même temps que":

Elle a été opérée quand moi
Tu partiras quand nous.

5. Length reduction by means of "sous entente";

Besoin ou pas, je te défends de l'acheter.
(que tu en aies besoin ou pas)
que si... (je vous dis que si)
que non... (je vous dis que non)

6. Elimination of the "particules rectives" (en, de, etc.)

and resulting telescoping of words:

une boîte métal
l'industrie auto
les renseignements radio
question prix
côté famille
histoire de rire
le facteur temps

1Guiraud, Ibid., p. 73.
2Frei, La grammaire, p. 231.
3Sauvageot, "les divers français parlés," p. 20.
The reduction may even affect noun phrases:

Il a démissionné de président (de ses fonctions de président)\(^1\)

Nominal predicates without subject:

defense d'afficher
bas les pattes!
chapeau\(^2\)

Elision of the articulation words between the elements of the discourse. According to Sauvageot, the examination of recordings of conversations show that long or complex sentences are in regression in spoken informal French; instead we find a juxtaposition of short independent phrases:

En dehors des phrases subordonnées introduites par 'que' ou par un relatif (le plus souvent 'que') on ne trouve guère que des complétives commençant par 'quand', 'parce que', 'puisque', 'pendant que', etc., ou des propositions introduites par 'si'. La conjonction 'car' est presque sortie de l'usage parlé.\(^3\)

As indicated earlier, the relationship between the different propositions is now expressed by the intonation rather than by grammatical means. Here are a few typical sequences from radio interviews:

Ex. 1—Il a plu toute la journée, on n'a pas bougé.
Ex. 2—J'étais occupée dans ma cuisine. Je me suis rendu compte de rien. J'ai seulement entendu une explosion. Je n'ai pas pensé que ça pouvait être une bombe.\(^4\)

\(^1\)Ibid.
\(^2\)Martinet, Le français sans fard, p. 40.
\(^3\)Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 39.
\(^4\)Ibid.
Sauvageot offers the following explanation of this aspect of spoken informal French:

Le rythme plus saccadé, cette substitution des effets modulatoires aux agencements complexes des phrases, sont peut-être imposés par le besoin de transmettre des communications contenant une teneur d'information relativement plus dense. Le locuteur laisse à son interlocuteur le soin d'inférer quel est l'agencement des concepts qu'il lui destine. L'économie porte sur les liaisons... Tout se passe comme si nous n'avions plus le temps de marquer les articulations du discours.¹

D. Syntactic expressivity or "mise en relief"

1. Articulation of the discourse.

It was just pointed out that spoken informal French tends to leave out all the coordination and articulation words; however, under the effect of emotion or when the speaker wants to emphasize the relationship between the different phases of his discourse, he uses various expedients that are more obvious than the usual conjunctions.²

J'étais en train de faire la cuisine, pendant ce temps là, il est sorti sans que je le voie. Du moment qu'il le veut, on peut être sûr qu'il y arrivera. Il a cru qu'il avait gagné, seulement voilà, il s'était trompé...

J'ai pas attendu; aussitôt que j'ai eu fini, je suis parti. A peine qu'il l'avait aperçu, l'autre lui a tiré dessus. Si c'est que ça ne te plait pas, dis-le carrément.

Quand ça sera qu'il faudra partir, tu le diras.³

Thus in spoken informal French, the use of articulation words seems to be limited to emphatic forms, and the choice and position of the articulation words reflect that intention.

¹Ibid., p. 44.
²Ibid., p. 40.
³Ibid.
Word order in spontaneous speech.

The established grammar instructs us to fit our messages into the prescribed word order: subject, verb, complement. However, that order does not necessarily reflect the mental or psychological framework of the speaker. The order in which the words-concepts come to mind is not necessarily the one prescribed by the grammar. In order to conform to the prescribed word order the speaker would need to reshuffle and reorder the concepts. Yet, in spontaneous speech, words are uttered almost as fast as the mind conceives them, therefore there is no time for a reordering of the words to fit them into the established mold. As Sauvageot puts it:

Dans la vie courante, le locuteur n'a pas le loisir de 'retaper' sa phrase avant de la prononcer. Il commence, et puis, il 'se débrouille' pour continuer comme il peut.¹

The emphasizing of certain elements of the word sequence may be a deliberate stylistic choice, and this is particularly the case in the written language. In spontaneous speech, however, the "mise en relief" corresponds more to the affective realities of the speaker. Rather than a deliberate choice, it is the order in which the concepts come to his mind and their affective importance which will determine the word order and the type of emphatic construction used.

What are, in colloquial French the syntactic means available

¹Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 28.
available to the speaker to help him mold the word order to his order of conceptual or affective priorities? In spoken French, says Sauvageot, the most common expedient is to place at the head of the sentence the word or the group to be emphasized, and to use a "pronom relai" in its stead.

(a) Emphasizing the subject of the predicate. This is achieved by the addition of a disjunctive pronoun:

Moi, je pense qu'il se trompe.
Lui, il s'en fiche.
Nous, on est sorti.

The most common construction is with the stressed pronoun coming first, but it is also frequently placed at the end:

Vous me comprenez, vous.
Ils n'admettent pas ça, eux.

In fact it can also be placed in the middle, but this construction seems less spontaneous and more stylistically conscious:

Je pense, moi, qu'il se trompe.

When the stressed word is a noun rather than a pronoun, the same word order is used.

Les copains, ils vont m'aider.
Ta soeur, elle est mignonne.

(b) Emphasizing the object of the predicate. Here again, the same order is used, the noun object is uttered first, and an unstressed pronoun works as a relay and assumes the grammatical function of direct object:

---

1 Most of the examples presented in this section are borrowed from Sauvageot's *Français écrit, français parlé*, pp. 28–38.
Ce livre, tu l'as lu?
La voiture, je l'ai garée sous le porche.

Likewise, if the object of the predicate is a pronoun, the disjunctive pronoun is uttered first, and the grammatical object function is assumed by the relay pronoun:

Lui, je l'ai aperçu dans la rue.
Eux, je ne les ai plus revus.
Moi, il ne me trompera pas.
Nous, il nous ont eus.

(c) Emphasizing the predicate.

When the predicate is the first word that comes to mind, the solution is not as simple. The speaker may use the verb with the proper subject pronoun, and place the explicit subject last:

Ils nous ont eus, les bandits.
Elle est tombée en panne, la voiture.
Il est bien maigre, ce chien.

Sauvageot indicates that in this case, there is a slight pause before the explicit subject which is thus spoken as an afterthought or a complement of information.

-When the verb has a direct object, colloquial French may resort to the following word sequence:

Il l'avait aperçu, lui, la voiture.
On l'a pas vu, nous, ton copain.

-Another construction, especially frequent in administrative language serves the same purpose of allowing the verb to come first; it consists of a passive construction introduced by the impersonal "il":

Il a été pris des mesures énergiques.
Il a été oublié plusieurs cartes d'identité. Les chercher à la mairie.
(d) Emphasizing the attribute of the subject. This is also done by placing it at the beginning of the sentence:

Stupide il a été et il restera.

The attribute, like the subject or the object may be relayed by a pronoun:

élégante, elle l'a toujours été ridicule, il l'est bien.

Sauvageot also observed that when there is no time precision and the subject is in the 3rd person, spoken French may leave out the verb (être) and simply use a nominal phrase:

Vaniteux, le bonhomme!
Pas astucieuse cette commercante.
Bien compliquée, son affaire.
Pas fin, le mec.

(e) Emphasizing the complement of circumstance.

As Sauvageot indicates this attempt to put the complement of circumstance at the beginning of the sentence, may be more or less successful depending on the case:

Il n'en a jamais été question

may lead to:

Jamais, il n'en a été question.

But, the terms cannot be inverted in the following instances:

Il mange trop.
Tu te trompes complètement.
Ça file vite.

This is a frequent source of "misfires" or false starts:

Les ratés sont nombreux quand le sujet parlant est obsédé par le complément circonstanciel et commet l'imprudence de l'émettre avant d'avoir aménagé la phrase qu'il va dire. On entend alors des bribes de phrases qui restent en suspens avant
que la construction soit rétablie:
Trop..., il mange trop.
Energiquement..., oui, j'ai bien protesté énergiquement.
Complètement, il s'est complètement trompé.¹

(f) Use of the presentation device "c'est" for emphasizing an element
of the message:

Nous autres, c'est ce que nous voulons.
Le terrible, c'est qu'il y croit.
C'est moi qui vous le dit.

"C'est" may in turn be reinforced by "ça":

ça, c'est bien lui!

(g) Other emphatic devices:

Pour ce qui est de la voiture, je m'en occuperai.
En ce qui me concerne, c'est le premier que je préfère.

The types of constructions presented above are extremely frequent in colloquial French. They reflect an attempt on the part of the speaker to escape the rigidity of the established syntax. Instead of the speaker trying to fit his thoughts into a prescribed pattern, it is the syntax which is made to reflect the speaker's spontaneous emotional reactions to a situation. The informational content of the message and the affectivity of the speaker are thus woven together by the syntax as well as by the lexical and prosodic elements. In fact, it may be said that the less control the speaker everts over the word order, the more the latter is likely to reflect his affective priorities. In colloquial syntax the affective function seeks to take precedence over the grammatical function.

¹ Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 34.
E. Question Formation patterns. Some aspects of the question formation patterns in spoken and in colloquial French could be related to the need for economy, for instance the fact that many direct questions are expressed by the intonation alone. Some could be related to the need for assimilation and invariability, for instance, the use of "est-ce que" with all persons or the generalized use of the question morpheme "ti" in popular French. Some could spring from the need for differentiation, for instance, the use of "laquelle" instead of "quelle" in order to have an aural gender and number marker. Others still could be taken as a clear illustration of the need for expressivity. For instance, the question word can be emphasized either by its position in the sentence (ex: "tu es venu avec qui?") or by the use of a reinforcement device (ex: "C'est qui, qui t'a dit ça?"). However these influences will be overlooked in the presentation which is to follow, in order to have a more systematic coverage of the topic.

According to Albert Doppagne, of all grammatical constructions, the question is probably the one that differs most in actual use from what is taught in grammar books.

\[1\] Ibid., p. 31.

\[2\] Doppagne, Trois aspects du français contemporain, pp. 161-169.
1. Direct questions.

Grammars teach us that the inversion of the subject is the proper method of forming a question (ex: Venez-vous?) despite the impossibility of using this construction with the first person singular where another device has to be used (ex: est-ce que je viens?). Doppagne claims that this weakness—not being able to use the inversion with all the persons—may have been the cause of the decline of the inversion and the origin of the widespread adoption of another interrogative form that could be used with all persons indiscriminately, the locution "est-ce que."

Guiraud, in addition to the reason mentioned by Doppagne, attributes the popularity of "est-ce que" to: a) the predilection of the spoken language for intensive forms, their very over-use leading to the degradation of their emphatic value (Originally, "est-ce que" was an emphatic device to stress the interrogation.); b) the reluctance of the spoken language to use a regressive construction which places an unstressed pronoun at the end of the syntagm. A third reason mentioned by Sauvageot is the awkwardness of the inversion method in the 3rd person when there is an explicit subject (ex: Sa femme se porte-t-elle bien?).

"Est-ce que" presents none of these disadvantages. It can be used with all persons and it further presents the advantage of

1 Guiraud, *Le français populaire*, p. 47.

2 Sauvageot, *Français écrit, français parlé*, p. 106.
being very simple to use since it does not call for any change in the word order of the affirmative (or negative) sentence; it thereby reduces the chances of making mistakes:

Est-ce que tu viens?
Est-ce qu'il t'a écrit?
Est-ce que je peux m'en servir?
Est-ce que je n'ai pas laissé mon sac?

However, in spoken French, there is an even simpler and more commonly used way of asking a question than by "est-ce que." It consists of expressing the interrogation solely by the intonation:

Tu viens?
Vous êtes d'accord?
Il n'est pas venu?

Doppagne thinks that this question formation method is very deeply set in the French linguistic habit; he claims that one hardly ever says "viens-tu?" anymore, one says "est-ce que tu viens" mostly in order to insist, but the more current question pattern nowadays is simply: "Tu viens?"

This opinion is supported by the results of statistical analyses done by Jean Pohl. Pohl recorded over a period of time all the questions uttered by his parents, a retired engineer and his wife, both in their eighties. His results show that out of a total of 816 direct questions, 698 used only the intonation to express the interrogation, 114 used "est-ce que," and only 4 questions were formed by inversion.

Doppagne reports that the interrogative intention can also be stressed by means of an appended special formula such as "n'est-ce pas" or, at a more colloquial level, "hein":

- c'est joli, hein?
- or hein, que c'est bon?
- vous viendrez nous voir, n'est-ce pas?
- or n'est-ce pas que vous viendrez?

The question can also be suggested by a negative:

- Vous ne trouvez pas que ça sent mauvais?

or by a conditional:

- Vous tirez un peu la jambe, on dirait?

Negative and conditional (and of course, intonation) can be combined:

- On ne pourrait pas ouvrir un peu la fenêtre?¹

In addition to the intonation and the "est-ce que" formula, there is another method of asking a direct question, which is quite commonly used in popular French and occasionally in colloquial French. It consists of adding "ti" after the verb; Ex: "tu viens-ti?" "On y va ti?"² This question morpheme must have originated from the 3rd person question pattern:

- vient-il  \(\rightarrow\) il vient-il  \(\rightarrow\) i(l) vient-ti?

---

¹The preceding examples were borrowed from Doppagne's *Trois Aspects du français contemporain*, pp. 163-164.

Then its use was generalized to all the persons:

    vous venez-ti?
    i(ls) sont-ti partis?
    j'y vais-ti?

This construction still has strong popular connotations; however it must be noted that Pohl observed several instances of it in the speech of his parents who could certainly be considered as educated, middle or upper middle class people. The writer also witnessed what seemed to be a very frequent and generalized use of this formula in Canada; it could even be seen written in huge letters on an advertisement panel in a supermarket: "c'est-ti assez fort?" (Montreal, June 1971).

La particule interrogative 'ti' serait probablement déjà consacrée si le mouvement de la langue n'était retardé par l'enseignement et l'imprimerie. Le français montre une tendance à perdre l'inversion interrogative; il aurait pu la remplacer par 'ti' évolution naturelle de 'il,' 'ils' 't-il,' mis interrogativement après les verbes à la troisième personne masculine du singulier ou du pluriel.1

2. Partial questions, i.e., questions introduced by a question word such as "quand," "comment," "qui," etc.

The techniques identified in the direct questions patterns also apply to the partial questions:

(a) Use of the locution "est-ce que":

    Qui est-ce qui a dit ça?
    Où est-ce que vous allez?
    Quand est-ce que vous partez?
    Pourquoi est-ce que vous n'êtes pas venu?
    Quelle robe est-ce que tu vas mettre?

---

In spoken French, the interrogative adjective "quel" does not bear any oral mark of the number or the gender, unless it is followed by a mute h or a vowel. (ex: "quelle(s) robe(s) est-ce que tu emportes," but "quels habits . . .") To counter this lack, colloquial French often develops the question with "quel":

Laquelle de robe est-ce que tu emportes?
De robe, tu mets laquelle?
Comme robe, tu mets laquelle?
Quelle sorte de robe est-ce que tu vas mettre?

(b) Use of the interrogative intonation only:

Tu viens quand?
Il s'appelle comment?
Elle habite où?
Je vous dois combien?
Tu es avec qui?
C'est fait avec quoi?
Et moi, je fais quoi pendant ce temps-là?
Et votre guitare, elle est où?

Guiraud points out that this construction also presents the advantage of maintaining the sequential order subject, verb, complement, and that, in this way, the adverb naturally comes in the accentuated position, after the verb. He also adds that the "ti" particule fits into this pattern which thus forms a simple and consistent question paradigm: Tu viens ti? / Tu viens quand? / Tu viens comment? / Tu fais quoi?, etc. To this simple construction corresponds the emphatic series:

---

1 Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, pp. 109-110.
Quand c'est que tu viens? Quand c'est que tu viens? 
Où c'est que tu vas? Où c'est que tu vas? 
C'est toi qui a fait ça? C'est ti toi qui a fait ça?

The question pattern with "ti" may still be looked down upon by most "educated" people, but as Guiraud stated, it constitutes a very functional paradigm.

Ce système est certainement une solution heureuse à la crise de l'interrogation qui liée à l'inversion du pronom sujet, est peu conforme aux tendances de l'idiome.1

3. The elliptic interrogations and reinforcement by expletive elements. It is quite frequent in conversation, that after a statement made by a speaker, one will ask for a complement of information. This is most simply and frequently done by using a single question word. For instance, if one says "j'y vais," obvious rejoinder-questions may be "où?" or "quand?" or "comment?", depending on what one wants to find out. This simple question can be reinforced by the adjunction of expletive elements; the latter are devoid of specific semantic content but add an affective connotation to the question. René Lagane2 presents the following table of the elliptic interrogation and its reinforcers:

---

1 Guiraud, Le français populaire, p. 50.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J'y vais</th>
<th>où?</th>
<th>où ça?</th>
<th>où donc?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l'enfant pleure</td>
<td>pourquoi?</td>
<td>pourquoi ça?</td>
<td>pourquoi donc?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on l'attend</td>
<td>quand?</td>
<td>quand ça?</td>
<td>quand donc?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il s'en est aperçu</td>
<td>comment?</td>
<td>comment ça?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passez-moi des verres</td>
<td>qui?</td>
<td>qui ça?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il est arrivé</td>
<td>combien?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je l'ai fait</td>
<td>quoi?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il m'en donne un</td>
<td>lequel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The expletive elements can also serve to reinforce the "est-ce que" type of question or the traditional question by inversion, thereby giving it a more informal appearance and a greater affective impact:

---Où est-ce qu'il est? > Où est-ce qu'il est donc? > Où diable est-ce qu'il est donc?
---Où est-il? > Où est-il donc? Où diable est-il? > Où diable est-il donc?
---Que fais-tu? > Que fais-tu donc? > Que diable fais-tu? > Que diable fais-tu donc?

Each of the expletives has a special affective value. "Diable" has a strong affective value and it expresses the speaker's insistence and/or irritation. "Donc" has a weaker affective impact; it contributes mainly to give the question a more pressing tone or simply to give it more substance and modulate the melody.

4. Indirect questions. Standard French introduces indirect questions by means of "si," a relative pronoun, or a question word:

J'ai demandé s'il était venu.
J'ai demandé qui était venu.
J'ai demandé avec qui il était venu.
J'ai demandé pourquoi il était venu.
Sauvageot notes that it is not infrequent for the speaker to feel a need to express more strongly his incertitude. He accomplishes this by means of a construction parallel to that of the direct question:

Peux-tu me dire quelle heure est-il?

Sauvageot explains this redundancy as follows:

On se trouve en présence de deux interrogations successives, directes toutes les deux, mais le débit continu et la modulation n'ayant pas le profil élevé de l'interrogation directe, l'énonciation constitue bel et bien une interrogation du type indirecte.¹

Doppagne observes that the widespread use of the locution "est-ce que" has also intruded into the indirect question pattern; for instance, the indirect question "Dites moi ce qui vous ferait plaisir" can also be said "Dites moi qu'est-ce qui vous ferait plaisir." Some grammarians reject such a construction, others accept it in colloquial style only² and others still accept both forms equally:

"Dis-moi qui vient" or "Dis-moi qui est-ce qui vient."
"Dis-moi où tu vas" or "Dis-moi où est-ce que tu vas."³

5. Relative frequency of the various question patterns.

¹Sauvageot, Français écrit, français parlé, p. 112.
²Le Bidois, Syntaxe du français moderne, Tome I, p. 369.
³Grévisse, Le Bon Usage, paragr. 995, remarque I.
The following table is derived from the results found by Pohl and Doppagne.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inversion</th>
<th>Est-ce que or Equivalent</th>
<th>Intonation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pohl</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.49%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>816</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doppagne</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.46%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. Doppagne, *Trois aspects du français contemporain*, pp. 161-169. Doppagne reports a statistical analysis of the questions used in the first act of a popular play called "Le Signe de Kikota" by Roger-Ferdinand, which was playing in Paris in 1961.

3. The difference of proportions obtained here comes from the fact that Pohl's figure deals only with what he calls "total questions," i.e., questions that call for an adverb of assertion: oui, non, peut-être. Doppagne figures include the questions introduced by a question word "qui," "quand," etc. [partial questional] in addition to the "est-ce-que" questions.
The conclusions offered by Pohl\textsuperscript{1} summarize adequately the main aspects of the question for motion patterns in colloquial French.

In spoken French, the most economic means of asking a question is by the intonation only; this method also presents the speaker the possibility of expressing different shades or intensity of interrogation. Next to intonation, the most common way of asking a question is by using "est-ce que" or related expressions such as "hein que," "n'est-ce pas que."

The less educated the speaker, the more evident the cleavage will be between the spoken and the written question formation patterns.

Ceci tend à prouver qu'il y a vraiment deux mécanismes différents de pensée et que, l'intrusion ou le maintien dans la langue parlée, de formes écrites, relève d'un effort stylistique plus ou moins conscient.\textsuperscript{2}

Comprehensive as this exposé of the linguistic features of colloquial French was intended to be, it undoubtedly omitted certain features that other observers may have noted. However, its primary purpose was to outline the forces that govern the informal and colloquial use of French and to give ample illustrations of these trends rather than to be a complete repertory of all its observable features. Such an approach has hopefully enabled the reader to account for the new forms that he may encounter and to understand better the dynamics of colloquial French and of the on-going evolution of French in general.

\textsuperscript{1} Pohl, "Observations sur les formes d'interrogation," p. 513.

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

TEST CONSTRUCTION AND TESTING PROCEDURES

Introduction:

Previously reported interviews with American students who have lived in France, in addition to the investigation of the nature and role of colloquial French, have convinced the writer that the kind of French which is taught in school is quite different from the kind which is commonly spoken by French people in informal situations and that, as a consequence, American students are not adequately prepared to understand the latter. Therefore, it seemed important either to verify or to dismiss such beliefs by actually measuring and comparing student comprehension of standard formal French on the one hand and colloquial French on the other.

Function and Specific Objectives of the Instruments

The general purpose of the measuring instruments is to test the following hypotheses:

1. Because colloquial, informal French is very different from standard formal French and only the latter is emphasized in college training programs, students' performance on a test of listening comprehension of colloquial French will be significantly lower than on a test of standard formal French.
2. There is a discrepancy between the priorities of the students and the practices and policies found in foreign language programs as well as between the officially stated objectives of the profession and actual practice.

To fulfill that purpose, it was decided that the instrument should include three parts:

A. A test of listening comprehension of colloquial French of which the specific objectives are:
   1. To measure the level of comprehension reached by language majors who have identified themselves as future teachers.
   2. To perform a diagnostic function by indicating which aspects of colloquial French impinge the most upon comprehension.

Its content then should reflect the most commonly encountered features of colloquial French and its format should insure a reliable measure of students' understanding of colloquial French.

B. A test of listening comprehension of standard formal French, in order to provide grounds for comparison.

Its content and format should parallel the test of colloquial French, but use instead standard forms of the language.

C. A questionnaire, preceding both tests of which the specific objectives are:
   1. To find out which factors, if any, in the students' previous language experience, are related to their performance on the test.
   2. To assess the relative degree of importance granted to various language objectives by college language students and
to see how the area of language competence dealt with in this study (aural comprehension of colloquial French) rates among students' priorities.

3. To find out how effective in the students' view, the college language programs are in meeting these objectives.

Target Population and Sample:

The target population consists of those people who, as students, are "victims" of the current programs, and as teachers, the likely perpetuators of the problem, unless it is brought to their attention. The population is, therefore, the French language majors who have identified themselves as future teachers and are currently enrolled in a French methods class. The sample was selected on the basis of convenience rather than through randomization (the accessible population is too small to allow such a procedure). It consists of the French methods class students at The Ohio State University, and in the following universities: Columbia Teachers College; Florida State; University of Massachusetts; Purdue; University of Texas and Utah State University. The writer feels reasonably confident that the size and the wide geographical distribution of the universities selected to participate in the testing insures a representative sample of the target population.

Guidelines Followed for the Construction of the Test of Colloquial French and Preliminary Decisions

In order to fulfill the stated objectives, it was decided that the test of colloquial French should display the following characteristics:
A. Type of test: Proficiency test of listening comprehension.

B. Content: Test items will be built and selected to embody the typical features of colloquial French that have been identified by linguists and which have been described in the preceding chapter.

C. Construct: Since the test aims to represent a fair sample of the difficulties involved in understanding colloquial French, greater weight will be given to those features that researchers have identified as being the most frequent or significant ones. The test will be broken down into five subtests, each representing a broad source of difficulty.

Subtest A: Contains phonological problems only, such as the dropping of the mute "e" and the subsequent assimilation of a voiced consonant by the following unvoiced consonant Ex: [paskow] 

Subtest B: Focuses on morpho-syntactic difficulties. However, since these morpho-syntactic variations occur when the language is spoken in a carefree manner, they cannot be artificially separated from a relaxed pronunciation. Subtest B then combines morpho-syntactic and phonological features. Ex: [japaotjoz?] "I(1 n'y) a pas aut(re) chose?"

Subtest C. Focuses solely on the lexical and semantic aspects of colloquial French. Words and expressions that are not used in standard French or which have a different meaning in standard French represent a major source of difficulty.

Ex: On m'a fauché ma bagnole.

Ex: Il se la coule douce.
Subtest D: Although utterances that display only lexical or only phonological and morpho-syntactic aspects typical of colloquial French can be found frequently in normal speech, they do not occur in isolation from one another; instead they combine to produce typical colloquial utterances. Therefore, it seems appropriate that an important part of the test be made up of items combining the various aspects of colloquial French.

Ex: [Izav€kapaf€r]emaI€]
I(l)s avaient qu'à pas faire les malins.

Subtest E: Presents whole conversations which supply the contextual clues usually absent from isolated utterances and thus simulates more closely the act of listening to an on-going conversation between natives.

D. Format: Several formats were investigated. Given a spoken utterance, students' comprehension of the utterance could be verified in the following ways:

1. From a choice of 4 pictures selecting the one that best fits the utterance.

2. Translating it into English.

3. Transcribing what is heard into written French.

4. Selecting the best rejoinder from a choice of alternatives, which could be presented either in written or spoken form.

The first possibility was rejected for practical reasons: it would have required the assistance of a highly skilled and imaginative artist to depict graphically a situation compatible with utterances such as:
"Dans ce cas-là, il n'y a plus qu'à recommencer."

or

"Penses-tu! Ils ont dit cela pour te faire marcher."

or

"Ça vaut-il le coup d'y aller?"

The multiple choice format with the rejoinder presented in spoken form was rejected because it was felt that it would place too great a burden on the students' memory and on their listening attention capacity. The three remaining alternatives all present the drawback of involving the use of another skill: translating, writing, reading. In order to get at meaningful information such shortcomings cannot be entirely avoided. Furthermore, the test being destined to be used with graduating seniors, none of these skills should present any problem to those students, who, because of the nature of their training programs, have received intensive training in reading, translating, or taking dictation. The translation format which is very sensitive to the precise understanding of the utterance, presents the problem of establishing tight criteria by which to rate the answers and of ascertaining the intra- and interjudge reliability. It also precludes the use of machine scorable answer sheets. The format requiring transcription into written French, which presents the same problem as translation is somewhat sounder from the point of view of logical construct. Colloquial French is mostly spoken, rarely written except by writers who want to reproduce the flavor of conversations; the written code uses standard French instead. The fact of writing down a spoken message usually implies a change of style so that through the process of writing, a message emitted in colloquial French is automatically
transformed into standard French. Ex: \text{[fopaldir]} is written "il ne faut pas le dire". This observation is corroborated by René Lagane:

\begin{quote}
Le passage de la parole à l'écriture se traduit naturellement, chez les gens même moyennement cultivés, par un changement de registre qui ramène diverses variantes à certaines formes de base.\textsuperscript{1}
\end{quote}

In writing, then, a Frenchman automatically rectifies the "faulty" morphology and syntax of colloquial French, but when idiomatic colloquial expressions are concerned, the process is much more complex; frequently it cannot be entirely recoded into another register without losing some of the affective connotations (for instance, how does one say: "J'en ai marre" in standard French?). In any case, it involves such delicate recoding manipulations that the writer feels it would not be a fair or appropriate technique to check simple comprehension by non-natives.

The last alternative is the written multiple choice format. It presents the substantial advantage of being an objective and machine scorable test. From the test builder's point of view, it presents the considerable task of finding plausible rejoinders and attractive, yet not misleading distractors. The fact of having choices to select from also provides clues that facilitate recognition or even guessing; these clues and alternatives to choose from are not present in normal conversation. On the other hand, it can be argued that normal conversation does not take place in a vacuum and abounds in contextual clues which are usually absent from a test item. It was felt that one compensates for the other and, therefore that format was selected.

During the pilot testing phase two types of multiple choice items were experimented with; the first one consisted in providing four written

\textsuperscript{1}René Lagane: "Le français commun," p. 8.
representations of what had been heard, the second in providing four rejoinders to what had been heard. It was found that the first format did not necessarily insure comprehension; it involved only accurate matching of a sound sequence with a written sequence; it also turned out to be an almost impossible task to find four plausible and appealing ways of writing a short utterance. It was decided, then, that the whole test should be of the multiple choice, rejoinder format. Since the response device involved reading the alternative choices, it was stipulated that the words and constructions used should fall within the 1500 basic words of *Le Français Fondamental* or be obvious cognates, in order to insure that the difficulty would lie in understanding the item, not the choices.

**Description of the Process of Content and Item Selection**

**A. Sources and Constraints:**

The first step in building the test of colloquial French was to find and collect a sufficient number of utterances typical of spoken colloquial French. This was done in the following ways:

1. While reviewing studies describing the linguistic features of colloquial French, the author took note of the examples quoted and of the specific features that had been identified. This procedure furnished items that could be used almost verbatim, but more important still, it provided a wide spectrum of the different features that should be embedded in the items. It thus provided guidelines by which to select and retain items from various corpora, or for building items that would display
these features. It insured a thorough coverage of the field, especially as far as the phonological and syntactic description is concerned; however, it rarely provided indications of the frequency or typicality of these features so that items selected at that stage were sometimes rejected later on the basis of being "infrequent" or verging on "populaire." There was also a paucity of documents on the lexical features of colloquial French. In order to make sure the lexical content of the items would be valid, another constraint was adopted. Each colloquial word and expression appearing in the test items was checked in Le Petit Robert dictionary and retained only if it bore the notation "familier" or, exceptionally, "populaire."

2. During a short trip to France in the winter of 1970, the author took note of conversations, or bits of conversations, overheard in stores, buses, or in the streets.

3. A few modern novels and plays whose language aims at reproducing everyday speech were reviewed and samples were selected from them. The books were:

J. Anouilh: Le Voyageur sans bagages
J. P. Sartre: Les Jeux sont faits
J. Anouilh: L'Alouette
F. Céline: Le Voyage au bout de la nuit
G. Queneau: Zazie dans le Métro

(The first three books are common readers in college and even in high school.)

4. Finally, the author collected phrases that were volunteered by French colleagues or that were coined for the purpose of
embodying traits of pronunciation or syntax or expressions typical of colloquial French.

These procedures provided a sample of several hundred phrases that could be worked into items, i.e., single utterances, emitted by one speaker, having a reasonable amount of semantic cohesion, as could be heard in conversations, and to which a plausible reply could be found.

B. Preparing the Answer Sheet.

For each stem or item, four replies, retorts or rejoinders were written, with the stipulations that 1) they contain only words included in Le Français Fondamental or obvious cognates, 2) that they be reasonably short, and 3) that only one of the choices could be an appropriate retort to the statement or question expressed in the stem. The other three choices, though obviously wrong to whoever understood the stem, had to be appealing to the students who understood only partly. Each distractor, then, tried to focus on a possible misunderstanding of the stem, as illustrated by the following examples:

1. Understanding of isolated words rather than of the whole utterance.
   
   Ex: Stem: Passez-nous un coup de fil avant de partir.
   
   Distractor: Voilà, avez-vous une aiguille?

2. Understanding the standard meaning of words, but not their colloquial idiomatic meaning:
   
   Ex: Stem: Ils ont dit cela pour te faire marcher.
   
   Dis.: Alors, je prendrai une bonne paire de souliers.

3. Partial resemblance of the sound sequence produced by the colloquial phonological features, with sequences of sounds that exist in standard French:
Ex: Stem: Il me l'a dit avant de partir.
Distractor: Quelle maladie a-t-il?

4. Misconstruing the meaning of a colloquial idiom.
Ex: Stem: Ils se sont fait rentrer dedans par un camion.
Distractor: Quand on est jeune, c'est une bonne idée de voyager.

C. Pilot Testing.

When this task was completed and 14 test items had thus been produced, the whole test was recorded by three native French speakers: two men and one woman. They were instructed to speak with the "relâchement" and the rich affective intonation typical of colloquial French. The instrument was then pilot tested. The pilot testing consisted of two operations:

1. Giving the test to a small group of French natives to make sure the task was not too artificial or unreasonable. This enabled the test writer to verify that the right answer was obvious to whoever understood the stem; logically then, native speakers should understand all the test items, be able to select the right retort and get a perfect score on the test, which they did. This procedure also provided feedback from a critical audience: even though they had selected the right answer, they were encouraged to point out possible misleading distractors and to suggest ways of improving the stem or the choices.

2. Administering the test to a population fairly similar to the target population and in conditions comparable to those of
the final testing. For that purpose, fifteen graduate students, teaching assistants, and some language majors living at the French house at The Ohio State University were tested. The item analysis provided data on the average difficulty of the whole test as well as detailed information on the difficulty and discrimination index of each item and on the way each distractor performed. This information was used to select or discard items when it was found that they were either too hard or too easy, or had a negative discrimination index and to re-write the choices when some choices seemed totally unattractive.

D. Evaluations of Test Items by Native Consultants.

To further ascertain the validity of the test items, each test item included in the pilot test was submitted to the judgment of sixteen native speakers of French. All the consultants were college educated and most of them were teachers or professors; they ranged in age from seventeen to forty-four and included six women and nine men coming from different parts of France (Paris, Normandie, Bordeaux, Perpignan, Pau, Grenoble), or from different French speaking countries (Belgium, Algeria, Canada, and the Congo).

The consultants were asked to rate the stem of each item on a 1 to 5 scale, according to how typical they thought it was, i.e., how likely they would be to hear it in informal conversations in French. (One represents least typical and 5 most typical.) The instructions specified that they should not judge necessarily according to the way they would speak, but according to what they would likely hear in the streets, in stores, in cafes, etc. This precaution was taken in
order to minimize the purist reaction often noted by linguists and also observed by this writer. It is interesting to note that despite the instructions, consultants would still frequently react personally and say, "Oh no, I would not say that," even though they could sometimes be caught using the same phrase or "sloppy" pronunciation half an hour later in the heat of a discussion.

The instructions may not have been specific enough; comments from the raters showed that they used different criteria to decide what was typical. For some it meant the typicality of the situation in which the utterance occurred. For instance, they would rate a conversation between students "3" or "4" because it applied only to a specific and limited segment of the population. Others defined it in terms of social classes. For them, "français familier" was limited to the relaxed and casual speech of the middle and upper middle classes (but not the working classes).

Space was provided on the rating sheet so that consultants could write their comments, criticisms, or suggestions to make each item more typical. These were taken into account when the test was reviewed for the production of the final version. This tended to improve the validity of the items even though the numerical ratings remained the same.

Most raters were presented with a spoken version of the test items, but for reasons of practicality, others who could easily read phonetics were provided with a script written both in ordinary spelling and in phonetics. There is reason to believe that when the colloquial linguistic feature(s) imbedded in the item were
brought to the attention of the consultants, their rating became more severe. This became obvious during the incident that will be related here.

Three raters were listening to the recorded test; they would hear the item, write down their evaluation and then compare notes. This was done in the presence of the writer. After having heard an item, all three wrote a "5" on their answer sheet, without hesitation. Then the writer made the mistake of pointing out what the colloquial feature was: the "ne" of the negative had been dropped and the "plus" had been pronounced [py]. The sentence had seemed so familiar to them that they had not noticed it, even after hearing it twice, but upon being made aware of it, the purist reaction set in, with cries of "No, this is not correct" and they proceeded to change their ratings from "5" to "3" and even "2." After that, they became very attentive to such "careless" pronunciation and "faulty" grammar and rated down the items accordingly.

This incident illustrates the purist reaction typical of so many Frenchmen who have been duly indoctrinated during their schooling to eradicate such forms from their conscious speech and to regard them as "incorrect," even though they, themselves, use them frequently when they do not "watch" themselves. It also leads the writer to suspect that the judges who had a phonetic transcript of the test items might have been more severe, since the transcript clearly pointed out every colloquial feature. Seeing it written also has a different impact from simply hearing it, because in writing, one automatically expects a more formal style, and one has more time to think about it.
For each of the 148 items, a mean rating was computed. It must be noted that for subtest E, which consists of two conversations, with seven and eight multiple choice questions each, the conversations were each rated globally since the question did not focus on the understanding of a particular expression, but rather of the conversation as a whole. For the computation of the mean for the whole test, these ratings were multiplied by the number of test items pertaining to each conversation. In addition to mean ratings for each item and for the whole test, means were also computed for each subtest to see which aspects of colloquial French were most easily accepted. The results of these computations are presented on pages 201-207.

Of the original 148 items, 80 were retained for the final version of the test. This number was chosen in order to limit the time necessary to take the test to approximately forty minutes, while retaining enough items to insure a good reliability. The final selection was thus made according to the following criteria:

1. Typicality. The items retained generally had a mean rating of four or above on the aforementioned 1 to 5 scale with only a few exceptions. In controversial cases, greater weight was given to the opinion of trained linguists and phoneticians who were familiar with the nature of colloquial French.

2. Variety. Items with high ratings were sometimes left out while others with lower ratings were retained in order to maintain as wide a collection as possible of the different features identified by researchers.
3. Testability. Items with high ratings sometimes had to be rejected when the answer choices had proven unsatisfactory on the pilot test and it was not possible to find better ones. The item analysis of the pilot test. Items that were either too hard or too easy tended to be rejected even though a few were retained when it was felt that they were extremely typical. The highest difficulty index was 80; a few items with a 0 difficulty index were kept. Great attention was also paid to the discrimination indexes; items with negative indexes were usually discarded or the answer choices were re-written. For each test item a card was kept which recorded its performance on the pilot test and each subsequent testing and on the evaluations of the consultants, as well as changes made in the wording of the stem or of the answers (see Appendix C). When the selection task was completed a new recording script was prepared and the test was recorded again with three native speakers, two of them being the same as for the pilot test.

Description of the Resulting Final Test

I. Description of Test Content

A. Phonological Inventory

1. Elision of the mute "e" and related phenomena

   a. Instances of simple elision of the mute "e" are too numerous to list each separately.

   b. Assimilation of a voiced consonant by an unvoiced one due to the elision of the mute "e":
[spãs] (je pense)
[ʃfɛ] (je fais)
[ʃœldleʃœlrepẽt] (je te le dis et je te le répète)
[ʃtepʁɔmẽ] (je te promets)
[tyvœkastœdiz] (tu veux que je te dise)
[ʃepã] (je ne sais pas)
[ʃsɥl] (je suis)
[ʃœvwaŋnir] (je te vois venir)
[ʃparl] (je parie)
[œfœʃtœ] (un faux-jeton)
[ʃtadl] (je te dis)
[ʃtœpɛjoœpo] (je te paie un pot)
[ʃtœsyʁ] (je t'assure)

c. Appearance of double consonant clusters due to the elision of the mute "e":

[avãsswar] (avant ce soir)
[râtreddã] (rentrer dedans)
[rjœn̪ namₘɛt] (rien à me mettre)

d. Reduction of the number of syllables within a breath group due to 1) the elision of the mute e, 2) to other sound elisions, and 3) to the elision of the "ne" part of the negative.
This reduction of the number of syllables per rhythmic group is sometimes accompanied by sound reduction within syllables, for example: /py/ instead of /ply/. However, it must be noted that the reduction in the number of syllables usually leads to a greater number of consonants within syllables.

Example: /ldir/

2. Elision of the [l] sound of the third person personal pronoun, singular and plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colloquial</th>
<th>Standard Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[stel/d1/]</td>
<td>[3e/te/le/d1/]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[fo/pa/idir/]</td>
<td>[il/na/fo/pa/le/dir/]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[jã/na/py/]</td>
<td>[il/ni/jã/na/ply/]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colloquial</th>
<th>Standard Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[izirœ]</td>
<td>(ils iraient)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[sizave]</td>
<td>(s'ils avaient)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ivamœr]</td>
<td>(il va venir)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[keskiwœdy]</td>
<td>(qu'est ce qu'il veut de plus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[imlœdl]</td>
<td>(il me l'a dit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[lœf]</td>
<td>(il faut)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[sivœpœ]</td>
<td>(s'il vous plait)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[jakœ]</td>
<td>(il n'y a qu'à ...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[skidœ]</td>
<td>(ce qu'il dit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[isdesid]</td>
<td>(ils se décident)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[izirœ]</td>
<td>(ils iront)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[izavepa]</td>
<td>(ils n'avaient pas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[jãnapœ]</td>
<td>(il n'y en a plus)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Elision of the [l] sound in pronouns "celui" and "lui" when the latter is unstressed:

[ʒyːdɪ] (je lui ai dit)
[ʒyːdiɛʁe] (je lui dirai)
4. Elision of the [l] sound in "plus" when used with a negative meaning:

[japyka] (il n'y a plus qu'à)
[ʒepyɾjɛ] (je n'ai plus rien)
[sasarɛtpy] (ça ne s'arrête plus)
[ʒãnepy] (je n'en ai plus)

5. Elision of [r] sound after a [t] or a[d] preceding an [l]:

[ptɛt] (peut-être)
[oteat] (au théâtre)
[vɔt] (votre)
[vãd] (vendre)
[mɛt] (mettre)
[prɔd] (prendre)
[kat] (quatre)
[ɛt] (être)
[œnot] (un autre)
[syldɔ] (sur le dos)
[syli] (sur le lit)
[sylaplɔs] (sur la place)

6. Elision of the [y] sound of the personal pronoun subject "tu" when it is followed by a vowel:

[tepa] (tu n'es pas)
An exception to this trend is [tylkrwa] (tu y crois) which could be pronounced [t̥lkrwa] but it was felt to be too "populaire" by several of the consultants. The [y] is maintained when it is followed by a consonant:

[tyvwa] (tu vois)
[tyvøpa] (tu ne veux pas)
[tysɛ] (tu sais)

(Although [tyvø] and [tysɛ] could also be pronounced and [t̥vø] and [tse] in fast and very familiar speech.)

7. Other sound elisions were the elision of [y] in "puis," thus giving [pl] and the [wa] in "voilà," giving [vila].

B. Supra-segmental Features

1. Rate of speech

It was impossible to measure accurately the rate of speech of each speaker without special equipment. Speakers felt they automatically spoke rather fast when delivering a
colloquial utterance. However, rough measurement shows that the average number of syllables per second is almost the same in standard French and in colloquial French. This may be explained by the fact that although breath groups are uttered more rapidly, pauses between groups or on connecting words are longer.

2. Hesitation pauses, filling words or sounds, choppy rhythm, seem to be characteristic of colloquial French.

3. Role of intonation:
   a. to convey a question
      Ex. Tu veux pas bouger?
   b. to convey irony
      Ex. 1. Vous voilà bien avancé maintenant!
          2. Ah oui, parlons en!
   c. to convey disbelief
      Ex. 1. penses tu!
          2. Oh dis, ça prend pas.
   d. to convey uncertainty
      Ex. 1. Ça va être juste?
          2. Toi, tu crois à ce qu'il dit, le maire?
   e. to convey a strong injunction
      Ex. Surtout, les perd pas, hein!
   f. to convey boredom
      Ex. Ce qu'on peut se faire suer dans ce cours, alors!
   g. to convey fatigue
      Ex. J'en peux plus, je suis claqué.
h. to convey persuasion

Ex. C'est elle qui lui court après, je te dis.

i. to convey pleasurable excitement

Ex. Tu as vu le nouveau prof de gym, il est vachement sympa!

j. to convey sympathy

Ex. T'as vraiment pas eu de veine ma pauvre vieille.

k. to convey disdain

Ex. C'est pas qu'il est bête, mais il est pas débrouillard, quoi.

l. to convey annoyance or mounting anger

Ex. Si je (ne) me tetenais pas, je (ne) sais pas ce que je te ferais.

The important role played by the intonation to convey affective meaning or to reinforce the affective meaning of the utterance cannot be underestimated; however, it can only be fully appreciated by listening to the tape recording of the test. After taking the test, students testified that on several occasions the affective intonation overtones were so strong that they were able to guess right, even though they had not understood "the words" of the utterance. The writer tends to consider this type of "understanding" quite legitimate and no threat to the validity of the test, since it does parallel what happens in real life conversation where sometimes one is able to catch the meaning of what is said solely by the affective impact of the intonation.
C. Morpho-Syntactical Inventory

1. Elision of the "ne" part of the negative. Instances found in the test are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Elision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C'est pas</td>
<td>je sais pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il y a plus</td>
<td>les perds pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je te promets de pas le vendre (il) y en a eu que quatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j'ai plus rien</td>
<td>on vous voit plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faut pas le dire</td>
<td>tu as pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(il) y a qu'à</td>
<td>ils avaient qu'à pas faire les malins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils avaient pas tort</td>
<td>c'est pas pour dire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>si je me retenais pas</td>
<td>il en fichait pas lourd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t'en fais pas</td>
<td>t'as pas eu de veine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j'aurais pas cent balles?</td>
<td>je vais pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ça prend pas</td>
<td>ça s'arrête plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c'est pas de la blague</td>
<td>t'as pas la frousse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ça a pas mal marché</td>
<td>j'y pense pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il y a qu'une section</td>
<td>je bouge pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j'avais pas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The elision of the "ne" can lead to even more important morpho-syntactic changes such as: "plains toi pas," instead of "ne te plains pas."

2. Repetition of the pronoun subject, either before or after the verb. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Elision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Et nous, on fait quoi?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toi, tu y crois à ce qu'il dit, le maire?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils avaient pas tort, les copains.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Et ta bagnole, elle est où?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lui, alors, il se pose un peu là
celui là, il s'en fait pas
tu as pigé ..............toi
je te leur en donnerais des motos, moi
Tu sais à quoi ça sert, ce truc là, toi
Ce qu'il peut être rasoir, ce type là, alors
C'est qui, qui t'a refilé ce tuyau.

quand je les vois là dans leur bagnole, moi, il y a des fois, j' ai envie de leur rentrer dedans
les gens, ils descendent
un bus, ça tourne pas ......
moi, j'ai le temps

3. Repetition of either direct or indirect complement.
tu y crois, à ce qu'il dit, le maire
ils iront le prendre, ce bateau
toi, je te vois venir
Tu sais à quoi ça sert ce truc là, toi
je te leur en donnerais, des motos, moi.
je les vois là, dans leur bagnole
il doit t'en falloir, de la patience
t'aurais dû le voir, qui gueulait
moi, ça va me coûter 160 balles.

(NB: 1, 2, and 3 can be combined into the same sentence.
Ex. Je te leur en donnerais des motos, moi)

4. "On" used instead of "nous"
Et nous alors, on fait quoi
On vous voit plus.
On va te donner un coup de main

5. The question pattern.
   a. The order of words follows the declarative pattern, but the question is asked by the intonation:
      tu y crois?
      t'es pas un peu dingue?
      tu sais à quoi ça sert ce truc là, toi?
      t'as encore besoin de fric, je parie?
      t'as vu le nouveau prof de gym?
      t'as pigé quelquechose.....toi?
      t'aurais pas cent balles?
      comment ça se fait?
      t'as pas la frousse?
      tu veux pas bouger?
   b. Declarative pattern plus interrogative intonation, plus "hein" with positive questions and "non" with negative questions or questions expecting a confirmation:
      T'es content, hein?
      Tu voyais pas que j'allais tourner, non?
      T' étais pourtant vachement câlé en philo, non?
   c. Colloquial interrogative patterns using question words such as où, pourquoi, comment, etc.:
      on fait quoi?
      c'est où, qu'ils iront le prendre...?
c'est qui, qui t'a refilé ce tuyau?
Ta bagnoles, elle est où?
Comment ça se fait?
à quoi que c'est dû
pourquoi que tu es venu te mettre là.
d. Inversion of the third person singular pronoun pronounced "ti" instead of "til," which becomes a question morpheme and can then be used also with other than the third person, especially in popular French:
Ex. Ça vaut- "ti" le coup d'y aller?
(other examples included in the pilot test, but not in the final test, were:
C'est "ti" pas malheureux de voir ça!
Vous y avez "ti" été?
C'est "ti" bientôt fini?
Faut "ti" qu'on aille le chercher?)
Example: Vous êtes donc faché qu'on vous voit plus?
(meaning: est-ce parce que vous êtes faché qu'on ne vous voit plus?)
5. Some constructions although not specifically colloquial, tend to belong to the spoken language and to have colloquial overtones:
a. (il n') y a qu'à pas...
t(u)' as qu' à....
ils avaient qu'â pas...

b. use of emphatic presentation devices (including repetition of pronoun subject and complement):

toi, je te vois venir

t'as pigé.....toi

cé qu'il peut être rasoir

cé qu'on peut se faire suer

c'est pas pour dire, mais

comme faux jeton, lui, alors, il se pose un peu là

celui là, alors,
c'est elle qui...

ce n'est pas qu'il est bête, mais....

c. Attention catchers:

dis, t'aurais pas cent balles

dis donc, tu sais à quoi ça sert

eh bien, celui-là alors.....

Non mais, t'as pas un peu dingue
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or Expression</th>
<th>Notation in Le Petit Robert</th>
<th>Standard Formal French Equivalent or near Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arroser (une occasion)</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>fêter une occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vous êtes bien avancé!</td>
<td>ironique</td>
<td>A quoi cela vous a-t-il servi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le bac</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>le baccalauréat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>une bagnole</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>une voiture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cent balles</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>cent francs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ce n'est pas de la blague</td>
<td>fig. et fam.</td>
<td>c'est vrai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>une boîte</td>
<td>pop. et péjor.</td>
<td>un établissement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>des boniments</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>des discours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un bouquin</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>un livre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un bon bout de temps</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>assez longtemps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bûcher</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>travailler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>être calé</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>être très instruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>casser les pieds à quelqu'un</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>ennuyer quelqu'un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se casser la figure</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>avoir un accident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>être claqué</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>être fatigué</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoir l'air cloche</td>
<td>pop.</td>
<td>avoir l'air mais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>être collé à un examen</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>échouer à un examen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un coup de fil</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>un coup de téléphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>donner un coup de main</td>
<td>fig.</td>
<td>aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courir après quelqu'un</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td>poursuivre quelqu'un de les assiduités</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>être débrouillard</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un demi</td>
<td>fam. (presented without any specific notation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dingue</td>
<td>fam.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se faire à quelque chose</td>
<td>* s'habituer à qqch.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c'est bien fait pour eux</td>
<td>ils l'ont bien mérité</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne pas s'en faire</td>
<td>ne pas se faire de souci</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se faire vieux</td>
<td>vieillir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un faux-jeton</td>
<td>un hypocrite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne pas en ficher lourd</td>
<td>ne pas travailler beaucoup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s'en ficher</td>
<td>s'en moquer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoir la flème</td>
<td>ne pas avoir envie de travailler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le fric</td>
<td>l'argent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un frigo</td>
<td>le réfrigérateur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoir la frousse</td>
<td>avoir peur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gueuler</td>
<td>crier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la gym</td>
<td>la gymnastique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>à la longue</td>
<td>avec le temps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faire le malin</td>
<td>agir pour se faire remarquer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faire marcher quelqu'un marrant</td>
<td>taquiner, plaisanter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en avoir marre</td>
<td>amusant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y laisser sa peau</td>
<td>être fatigué de qqch.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>payer un pot à quelqu'un</td>
<td>être tué</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auffrir à boire à quelqu'un</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
penses-tu exclam. fam. mais non, voyons
le pépé pop. ou enfantin le grand-père
la philo fam. la philosophie
piger fam. comprendre
se poser là * être
ça ne prend pas fig. je ne vous crois pas
manque de pot fam. manque de chance
qu'eat-ce qui te prend? fam. qu'est-ce qui vous arrive?
s'y prendre mal fig. et fam. ne pas employer la bonne
m'as toujours ça de méthode
pris fig. et fam. nous avons au moins
le prof fam. acquis cela
il est rasoir fam. le professeur
refiler quelquechose fam. il est ennuyeux
à quelqu'un pop.
donner, fournir
rentrer dedans fam. entrer en collision
se faire rouler fam. avec qq.
secher à un examen fam. se faire voler
se faire suer fam. ne pas savoir faire
sympa fam. s'émouvoir
tres fam. sympatique
la télé abr. fam.
la télévision fam. un objet
un truc fam. un renseignement
un tuyau fam. très
vachement fam.
valor la peine fam.
In addition to the lexical items contained in the test, some semantic aspects of colloquial French can be noted, for instance:

- use of the negative of the contrary to express a positive statement. (This is a common rhetorical device, however, it seems to be more frequent in colloquial French than in other styles.)

"ils avaient pas tort" instead of "ils avaient raison"

"ça a pas mal marché" instead of "ça a bien marché"

-the frequent use of irony. Ex.:

"ça c'est malin ma foi!" (said because, in fact, it was not clever at all)

"vous voilà bien avancé!" (the contrary is true)

"Je te leur en donnerais des motos moi," (meaning I would certainly do nothing of the kind)

II. Validity of Test Content

The validity of the test can be ascertained by examination of the test content as described above and by the results of the evaluation of each test item by sixteen native consultants. A 1 to 5 scale was used for the ratings, 1 equals least typical; 5, most typical. The following tables will show: (1) the mean rating for each item (2) the distribution of consultant votes on each item, allowing the reader to see how each reacted to the various items (3) the mean rating for each subtest and for the whole test, and (4) the ratings obtained by discarded items. The test items to which these evaluations refer appear in Appendix A.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Region of Origin</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>P. Astier</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Professor of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>J. Carduner</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Bretagne</td>
<td>Professor of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>P. Léon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Phonetician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A. Spacagna</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Associate professor of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>J. Wilburn</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Lecturer of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>G. Ganansia</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Assistant professor of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>M. F. Ganansia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Pyrénées</td>
<td>Medical doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>M. Mpjanga</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>Graduate student in linguistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>D. Nabonne</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provence</td>
<td>Student in business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>E. Barraud</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grenoble</td>
<td>Teaching assistant of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>P. Dubé</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canada (French born)</td>
<td>Teaching assistant of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>D. Slaughenhougt</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>B. Regnier</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Belgique</td>
<td>Graduate student in guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>C. Edmondson</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Bordeaux</td>
<td>High school teacher of French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>D. Frings</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Belgique</td>
<td>High school student in Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>B. Fuset</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Massif Central</td>
<td>French university student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EVALUATIONS OF TEST ITEMS BY NATIVE SPEAKERS

### Subtest A: Phonological Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item no.</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Pilot</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP</td>
<td>4.88</td>
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<td>FJ</td>
<td>KL</td>
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<td>FJ</td>
<td>KL</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>ABFJ</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>EFG</td>
<td>DJP</td>
<td>ACEHIKLMNO</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>BCFK</td>
<td>AGJO</td>
<td>DEHLMNOP</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Subtest A: Mean evaluation of items retained in final version**

| * | 4   | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP | 5.00 |
|   | 5   | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP | 4.81 |
| 13 | KM  | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP | 4.88 |
| 15 | J   | ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP | 4.69 |
| 16 | ABMO | FGHJP  | CDEJKLN | 4.19 |
| 17 | CM  | AHKNO  | BDEGIJLP | 4.44 |

**Subtest A: Mean evaluation of discarded items.**

4.67

* Empty boxes in column 1 indicate that these test items appeared in the pilot version but they were not retained in the final version.*
### Subtest B: Morpho-Syntactic and Phonological Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item no.</th>
<th>Final Pilot</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>5.00</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>FJO A B C D E G H I K L M N P</td>
<td>4.81</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>F G K M A B C D E J L N O P</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>H K L M O A B C D E F G I J K L M N P</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>D M A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<td>A F B G J L M C D E H I K L M N O</td>
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<td>B F G J M A B C D E H I K L M N O</td>
<td>4.63</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>A B D H L C E F G I J K M N O</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>D F A B G J C E H I K L M N O</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>F R M A B C D E G I J K L M N O</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>A D B C D E F G H I J K L M N O</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>C F K A J O B C D E F G H I J K L M N O</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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<tr>
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**Subtest B: Mean evaluation of items retained in final version**

|          | 19          | B D F J L A C E G H I K M N O | 4.69 |
| 20       | J           | A B C D E F G H I K L M N O | 4.94 |
| 22       | H F         | C G J K M A D E H I L N O | 4.44 |
| 24       | A           | B C F E H K M P D G I J L N O | 4.13 |
Subtest B (cont')

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Subtest B: Mean evaluation of discarded items 4.16
### Subtest C: Lexical Aspects

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Subtest C: Mean evaluation of items retained in final version: 4.96

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Subtest C: Mean evaluation of discarded items: 4.78
Subtest D: Phonological, Morpho-Syntactic and Lexical Aspects Combined

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* The expression, although common in France, does not seem to be used in Belgium.
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Subtest D: Mean evaluation of items retained in final version 4.95

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Subtest D: Mean evaluation of discarded items. 4.60
Subtest E: All Aspects Combined Plus Situational Context

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Subtest E: Mean evaluation of items retained in the final version. 4.79

Overall mean evaluation for items retained in the final version of the test. 4.83

*D—thought the situation was typical of students who represent only a limited segment of the population.

O—thought students would normally speak with even more slang.

**A—thought that the language was too "tame" for a bus driver; he would normally speak with more popular slang.
III. Statistical Description and Reliability Estimates

The item analyses performed on the test each time it was administered yielded the statistical information presented in the following table.

### SUMMARY STATISTICS ON THE TEST OF COLLOQUIAL FRENCH

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<td>Kuder Richardson 21</td>
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<td>0.773</td>
<td>0.872</td>
<td>0.915</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.81 - 1.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.61 - .80</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.41 - .60</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
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<td>.21 - .40</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.633</td>
<td>.605</td>
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<td><strong>D. Item discrimination distribution</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Range</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
<td>% of items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.81 - 1.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.61 - .80</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>.41 - .60</td>
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<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.00 - .20</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean item discrimination</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>.277</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>.437</td>
<td>.385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Control Test of Standard French

The purpose of this test is to provide objective ground for comparison of the students' understanding of colloquial informal French, as opposed to their understanding of standard formal French. In order to minimize all extraneous variables, the test was kept as closely parallel as possible to the test of colloquial French: same length, same distribution of items, (even though the categories or subtests established for test one no longer had intrinsic meaning) same semantic content. It must be noted, however, that the correspondence could not be perfect; if informal French and standard French could express exactly the same reality, there would not be much use in having both. They express not only differences in social status, but also and especially differences in the condition of the communication, and the particularity of colloquial French is to abound in affective connotatives conveyed by the syntax as well as by the tone of voice. (Ex. Si t' les avais vus, les gars, du 120 à l'heure qui faisaient!) These affective elements are very hard to translate into standard formal French which by nature is more self-conscious and restrained.

Close parallellism between the two tests also allows for item per item and subtest per subtest comparison as well as whole test comparison. The author deliberately tried not to make the test easier or harder, simply to express as closely as possible the same idea in standard formal French. If the
language sometimes appears simpler, it may be because of
greater familiarity with these forms of the language. The
differences in lexical content between the two tests can
be found in the list of equivalences or near equivalences
presented on pages 195-198.

The test of standard formal French was recorded by the
same speakers, each saying the same items in both tests.
The speakers were instructed to speak with the careful dic­
tion expected in standard formal French. The results were
sometimes rather funny to a native ear, especially in the
case of the bus driver conversation: a bus driver who speaks
like a theater actor has a distinct comic effect. The inter­
esting fact, however, is that although native French listeners
burst out laughing upon hearing it, American listeners, even
when quite proficient in the language, usually failed to
notice the incompatibility of the language style with the
situation. This points out two problems: (1) the fact that
American students are only presented with the formal style and
take it to be proper for all situations, and (2) the need to
include phono-stylistic appreciation in language courses.

A statistical description of the test of Standard Formal
French is presented in the following table.
### SUMMARY STATISTICS ON THE CONTROL TEST OF STANDARD FORMAL FRENCH (TEST II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OSU I (n=22)</th>
<th>OSU II (n=20)</th>
<th>OSU III (n=21)</th>
<th>OTHER UNIV. (n=65)</th>
<th>GLOBAL (n=128)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Test distribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of items in test</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean test score</td>
<td>64.36</td>
<td>60.90</td>
<td>62.76</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>63.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
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<td>67</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>12.70</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>11.47</td>
<td>11.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>B. Reliability estimates</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuder-Richardson 20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.887</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>0.907</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C. Item difficulty distribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>.00 - .20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean item difficulty</td>
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<td>.239</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.211</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D. Item discrimination distribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.61 - .80</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>.41 - .60</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>.00 - .20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below .00</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean item discrimination</td>
<td>.285</td>
<td>.360</td>
<td>.296</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>.339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain information on each subject's background and language experience in order to see which factors, if any, are related to his performance on either test. It is also specially designed to find out which objectives are important for teachers and future teachers and to what degree their priorities correspond to their perception of the effectiveness and priorities evidenced in their college language training; in other words, to ascertain the amount of agreement or disagreement between what students think is important and what they think colleges do in fact emphasize.

This survey of opinion was felt to be very important within the scope of the study because (1) it would indicate how students felt about the point under investigation in this study, namely the understanding of colloquial French, and (2) it would give further support or rejection of the author's hypothesis that college language programs demonstrate negligence of or even contempt for the teaching of informal French. More generally, it was felt that it is not enough to guess what is important for students; the profession needs measurable data on that subject before it can realign its practices with students' needs and desires.

The questionnaire consists of two parts: Part I gives biographical information such as college(s) attended, years of study in the United States and in French speaking countries. The second part consists of a list of possible objectives to be rated on a one to five scale according to the importance placed on the objective by each student.
For each objective listed, the subjects were also asked to rate the effectiveness of their college language training in preparing them to meet that objective. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix D.

Test Administration

The instruments, including the test of colloquial French, Test 1, the control test of standard formal French (Test 2) and the questionnaire, were personally administered by the writer to the three groups from The Ohio State University. (Two groups were French methods class students and one group was composed of teachers attending a summer workshop held at Ohio State.) French methods class instructors from the other six participating universities were sent specific instructions so that the test administration procedures would be the same in all cases.

Prior to testing time, the subjects were told that they would be taking a test of spoken French, but it was not specified that it would be colloquial French. The test was administered during regular class time so as to avoid the problem of selective attendance. Testing was done in two stages, both conducted in a language laboratory. During the first session, the subjects were first instructed to answer the questionnaire; the writer was on hand in case there was any question about the wording of the questions. The questionnaire was administered first so as to avoid the subjects being influenced by their reaction to the test. This proved to be a worthwhile precaution, because after taking the test and finding out how little they knew about colloquial French, several wanted to change their evaluations of the effectiveness of their college training regarding
that objective. This leads the writer to wonder whether there might have been significant differences in the questionnaire ratings if they had been repeated after the testing was finished.

Each student was provided with a test copy on which he could read the choices for each item, a machine scorable answer sheet, a pencil, and a properly equipped booth. Before starting the test, the preliminary instructions were played twice to give students the opportunity to adjust the volume to their own liking and to report any possible malfunction of the equipment. The tape was then rewound and the test began. Each item was repeated twice followed by a sound blank of twenty seconds to allow enough time for reading the choices and recording the answer. When the test was completed, answer sheets and test copies were collected and the subjects were instructed to come back a week later at the same time and place for a control test of standard French. Some explanations about the purpose of the tests were also given because the students' curiosity was aroused and also, their self-confidence was badly shaken.

The second testing session took place at least a week later so that the memory factor would be minimized. This session was devoted to the test of standard French, and proceeded in similar fashion. For each test and each group tested, item analyses were performed by The Ohio State University's Office of Evaluation. The information from the questionnaires, plus the two sets of test scores, were coded onto machine scorable sheets and correlations were computed. The results are presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Procedures for Statistical Analysis

I. Sample

From the original sample of French methods class students drawn from OSU and six other universities around the country, only those who took both Test 1 and Test 2 were retained. This was done so that the comparison would be more rigorous and so that paired "t" tests could be used. The remaining sample of 128 subjects was subdivided into four component groups:

OSU 1, n = 22 (test administered spring quarter, 1971)
OSU 2, n = 20 (practicing teachers participating in a summer workshop, summer, 1971)
OSU 3, n = 21 (test administered fall quarter, 1971)
Other Universities, n = 65 (test administered fall quarter, 1971).

Analyses of results were performed for each group separately and for all groups combined.

II. Comparison of mean scores obtained by subjects on Test 1 (colloquial French) and Test 2 (Standard Formal French)

A. Hypotheses:

1. Test 2 mean score will be significantly higher than Test 1 mean score.
2. Each subtest of Test 2 will have a mean score significantly higher than its Test 1 counterpart.

3. The differences are expected to be highly significant (beyond the .001 level, meaning that the probabilities of these differences occurring by chance are less than one in a thousand.)

B. Statistical significance of the findings.

To appraise the significance of the difference between Test 1 and Test 2 mean scores, as well as between their subtests, paired "t" tests will be computed. The level of significance for the obtained "t" value will be read from standard "t" tables.

III. Exploration of possible relationships between test scores, students' backgrounds, and ratings of objectives

A. Procedure: All the variables will be entered in a correlation matrix and intercorrelated. This will be done in order to 1) confirm or reject the writer's hypotheses regarding the relationship between pairs of variables; 2) discover any possible relationship which may not have been anticipated. The problem of missing data, i.e. questions or ratings that have occasionally been left blank, will be dealt with by means of a special computer program (BMD3D) which readjusts the sample size for each pair of variables.

B. Hypotheses: A positive correlation is expected for the following pairs of variables:
Test 1 scores X Test 2 scores
Test 1 scores X amount of time spent in France
Test 2 scores X years of college French
Test 2 scores X years of high school French.

A negative correlation is expected between Test 1 scores and the ratings of the effectiveness of college language programs in preparing students to meet Objective 4 (ability to understand colloquial French). The writer anticipates that those who are familiar enough with colloquial French to score relatively high on Test 1 will also realize that colloquial French is practically absent from the college language curriculum. Null hypotheses are posited for all other correlations, especially those between the ratings of the importance of the objectives and the corresponding ratings of the effectiveness of the college language programs in preparing students to meet these same objectives.

C. Statistical significance of the findings. The significance of the correlations will be read from standard r tables. For each pair of variables, the degrees of freedom will be n-2, n being the number of subjects who responded to the question rather than the total number of subjects in the group.

IV. Assessment of Students' attitudes towards objectives and towards their college training: establishment of the relative importance granted by students to the various objectives presented in the questionnaire and comparison of A (students' mean ratings of the importance of the objectives) and B (students' mean ratings of the
effectiveness of their college language training in preparing them to meet these objectives).

A. Procedures:

1. The mean ratings of the importance of each of the 13 objectives will be calculated, as well as the corresponding standard deviations. The scale used in the questionnaire was a 1 to 5 scale, 5 meaning highest value and 1 the lowest value. However, the scanning process employed to read the coded questionnaires used a 0 to 4 scale, so that the means reported in the tables are based on a 0 to 4 scale.

2. These mean ratings will be ranked in order of decreasing importance.

3. The same procedures will be applied to the mean ratings of the effectiveness of college language programs regarding each objective.

4. Mean ratings of objectives according to A (importance granted) and B (perceptions of the effectiveness of college language training) will be compared. Comparison will be made of ranking according to A and B, (students' priorities versus colleges' priorities). Differences between A and B will be calculated and the level of significance of these differences will be reported.

B. Hypotheses:

It is expected that the mean ratings of the objectives according to A (importance granted) will be significantly
higher than the ratings of the same objectives according to B (effectiveness of training). The differences are expected to be highly significant in all cases except for Objective 1 (to be able to read French literary masterpieces) and Objective 5 (to be able to speak French in a careful formal manner), for which the null hypothesis is stated.

It is also expected that 1) the ranking of objectives according to students' priorities will differ considerably from ranking according to college priorities as they are perceived by students. 2) The top ranking objectives for students will deal with the ability to understand the foreign language and the foreign culture in everyday situations, whereas the top ranking objectives for colleges will deal with literary appreciation and familiarity with the more formal aspects of language use.

C. Statistical significance of the findings. The significance of the difference between mean ratings of A and B will be assessed by means of the non-parametric Wilcoxon matched-pairs, signed-ranks test of significance. Corroboration of these findings will also be sought from the two sample "t" tests. Given the degrees of freedom for the two sample "t" test \( \text{df} = n_1 + n_2 - 2 \), level of significance will be read from standard "t" tables.

Comparison of Test 1 and Test 2 Scores

The distribution of scores obtained by each group tested on Test 1
(colloquial French) and Test 2 (Standard Formal French) is presented in Table 1 on the following page.

From this table it is apparent that (1) The performance on Test 1 is consistently extremely low. Out of a possible total score of 80, the highest obtained mean score is only 33.11 (other universities); the median for all groups combined reveals that half the subjects scored below 30. (2) For each group tested, there is a marked difference between Test 1 and Test 2 scores, the latter being much higher. The highest mean score for Test 2 is 64.36 and the median for all groups combined indicates that half the subjects scored above 67, as compared with a median of 30 for Test 1. (3) The mean performance of each group tested is comparable and shows the same variation between Test 1 and Test 2: Test 1 lowest and highest group means are 29.00 and 33.11 whereas Test 2 lowest and highest group means are 60.90 and 64.36. (4) The group which performed at the lowest level on Test 1 also tends to score lowest on Test 2. (5) For each group and each test, there is a wide distribution of scores (maximum range for Test 1 = 59; maximum range for Test 2 = 56) thereby revealing that although mean group performances were comparable, individual listening comprehension performances varied greatly.

Table 2 focuses on the comparison of the mean scores obtained on Test 1 and Test 2 by each group. The "t" values computed from the paired "t" test and the level of significance are also reported (p = probability that the difference could have occurred by chance alone).

As predicted, Test 2 mean scores are much higher than Test 1 scores, almost twice as high, and the difference is highly significant for each group as well as for all groups combined. The level of significance for
Table 1: Comparison of Scores Distribution for Test 1 and Test 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>OSU 1 (n=22)</th>
<th>OSU 2 (n=20)</th>
<th>OSU 3 (n=21)</th>
<th>Other Univ. (n=55)</th>
<th>All groups combined (n=128)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of items</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
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<td>29.38</td>
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<td>31</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
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</tr>
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<td>69</td>
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</table>

Test 1: Colloquial French

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>OSU 2 (n=20)</th>
<th>OSU 3 (n=21)</th>
<th>Other Univ. (n=55)</th>
<th>All groups combined (n=128)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Mean test score</td>
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<td>60.90</td>
<td>62.76</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Standard deviation</td>
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<td>11.28</td>
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<td>Range</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>56</td>
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Table 2: Comparison of Mean Scores Obtained by the Different Groups on Test 1 and Test 2

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<th>Test 1</th>
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<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>t value</th>
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<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 2 (n=20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>60.90</td>
<td>31.90</td>
<td>17.3553</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>12.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 3 (n=21)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>29.38</td>
<td>62.76</td>
<td>33.38</td>
<td>17.8492</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Univ. (n=65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>33.11</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>30.38</td>
<td>26.1105</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>14.22</td>
<td>11.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Groups Combined (n=128)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>31.59</td>
<td>62.22</td>
<td>30.63</td>
<td>39.9159</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>11.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the obtained "t" values goes far beyond the .001 level; this means that
the probability of these differences occurring by chance alone is almost
nil. Keeping in mind that the format and the information content of the
two tests were identical—only the language style differed—it reveals
that the listening comprehension performance of French methods class
students varies greatly according to the type of language usage they are
confronted with. Whereas all tend to show a good understanding of formal
French, their understanding of colloquial French is extremely low. Since
the subjects were methods class students, i.e., language majors close to
the terminal point of their training who have identified themselves as
future teachers and since a part of the sample was composed of practic­
ing teachers, to a large extent the findings seem applicable to college
language graduates in general and high school language teachers in
general. From these findings it can also be inferred that college lan­
guage training focuses largely, if not solely, on the more formal aspects
of French language usage.

A separate computation of Test 1 mean scores for those who stayed
in a French speaking country 3 months or more yielded a mean score of
44.58; those who stayed less or not at all had a mean score of 26.44.
These results show that a) those who have not had the benefit of residence
abroad score much lower, thereby confirming the absence of exposure to
colloquial French in regular college training, and b) residence abroad
improves considerably students' comprehension of everyday colloquial
French. Mean scores on the test of standard formal French are 69.19 for
those who stayed more than 3 months and 60.14 for those who stayed less
or not at all. Although still favoring those who stayed more than 3
months, the difference is much smaller than for the test of colloquial French. This indicates that although residence in France is beneficial to the development of comprehension of standard French, there exist other ways within traditional programs that are almost as effective. A special value of study in the foreign country may very well be to provide students with the exposure to the informal use of the foreign language, which is otherwise lacking or difficult to achieve in the regular college language program. Because of this relationship between the amount of time spent in France and comprehension of colloquial French, it may also be inferred that colloquial French is frequently used in everyday interaction, since it is the fact of having participated in daily French life which seems to have enabled these students to score better on the test of colloquial French.

The information provided by further subdivision of the results according to each participating institution (Table 3) confirms the trends already mentioned. In addition, it reveals appreciable differences in the performance of the various universities. These differences are observable in both Test 1 and Test 2 and tend to vary together. This means that listening comprehension, as measured by these two tests, is noticeably superior in some universities. This may be attributable to the superiority of their language training, including provision or requirement for study abroad, or to the selection criteria, or possibly to the duration of language training the students have had prior to taking a course in methodology of language teaching.
Table 3: Mean Scores Obtained on Test 1 and Test 2 by Each Participating Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Test 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 1 (N=22)</td>
<td>31.55</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>64.36</td>
<td>9.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 2 (N=20)</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>60.90</td>
<td>12.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 3 (N=21)</td>
<td>29.38</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>62.76</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida State Univ. (N=9)</td>
<td>29.22</td>
<td>11.66</td>
<td>63.67</td>
<td>8.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univ. of Mass. (N=9)</td>
<td>37.67</td>
<td>12.63</td>
<td>68.89</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah State Univ. (N=5)</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>14.44</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univ. of Texas (N=18)</td>
<td>23.94</td>
<td>9.57</td>
<td>54.33</td>
<td>11.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue Univ. (N=10)</td>
<td>41.10</td>
<td>14.27</td>
<td>68.80</td>
<td>8.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Univ. (N=14)</td>
<td>39.86</td>
<td>13.63</td>
<td>70.93</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups combined</td>
<td>31.59</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>63.13</td>
<td>11.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of the Relative Difficulty of the Subtests Within Each Test and From Test 1 to Test 2

As was explained in Chapter 3, each subtest of Test 1 focused on one type of difficulty. Also, the length of the subtests varied and reflected somewhat the predicted importance of each linguistic aspect of colloquial French as a possible comprehension problem. The order of presentation of the subtests also aimed to move from easier to more difficult, with the exception of Subtest E which was placed last because it combined all aspects as they can be observed in conversations. Thus the 80 items of the test were distributed as follows:

Subtest A: phonological problems only; 8 items
Subtest B: phonological and syntactic problems combined; 17 items.
Subtest C: lexical problems only; 10 items.
Subtest D: phonological, syntactic and lexical problems combined; 31 items.
Subtest E: all problems combined but presented in context; 14 items.

Table 4 presents the mean scores and standard deviation obtained on each of the 5 subtests. It also gives the equivalent percentage mean score in order to facilitate comparison of performances on the different subtests.

This table reveals that 1) performance on each subtest is comparable from group to group; the only exception being the performance of OSU 2 on Subtest C, for which the mean score is noticeably lower than that of the other groups. Since Subtest C deals primarily with colloquial vocabulary, it may be that practicing teachers have less contact with college age native speakers who are more prone to use a lot of
Table 4: Mean Scores and Equivalent Percentage Mean Scores Obtained on Each Subtest of Test 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtests</th>
<th>OSU 1 (n=22)</th>
<th>OSU 2 (n=20)</th>
<th>OSU 3 (n=21)</th>
<th>Other Univ. (n=65)</th>
<th>Global (n=128)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtest A</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>55.12</td>
<td>47.50</td>
<td>49.37</td>
<td>52.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest B</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>43.53</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>45.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest C</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>35.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest D</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>10.14</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>9.67</td>
<td>10.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>32.71</td>
<td>28.06</td>
<td>31.19</td>
<td>34.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest E</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>7.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>48.07</td>
<td>51.07</td>
<td>39.14</td>
<td>52.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole test</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>31.55</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>29.38</td>
<td>33.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>14.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent. $\bar{x}$</td>
<td>39.44</td>
<td>36.25</td>
<td>36.72</td>
<td>41.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
colloquial terms in their speech than do college students. They may also
tend to read fewer modern plays and novels in which colloquial terms and
slang are frequently used; 2) comparison of the percentage mean scores
reveals considerable differences in the difficulty of the subtests. For
instance, the analysis for all groups combined shows that although the
whole test percentage mean is 39.59, the subtests means range from
32.52 to 39.52, which represents a difficulty differential of 19.10%.
These differences are best appreciated in Table 5 which presents the sub-
tests' percentage means in order of increasing difficulty for each group
and gives an estimate of the percentage difficulty increase from subtest
to subtest.

From Table 5 it is evident that there is considerable agreement
among the groups as to which subtests were harder and easier, respect­
ively. Subtest A (phonological aspects) is generally the easiest and
Subtest E (conversations) is second to easiest. Subtest D (all aspects
combined) is consistently perceived as being the hardest and Subtest C
(lexical aspects only) is next to hardest. This confirms the writer's
prediction about the aspects or combination of aspects of colloquial
French which contribute most to lack of comprehension. It also shows
that even when all types of difficulty are combined, as in Subtests D
and E, the difficulty is greatly alleviated if the language is presented
in the context of meaningful situations where clues are abundant. It
must be added that the questions asked on conversations are of necessity
more general and less based on understanding of specific elements of
speech and therefore more open to contextual guessing. This difference
in difficulty is best illustrated by a comparison of the mean percentage
Table 5: Comparison of the Relative Difficulty of Each Subtest of Test 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>OSU 1</th>
<th>OSU 2</th>
<th>OSU 3</th>
<th>Other Univ.</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>55.12</td>
<td>51.07</td>
<td>49.37</td>
<td>52.50</td>
<td>51.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>48.07</td>
<td>47.50</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>49.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diff. increase</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>43.53</td>
<td>39.14</td>
<td>43.88</td>
<td>42.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diff. increase</td>
<td>7.72</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>8.12</td>
<td>6.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>28.06</td>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>35.50</td>
<td>32.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diff. increase</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>32.71</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>31.19</td>
<td>34.26</td>
<td>32.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diff. increase</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total difficulty increase</td>
<td>22.41</td>
<td>31.57</td>
<td>18.18</td>
<td>18.24</td>
<td>19.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
scores on Subtests D and E for all groups combined which were 49.07 and 32.52 respectively.

Variations among groups, although minor, are also interesting. For instance, OSU 2 and OSU 3 whose whole test performances are comparable (OSU 2 = 36.25, OSU 3 = 36.72), performed very differently on subtest E: Subtest E ranked first for OSU 2, with a percentage mean of 51.07, and third for OSU 3, with a percentage mean of 39.14. The fact that OSU 2 was composed of practicing teachers may have had some bearing upon their better performance on Subtest E. However, it is difficult at this point to conjecture about the reasons for this difference.

In summary then, it can be said that for the population studied, the easiest problem to overcome is the way in which the pronunciation of colloquial French differs from that of standard formal French. Colloquial syntax is also relatively easy to understand since the combination of phonological and syntactic aspects is still easier to comprehend than lexical aspects alone (Subtest C). The key role played by lexical elements as an impediment to comprehension of colloquial French is further evidenced by 1) the fact that Subtest C comes very close to being as difficult as Subtest D, which, in addition to lexical elements, also includes phonological and syntactic elements, and 2) the fact that the most marked difficulty increase occurs between Subtests B and C (10.10% for all groups combined). It then seems that the single most difficult aspect of colloquial French is the way in which its lexicon differs from that of standard French.

These conclusions, however, cannot be taken to mean that knowledge of colloquial vocabulary is necessarily the most important requirement for
understanding colloquial French when it is used in live situations of communication. In a dialogue or a discussion between native Frenchmen, the frequency of appearance of colloquial vocabulary items may well be less than the frequency of appearance of colloquial traits of pronunciation. (None of the studies consulted dealt with this matter.) Moreover, in a conversation, general understanding of what is said, is obviously less strictly dependent upon the understanding of a particular word than it is in a test item, the latter being specifically designed to see whether or not the subjects understand a given word. On the other hand, it is pertinent to recall here that when the native speakers were asked to rate each item according to how typical it was of everyday informal French, the items embodying lexical elements were consistently rated highest (the mean rating for this section of the test is 4.96 on a 1 to 5 scale. Linguists also indicate that the most striking characteristic of colloquial French is its vocabulary which is very different from that of standard French. Thus colloquial vocabulary, although being the least known aspect of colloquial French, is the one most widely accepted by native French speakers.

Table 6 presents the mean scores and standard deviations obtained on each subtest of Test 2. It also gives the equivalent percentage mean scores in order to facilitate comparison. Table 7 presents the Test 2 subtests in order of increasing difficulty for each group tested.

---

Table 6: Raw Mean Scores and Equivalent Percentage Mean Scores Obtained on Each Subtest of Test 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>raw score $\bar{X}$</th>
<th>OSU 1</th>
<th>OSU 2</th>
<th>OSU 3</th>
<th>Other Univ.</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtest A</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>5.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>77.25</td>
<td>70.63</td>
<td>68.50</td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>74.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest B</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>13.19</td>
<td>13.38</td>
<td>13.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>82.65</td>
<td>70.88</td>
<td>77.58</td>
<td>78.70</td>
<td>78.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest C</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>7.43</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>7.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>77.70</td>
<td>71.50</td>
<td>74.30</td>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>74.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest D</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>25.45</td>
<td>24.90</td>
<td>24.81</td>
<td>25.40</td>
<td>25.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>82.09</td>
<td>80.32</td>
<td>80.03</td>
<td>81.93</td>
<td>81.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtest E</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>11.23</td>
<td>11.27</td>
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<tr>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>73.93</td>
<td>79.64</td>
<td>84.71</td>
<td>80.21</td>
<td>80.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole test</td>
<td>raw score $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>64.36</td>
<td>60.90</td>
<td>63.76</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>63.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>12.70</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>11.47</td>
<td>11.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percent. $\bar{X}$</td>
<td>80.45</td>
<td>76.13</td>
<td>78.45</td>
<td>79.36</td>
<td>78.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Comparison of the Relative Difficulty of Each Subtest Within Test 2 (Standard French)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>X Percent.</th>
<th>OSU 1</th>
<th>OSU 2</th>
<th>OSU 3</th>
<th>Other Univ.</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Percent.</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSD 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>82.65</td>
<td>78.21</td>
<td>84.71</td>
<td>81.93</td>
<td>81.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Percent.</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>82.09</td>
<td>78.03</td>
<td>80.03</td>
<td>80.21</td>
<td>80.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Percent.</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>77.70</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>77.58</td>
<td>78.70</td>
<td>78.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Percent.</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>77.25</td>
<td>68.88</td>
<td>74.30</td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>74.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Percent.</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>73.93</td>
<td>67.87</td>
<td>68.50</td>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>74.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total difficulty Increase</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.72</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>16.21</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From these tables, it appears that the difficulty was fairly evenly distributed over the different subtests, the difficulty differential from the easiest to the hardest subtest being only 7.30%. Although Subtests A and C are generally perceived as being hardest and E and B as being easiest, there are several deviations from this trend. However, subdivision of Test C into subtests has little intrinsic value since it does not reflect different types of problems involved in the comprehension of standard formal French; the value of maintaining these subdivisions lies only in the fact that it sheds some light on the performance of each subtest of Test 1. For instance, if the order of difficulty in Test 2 matched that of Test 1, it could be that part of the difficulty resided in the format of the items along with their linguistic content. Thus, comparing Test 1 and Test 2 subtest mean scores will show whether such relationship exists. It will also show whether the significant difference between Test 1 and Test 2, observed on the whole test mean scores, is equally observable at the level of the subtests.

Such a comparison for all groups combined is presented in Table 8. For each test the subtests are ranked in order of increasing difficulty so that the table will show whether the same pattern of difficulty distribution appears in both tests.

This table shows that the range of difficulty of the subtests is much smaller in Test 2 than in Test 1. It is interesting to note that the most difficult subtest of Test 1, Subtest D is the easiest one of Test 2. This shows that the difficulty did lie in the linguistic content of the items rather than in their format since the latter was strictly identical in both tests. And, vice-versa, Subtest A, the easiest subtest of Test 1 is the most difficult one of Test 2. A plausible explanation
Table 8: Comparison of the Relative Difficulty of Test 1 and Test 2 Subtests, For All Groups Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th>Test 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtest</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>51.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>49.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>42.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>32.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>32.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Difficulty Increase: 19.10  7.30
for this fact would be that there is always an adaptation process at the
beginning of a test which causes the subjects to miss some of the first
items until they have adjusted to the format of the test. This, of course,
would operate equally in both tests, but it was outweighed in Test 1 by
the greater content difficulty of the other subtests.

It is also of interest to note that in both tests, Subtest E
appears to be relatively easy. This indicates that the presentation
format (extracts of on-going conversation) facilitates understanding,
both of the language usage with which the subjects are best acquainted
(standard formal French) and of colloquial French to which they have had
little or no exposure. It is easier to derive meaning from language in
context than from isolated utterances. It may well be that although less
sensitive to the measurement of the understanding of specific lexical or
syntactic elements of a foreign language, this format offers a better
evaluation of the comprehension component of communicative competence as
it has been defined by Jakobovits. (See Chapter I, page 17)

Table 9 is a comparison of Test 1 and Test 2 subtest mean scores.
For each subtest it gives the raw mean score and its equivalent percentage
mean score. It also indicates the difference between Test 1 and Test 2
mean scores, and the computed "t" value for the differences and their
level of significance, as estimated by the paired "t" test.

Table 10 shows that the significant differences observed between
the subjects' performances on Test 1 and Test 2 are also present at the
level of each subtest and have a high level of significance in every
instance. The size of the differences is best displayed by Table 10,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>OSU 1</th>
<th>OSU 2</th>
<th>OSU 3</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>All groups combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raw Mean</td>
<td>% Mean</td>
<td>Raw Mean</td>
<td>% Mean</td>
<td>Raw Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>55.12</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>47.50</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>77.25</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>70.63</td>
<td>5.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>22.13</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>11.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>43.53</td>
<td>6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td>82.65</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>70.88</td>
<td>13.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>42.30</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>27.35</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>13.68</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td>20.17</td>
<td>14.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>77.70</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>71.50</td>
<td>7.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>43.60</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>14.75</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>15.37</td>
<td>23.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>10.14</td>
<td>32.71</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>28.66</td>
<td>9.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>25.45</td>
<td>82.09</td>
<td>24.90</td>
<td>80.32</td>
<td>24.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>15.31</td>
<td>49.38</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>52.26</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>19.45</td>
<td>17.55</td>
<td>27.91</td>
<td>14.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>48.07</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>51.07</td>
<td>5.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>73.93</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>79.64</td>
<td>11.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>25.86</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>6.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>16.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>31.55</td>
<td>39.44</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>36.25</td>
<td>29.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>64.36</td>
<td>80.45</td>
<td>60.90</td>
<td>76.15</td>
<td>62.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>41.01</td>
<td>31.90</td>
<td>39.83</td>
<td>33.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t value</td>
<td>17.85</td>
<td>17.55</td>
<td>17.55</td>
<td>26.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Comparison of the Mean Scores Obtained by Each Group on Each Subtest of Test 1 and Test 2
Table 10: Percentage Mean Differences Between Test 1 and Test 2 Subtests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtests</th>
<th>OSU 1 Mean diff.</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>OSU 2 Mean diff.</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>OSU 3 Mean diff.</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Other Univ. Mean diff.</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>All groups combined Mean diff.</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>22.13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>42.30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27.35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37.23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34.82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35.30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>43.60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41.70</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>49.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48.84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47.67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48.90</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>25.86</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45.57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31.43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Correlation Between Test 1 and Test 2 Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OSU 1</th>
<th>OSU 2</th>
<th>OSU 3</th>
<th>Other Univ.</th>
<th>All groups combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( r )</td>
<td>0.716</td>
<td>0.780</td>
<td>0.704</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>0.727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( df )</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
which presents only the percentage mean differences, and indicates their rank order for each group (1 = most difficult, 5 = least difficult).

There is remarkable agreement among all groups. For every group the greatest difference between Test 1 and Test 2 scores occurred in Subtest D and that difference can be as high as 52.26 for OSU 2. For every group also, the smallest difference occurs in Subtest A. These figures corroborate the earlier diagnosis about the built-in difficulties of Test 1: the passage from standard formal to colloquial French presents less of a problem when only phonological aspects are presented; the greatest barrier to comprehension occurs when all linguistic aspects of colloquial French are combined, and the single most difficult aspect of colloquial French is its lexicon. They also show that for the population studied, all aspects of colloquial French constitute a significant barrier to understanding; or, to put it differently, they show that all aspects of colloquial French are neglected in the training of foreign language teachers.

Exploration of Relationships Between Test Scores and Students' Backgrounds and Attitudes

The prediction that the best performers on Test 1 would also tend to score high on Test 2 is confirmed by the correlations between Test 1 and Test 2 scores presented in Table 11, shown on the previous page.

Correlations between test scores and relevant student backgrounds are presented in Table 12. Since the questionnaire data had to be coded for computer analysis and correlation, the non-quantitative information was omitted. After the coding system had been established and already
Table 12: Correlations Between Test Scores and Students' Backgrounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Test 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 1 (n = 22, df = 20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of H.S. French</td>
<td>0.559</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. of College French</td>
<td>0.465</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of courses from natives</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal contacts with natives</td>
<td>0.363</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in France</td>
<td>0.670</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.470</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 2 (n = 20, df = 18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of H.S. French</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. of College French</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of courses from natives</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.476</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal contacts with natives</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in France</td>
<td>0.652</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 3 (n = 21, df = 19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of H.S. French</td>
<td>0.545</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. of College French</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of courses from natives</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.427</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal contacts with natives</td>
<td>-0.115</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.423</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in France</td>
<td>-0.053</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.578</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Univ. (n = 65, df = 63)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of H.S. French</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. of College French</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of courses from natives</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.456</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal contacts with natives</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.370</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in France</td>
<td>0.743</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups combined (n = 128, df = 126)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of H.S. French</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. of College French</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of courses from natives</td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal contacts with natives</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in France</td>
<td>0.608</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>0.254</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
applied to nearly half the data, it was discovered that a few students who had never spent any time in France had, nonetheless, had considerable exposure to everyday informal French in their own families. It was unfortunately too late to make allowances for this variable. The fact that these students did quite well on Test 1 despite their not having gone to a French speaking country, then, tended to lower the correlation between Test 1 scores and time spent in France. However, these correlations still remain substantial.

Correlations for all groups combined show that among the various ways to gain exposure to a foreign language, the one factor most highly related to good comprehension of colloquial French is the amount of time spent in France. The correlation between Test 1 scores and time spent in France (measured in weeks) is significant at the .001 level. It is interesting to note that although time spent in France is also positively related to performance on Test 2, the correlation is much lower \( r = 0.25^4 \) and significant only at the .01 level. The fact that time spent in France is more highly related to understanding of colloquial French than to the understanding of standard formal French tends to support the writer's claim that 1) in France colloquial French is much more widely used than standard formal French, especially in informal conversation, and 2) college language programs pay little attention, if any, to colloquial language use. The latter is further evidenced by the expected absence of significant correlation between years of college French and Test 1 scores.

For all groups combined, the next significant correlation is that between Test 1 scores and the number of courses taken from native speakers.
However, it may be erroneous to interpret this correlation as meaning that taking courses from native speakers contributes highly to understanding colloquial French. A closer look at the data shows that there is a significant correlation between the amount of time spent abroad and the number of courses taken from natives ($r = 0.600, p < .001$). It means that these two variables coexisted and tended to vary together; those who resided in France were also usually enrolled in some form of study abroad program where most of the courses were taught by native speakers.

How much of their understanding of colloquial French is attributable to taking courses from native speakers rather than just living in France is open to question. It could be properly ascertained only if the two factors could be studied separately. The fact that the correlation with time spent in France is much higher, tends to support the thesis that time spent in France was the primary factor and courses from natives only a subordinate or secondary factor. However, in the absence of residence in France, it is expected that courses taken from teachers who speak the language natively may and should make a difference. This raises the question as to whether college language programs use native speakers to the best advantage.

It is interesting to note that, as expected, there is no correlation between years of college French and understanding colloquial French. Much more striking however, is the absence of correlation between the number of years of college French and Test 2 scores, contrary to what was expected. This absence of correlation between the amount of time spent in studying French in college and both Test 1 and Test 2 scores may cast doubt upon the effectiveness of college language programs, at least as
far as developing listening comprehension is concerned. However, it must be pointed out that the small variance of the number of years of college French may have reduced the correlation (for all groups combined, the mean number of years of college French is 3.30 and the standard deviation is 0.92). On the other hand, high schools, so often blamed by the colleges for the poor quality of their graduates, seem to have a greater impact upon the development of foreign language listening skills (correlations: $r = 0.271$ with Test 1 and $r = 0.312$ with Test 2, both significant at the .01 level).

The pattern of correlation for each separate group roughly parallels that for all groups combined, except in the case of OSU 3 for which there are several negative correlations. For this group, the correlation between time spent in France and either Test 1 or Test 2 is negative. A closer look at the questionnaire responses showed that out of the 21 subjects only 3 had spent any time in French speaking countries and two of these were very poor students who performed equally low on both tests. Of all groups, only OSU 1 showed a significant positive correlation between Test 1 scores and the number of years of college French. Not a single group showed any significant correlation between Test 2 scores and the number of years of college French. This is contrary to the writer's expectation and quite surprising if one considers that a) formal French is the language style normally emphasized in colleges, and b) student ratings of the effectiveness of their college training show the teaching of formal French as one of the objectives most effectively met by college language programs.
Table 13 presents the correlations between Test 1 and Test 2 scores and students' ratings of the importance of the objectives submitted to their evaluation in the questionnaire. The complete list of objectives as they appeared in the questionnaire is presented in Appendix D.

This table shows that despite occasional significant correlations, there is no highly or consistently significant correlation between test scores and what students think is important. In particular, it means that students' attitudes towards Objectives 4, 6, and 7, which deal with the understanding and speaking of informal French, are not related to their performance in these areas. The absence of correlation along with the high ratings students gave to these objectives (see pp. 252-254) show that both good and poorer students reacted favorably towards them.

For two groups, however, (OSU 3, n = 21; Other universities, n = 65) there is a negative correlation between Test scores and ratings of the importance of Objective 1. This means that in these groups, the students who think most favorably of Objective 1 (to be able to read and appreciate literature) tend to be the weakest performers on tests of listening comprehension. It would be interesting to ascertain whether these higher ratings of the importance of literature correspond to higher performance on literature tests.

There also exists a small but significant positive correlation between Test 1 scores and ratings of the importance of Objective 10 (awareness and appreciation of the "deep" culture). The common denominator between these two factors—comprehension of colloquial French and attitude towards cultural awareness—may well be direct exposure to the
Table 13: Correlations Between Ratings of Importance of Objectives and Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obj.</th>
<th>OSU 1 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 1 Test 2</th>
<th>OSU 2 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 2 Test 2</th>
<th>OSU 3 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 3 Test 2</th>
<th>Other Univ. Test 1</th>
<th>Other Univ. Test 2</th>
<th>All Groups Comb. Test 1</th>
<th>All Groups Comb. Test 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.342</td>
<td>0.332</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>-0.367</td>
<td>-0.367</td>
<td>-0.227</td>
<td>-0.294*</td>
<td>-0.078</td>
<td>-0.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>-0.145</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>-0.483*</td>
<td>-0.427</td>
<td>-0.000</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>-0.066</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>-0.389</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>-0.087</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>-0.356</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
<td>-0.044</td>
<td>-0.046</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>-0.208</td>
<td>-0.046</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.393</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>-0.269</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>-0.374</td>
<td>-0.058</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>-0.097</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>-0.392</td>
<td>-0.066</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
<td>-0.123</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
<td>-0.096</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>-0.196</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
<td>0.258*</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.196*</td>
<td>0.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.377</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>-0.104</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>-0.134</td>
<td>-0.360</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>-0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-0.132</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>-0.287</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < 0.05
foreign culture. The amount of time spent in France is likely to have increased students' comprehension of colloquial French as well as their awareness of the importance of understanding cultural patterns.

Table 14 displays the correlation between test scores and students' ratings of the effectiveness of their college language training in preparing them to meet the objectives submitted to their evaluation.

Table 14 shows that although an occasional significant correlation may occur here and there, on the whole there is no significant pattern of correlation between student performance on either test and what they think of their training. The only exception is in the case of the two cultural appreciation objectives (9 and 10) where there is a low but significant correlation between their performance on either Test 1 or Test 2 and their appraisal of their training. The writer's hypothesis that those who knew enough about colloquial French would realize how poor their training was in this area has to be rejected. However, the questionnaire did not clearly specify what was meant by college training. Most of those who spent time in France did so as part of a junior year abroad or other foreign study program: some or all of them may well have considered this as part of their "college language training" and have rated it accordingly. The low mean rating of the effectiveness of college language programs in meeting Objective 4, then, cannot be attributed to any particular type of student.

Table 15 explores the relationship between amount of time spent in France and student ratings of A (the importance of the objectives) and B (the effectiveness of their college training). It also presents
Table 14: Correlations Between Ratings of College Effectiveness and Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obj.</th>
<th>OSU 1 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 1 Test 2</th>
<th>OSU 2 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 2 Test 2</th>
<th>OSU 3 Test 1</th>
<th>OSU 3 Test 2</th>
<th>Other Univ. Test 1</th>
<th>Other Univ. Test 2</th>
<th>All Groups Comb. Test 1</th>
<th>All Groups Comb. Test 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.375</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>0.258</td>
<td>0.257</td>
<td>-0.068</td>
<td>-0.039</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-0.143</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>-0.276</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>-0.178</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>-0.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
<td>-0.398</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>-0.191</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>-0.101</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.170*</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-0.284</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>-0.236</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>-0.218</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-0.344</td>
<td>-0.475*</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>-0.354</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>-0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td>0.550***</td>
<td>0.447*</td>
<td>0.335***</td>
<td>0.391***</td>
<td>0.260***</td>
<td>0.251**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>-0.120</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>0.248</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.577***</td>
<td>0.459*</td>
<td>0.288*</td>
<td>0.215</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>-0.044</td>
<td>-0.022</td>
<td>-0.061</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>-0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.430**</td>
<td>-0.391</td>
<td>-0.169</td>
<td>-0.337</td>
<td>0.401</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-0.251</td>
<td>-0.249</td>
<td>-0.150</td>
<td>-0.294</td>
<td>0.578***</td>
<td>0.443*</td>
<td>-0.129</td>
<td>-0.349</td>
<td>-0.049</td>
<td>-0.214*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < 0.05
** = p < 0.02
*** = p < 0.01
Table 15a: Correlations Between Ratings Of Importance of Objectives and 1) Time Spent in France, and 2) Number of Courses Taken From Natives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Time Spent in France</th>
<th>No. of Courses Taken From Natives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.057</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>-0.145</td>
<td>0.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.208*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.248**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>0.163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15b: Correlations Between Ratings of College Effectiveness in Meeting Objectives and 1) Time Spent in France, and 2) Number of Courses Taken From Natives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Time Spent in France</th>
<th>No. of Courses Taken From Natives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.237**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.221*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.224*</td>
<td>0.222*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.205*</td>
<td>0.269***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.246**</td>
<td>0.363****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.238**</td>
<td>0.379****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.286***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < 0.05  ** = p < 0.02  *** = p < 0.01  **** = p < 0.001
the relationship between the number of courses taken from natives and A and B. This analysis was performed for all groups combined.

The absence of significant correlations between the amount of time spent in France and the ratings of importance of the objectives indicates that residence in the foreign country is not necessarily related to the importance students grant to any of the objectives submitted to their evaluation. Attitudes towards the objectives are also largely independent of the number of courses taken from natives. However, it seems that the latter tends to be associated with more positive attitudes towards Objective 3 (to understand French as it is spoken by educated speakers in formal situations), Objective 10 (to develop appreciation of the daily patterns of living), and Objective 11 (to become aware of the way in which the language reflects the culture). On the other hand, time spent in France and especially courses taken from native speakers tend to correlate positively with students' evaluation of the effectiveness of their training. The more significant correlations occur between number of courses taken from natives and the cultural appreciation objectives (Objectives 9, 10, and 11) as well as Objective 8 (to become familiar with the "niveaux de langue" and their socio-cultural implications). Although no causal relationship can be ascertained from correlation, this may point out one of the areas of language teaching where native speakers can be most profitably used.

Several objectives listed in the questionnaire focused on different aspects of the same general objective, for instance, Objectives 9, 10, and 11 deal with culture, 3 and 4 with understanding different types of
spoken French, etc. The intercorrelations of the ratings of the importance of the objectives are presented in Table 16, page 251.

Comparison of Students' Ratings of A (Importance of the Objectives) and B (Effectiveness of Their College Training in Meeting the Same Objectives)

The following analysis aims at assessing the degree of importance granted by French methods class students to the various objectives submitted to their evaluation, and finding out where their priorities lie. It also attempts to measure these same students' perception of the effectiveness of their training in the various areas considered and to find out which objectives are most effectively met by college foreign language programs. Finally, it aims at discovering whether what students think is most important is also what is best taught or most emphasized in college foreign language programs and where any discrepancies may lie.

Thus, these findings should provide college language educators with 1) guidelines for attempting to meet the interests of their students, 2) a feedback as to how they are perceived by their students and what they do best and worst, and 3) an indication of the crucial areas in which they need to realign their priorities and improve their program if they wish to meet their students' interests.

Table 17 presents the mean ratings of objectives according to A (the importance granted by students to the objectives) and B (the effectiveness of their college training in preparing them to meet these same objectives. It also indicates the rank of each objective according to A and B. The mean ratings are based on a 0 to 4 scale, 4 indicating the highest importance or the greatest effectiveness.
Table 16: Correlations Among the Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

* = p < 0.05  
** = p < 0.02  
*** = p < 0.01  
**** = p < 0.001
Table 17: Mean Differences Between A: Evaluations of Importance of Objectives and B: Evaluations of Effectiveness of Colleges in Meeting Same Objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>A: Importance of Objectives</th>
<th>B: Colleges Effectiveness</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
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<td>Mean</td>
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## Table 17: continued

<table>
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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>A: Importance of Objectives</th>
<th>B: Colleges Effectiveness</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
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<td>Mean</td>
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Table 17: continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>A: Importance of Objectives</th>
<th>B: Colleges Effectiveness</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
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<td>Mean</td>
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<td>0.949</td>
<td>1.357</td>
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</table>
From Table 17 it is evident that:

1. The mean ratings of importance of the objectives are consistently and considerably higher than the mean ratings of the effectiveness of college language programs in preparing students to meet these objectives. This shows that in general students are somewhat dissatisfied with the kind of language training they get in college. However, it must be remembered that it seems to be a normal psychological tendency to expect more than one can get or achieve. The relative size of the difference then, is more important than its existence.

2. The standard deviations for column A (importance of objectives) are generally noticeably smaller than for column B (effectiveness of training). This shows that whereas there is widespread agreement as to how important the various objectives are, students differ greatly in their evaluation of how well they have been trained to meet these objectives.

3. The top ranking objective for each single group as well as for all groups combined is Objective 4, i.e., the ability to understand everyday informal French. Interestingly, it is also the objective for which there is the smallest standard deviation, thereby indicating widespread agreement regarding the importance of this objective. This adds considerable weight to the writer's appeal for including the colloquial language style in the presentation of language materials designed to develop listening comprehension. These results are believed to be unbiased and the genuine expression of students' opinions rather than a reflection of the researcher's view, since the following precautions were taken in order not to influence students' reactions: a) students responded
to the questionnaire before taking either test; b) teachers were instructed not to tell students beforehand what the tests were about other than their being tests of listening comprehension, and c) students did not know the nature of the writer's project.

4. The next two most important objectives according to students are Objective 6 (to be able to speak French both formally and informally according to the situation) and Objective 10 (to develop knowledge and appreciation for the way of life, values and pattern of daily living of the French people).

5. The top ranking objective in terms of college effectiveness deal with the teaching of literature and of the formal aspects of the language. These priorities are to be found in all the participating institutions.

6. There is a sharp discrepancy between what students think is most important and what college language programs do best or put more emphasis on. For instance, the top ranking objective in terms of college effectiveness, Objective 1, ranks very low in students' priorities (rank 11). This means that college students wish for less emphasis to be placed on the teaching of literature and far more emphasis on the various aspects of communicative competence.

Coming next among college priorities are Objectives 9 and 5 which deal respectively with "culture" in the sense of the great cultural achievements of a people (as opposed to culture in the sense of daily patterns of living to which students' give priority) and with the ability to speak French in a careful, formal manner. These two objectives come
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1B</th>
<th>STUDIES PREFERENCES (WHAT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED)</th>
<th>COLLEGE PREFERENCES (WHAT IS EMPHASIZED)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To be able to understand French as it is spoken informally both by educated speakers and &quot;ordinary&quot; people, in everyday types of situations, when these people are talking among peers or friends.</td>
<td>To be able to read and appreciate French literary works, both modern and classical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To learn to speak French both in a careful, formal way and in a carefree colloquial way according to whichever is called for by the circumstances of the communication.</td>
<td>To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the great cultural achievements of the French people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the way of life, system of values and patterns of daily living of the French people.</td>
<td>To learn to speak French in a careful, formal manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To be able to read current newspapers, magazines, and articles of interest to you.</td>
<td>To be able to understand French as it is spoken by educated speakers in formal situations such as radio and TV broadcasts, lectures, plays, speeches, and formal social intercourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To be able to understand French as it is spoken by educated speakers in formal situations such as radio and TV broadcasts, lectures, plays, speeches, and formal social intercourse.</td>
<td>To be able to read current newspapers, magazines, and articles of interest to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To be able to communicate with French people in all walks of life.</td>
<td>To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the way of life, system of values and patterns of daily living of the French people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the great cultural achievements of the French people.</td>
<td>To be able to understand French as it is spoken informally both by educated speakers and &quot;ordinary&quot; people, in everyday types of situations, when these people are talking among peers or friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To become familiar with the different &quot;niveaux de langue&quot; or manners of expressing oneself in different situations and their socio-cultural implications.</td>
<td>To become aware of the way in which the culture is reflected in the language and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>To become aware of the way in which the culture is reflected in the language and vice versa.</td>
<td>To learn to speak French both in a careful, formal way and in a carefree colloquial way according to whichever is called for by the circumstances of the communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To develop your knowledge and appreciation of the modern means of creative expression using both language and audio-visual technology such as films, songs, humorous cartoons, TV shows, etc.</td>
<td>To be able to communicate with French people in all walks of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>To be able to read and appreciate French literary works, both modern and classical.</td>
<td>To be able to understand with reasonable ease the language and the cultural connotations of French commercial films you might wish to see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>To be able to understand with reasonable ease the language and the cultural connotations of French commercial films you might wish to see.</td>
<td>To develop your knowledge and appreciation of the modern means of creative expression using both language and audio-visual technology such as films, songs, humorous cartoons, TV shows, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>To learn to speak French in a careful, formal manner.</td>
<td>To become familiar with the different &quot;niveaux de langue&quot; or manners of expressing oneself in different situations and their socio-cultural implications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the eighth and thirteenth positions for students (all groups combined).

Students' priorities and college foreign language programs' priorities as well as the discrepancies between the two can best be appreciated in the following table (Table 18, which lists and ranks the objectives according to A, students' priorities, and B, colleges' priorities.

The previous comparisons were based on the mean ratings of the objectives and therefore do not reveal how each subject felt in relation to both aspects of the evaluation of the objectives, i.e., if high or low rating of the importance was consistently paralleled by high or low rating of the effectiveness. Table 19 reveals the degree to which ratings of the importance of the objective and ratings of the effectiveness with which they are met, are related.

Table 19 shows that there are few significant correlations between the importance students grant to the various objectives and their perception of the effectiveness of their college training in the same areas. The only correlation which is present in all groups with a varying degree of significance is the one for Objective 11 (to become aware of the way in which the culture is reflected in the language). This is the only aspect of their training where there is consistent and substantial agreement between what students want and what their training offers them. In general, then, there is little agreement between what students think is important and what their college training emphasizes. This also means that students' attitudes towards objectives for language study are not affected by deficiencies of their training in these areas.

It is also of interest for the profession to know in which areas colleges come closest to meeting students' expectations and in which ones
Table 19: Correlations Between A (Evaluations of Importance of Objectives and B (Evaluations of Effectiveness of College Language Programs in Meeting Same Objectives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obj.</th>
<th>CORRELATIONS A x B</th>
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<th>All Groups Combined</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>OSU 2</td>
<td>OSU 3</td>
<td>Other Univ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.277</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.506*</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>-0.244</td>
<td>0.287***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.319</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>-0.220</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0.606***</td>
<td>-0.231</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.393</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.211*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td>0.539**</td>
<td>0.426</td>
<td>0.414****</td>
<td>0.433****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.467*</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>-0.053</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.235**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.258</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>0.092</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < .05  
** = p < .02  
*** = p < .01  
**** = p < .001
The distance is the greatest between what is expected and what is done. This information is provided by Table 20 which presents the mean differences between A (the ratings of the importance of the objectives) and B (the ratings of the effectiveness of college foreign language programs). The probability estimates for these mean differences are computed from the Wilcoxon matched pairs-signed-ranks test of significance (one-tailed).

The areas in which colleges come closest to meeting student expectations are represented by October 5 (to learn to speak French in a careful formal manner), Objective 9 (to become familiar with and develop appreciation for the great cultural achievements of the French people), and Objective 1 (to be able to read and appreciate French literary works, both modern and classical). For almost every group the A-B difference for these objectives failed to reach any significance. It is interesting to note that in some instances (OSU 2) colleges were even perceived as exceeding students' expectations. This may be taken to mean that colleges overemphasize these objectives despite students' relatively low interest.

The four greatest discrepancies between A = what students think is important and B = what college language programs actually do, presented in order of decreasing size, are:

Objective 4 (to be able to understand everyday informal French). This finding corroborates the test results which revealed extremely poor performance in listening comprehension of colloquial French for the subjects that had not spent a substantial amount of time in France. (For all groups combined, A-B = 1.944 on a 0 to 4 scale, p < 0.001.)

Objective 7 (to be able to communicate with French people in all walks of life); A-B = 1.925, p < 0.001.
Table 20: Differences Between A = Mean Ratings of Importance of Objectives and B = Mean Ratings of College Effectiveness in Meeting Same Objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OSU 1 (n=22)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mean A-B diff.</td>
<td>0.819</td>
<td>1.773</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>1.818</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>1.591</td>
<td>2.045</td>
<td>1.819</td>
<td>1.319</td>
<td>1.818</td>
<td>1.409</td>
<td>2.137</td>
<td>1.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wilcoxon T</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>52.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>0.0027</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.3351</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 2 (n=20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mean A-B diff.</td>
<td>-0.350</td>
<td>1.150</td>
<td>1.150</td>
<td>2.350</td>
<td>-0.150</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>0.950</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>1.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wilcoxon T</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>31.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>0.0912</td>
<td>0.0009</td>
<td>0.0019</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.2781</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
<td>0.0023</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.0013</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.0017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 3 (n=21)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mean A-B diff.</td>
<td>0.650</td>
<td>1.632</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>2.172</td>
<td>2.350</td>
<td>2.250</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.713</td>
<td>1.389</td>
<td>2.150</td>
<td>2.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wilcoxon T</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>0.0227</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0014</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.1317</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0015</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Univ. (n=65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mean A-B diff.</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.999</td>
<td>1.160</td>
<td>1.710</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>1.900</td>
<td>1.827</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>1.155</td>
<td>1.161</td>
<td>1.946</td>
<td>1.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wilcoxon T</td>
<td>253.00</td>
<td>85.50</td>
<td>85.50</td>
<td>34.50</td>
<td>256.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>138.00</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>111.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>0.0234</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.1690</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0019</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Groups Combined (n=123)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mean A-B diff.</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>1.277</td>
<td>1.216</td>
<td>1.944</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>1.867</td>
<td>1.920</td>
<td>1.833</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>1.414</td>
<td>1.196</td>
<td>1.732</td>
<td>1.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wilcoxon T</td>
<td>959.50</td>
<td>250.00</td>
<td>295.00</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>216.50</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>277.00</td>
<td>133.00</td>
<td>110.00</td>
<td>49.50</td>
<td>239.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>0.0147</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.1359</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p = Probability estimates computed from Wilcoxon Matched Pair Signed-Ranks Test (one-tail test)
Objective 6 (to learn to speak French both formally and informally according to whichever is called for by the circumstances of the communication); A-B = 1.867, p < 0.001.

Objective 8 (to become familiar with the different "niveaux de langue" and their socio-cultural implications); A-B = 1.833, p < 0.001.

Although for each group studied, these above mentioned objectives represent the areas of greatest discrepancy between what students want and what they are offered, it must be noted that 1) the actual size of the discrepancy measure varies with each group and can be as high as 2.350 (on a 0 to 4 scale); 2) the size of the discrepancy measure is generally greater for OSU groups (especially OSU 3) than for other universities. Plausible explanations for these larger differences could be that, a) OSU students rated these objectives higher than did the other groups, or b) OSU students rated their college training in these areas lower than did the other groups. Examination of the mean ratings presented in Table 17 (pp. 252-254) show that only the second hypothesis is true. It seems, then, that OSU students are more dissatisfied with these aspects of their college training than are students in other universities.

It may be noticed that all these objectives deal with greater acceptance, appreciation and mastery of the various language styles, and especially the more informal ones, mastery meaning here knowledge of the different forms as well as knowledge of their socio-cultural appropriateness. These conclusions are very much in keeping with the recommendations made by Crystal and Davy (see quote Chapter II, p. 67). This means that if college language programs do wish to meet their students' interests and to overcome their deficiencies, it is in these four interrelated areas that they will need to put their greatest efforts.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Summary of Findings.

The results summarized here are based on a sample of 128 French methods class students, i.e., language majors close to the terminal point of their training, who have identified themselves as future teachers of French. The sample also included 20 practicing teachers, whose performance and reactions were comparable to those of methods class students. The results therefore seem applicable to American teachers of French and college French majors in general. Also, since the subjects came from seven major universities the findings seem applicable to college French programs in general.

1) Listening comprehension performance of French depends largely upon the language style used by the speakers. Comprehension of colloquial French (Test 4) is considerably lower than comprehension of standard formal French (Test 2) (Test 1 $\bar{X} = 31.59$; Test 2 $\bar{X} = 63.13$). And this despite the fact that the type of colloquial French presented in the test items was judged by native speakers to be very typical of everyday informal conversation (the mean rating for the whole colloquial test was 4.83 on a 1 to 5 scale). From this it can be inferred that college language programs put much less emphasis on the informal than on the formal aspects of language use. This very sizable difference was observable in all the universities tested.
although some performed noticeably better than others. It would be interesting to investigate which aspects of their training account for that better preparation to understand spoken French in general and colloquial French in particular.

2) Each linguistic aspect of colloquial French (phonology, syntax, lexicon) constitutes a serious barrier to comprehension. The greatest loss of comprehension occurs when all aspects are combined in isolated utterances; the single most difficult aspect being the colloquial lexicon.

3) Students who performed relatively well on Test 1 also tended to do well on Test 2; i.e., those who show a fairly good understanding of colloquial French also tend to have a good or very good understanding of standard formal French.

4) Among various ways of learning French, the amount of time spent in France is the factor which correlates most highly with listening comprehension of colloquial French ($r = 0.608$, $p < .001$). The correlation between time spent in France and comprehension of standard formal French, though significant, is much lower ($r = 0.254$, $p < .01$).

The relationship between amount of time spent in France and aural comprehension of French is further evidenced by comparison of mean scores obtained by those who spent more than 3 months in France (Test 1 $\bar{X} = 44.58$; Test 2 $\bar{X} = 69.19$) versus mean scores obtained by those who spent less than 3 months in France (Test 1 $\bar{X} = 26.44$; Test 2 $\bar{X} = 60.14$). This shows that residence in France, though beneficial to comprehension of French in general, is especially valuable in providing exposure to the
informal use of French. It further indicates that whereas colleges are comparatively fairly successful in teaching formal aspects of French, they fail to familiarize their students with its informal colloquial use.

5) There is no significant correlation between the number of years of study of French in college and listening comprehension of either colloquial French or standard formal French. This would indicate that little time is devoted to teaching listening comprehension in the college language programs tested. However, the small variance of years of college French may have reduced the correlation.

6) There is a low, but significant correlation between the number of years of French in high school and performance on both Test 1 and Test 2 ($r_1 = 0.271, p < .01$; $r_2 = 0.312, p < .01$).

7) In general, there is no significant correlation between students' performances on either test and their attitudes towards the various language objectives presented in the questionnaire. For two groups, however, (OSU 3 $n = 21$ and Other Universities $n = 65$), there was a negative correlation between test scores and the importance granted to Objective 1. This means that in these two groups, the students who think most favorably of Objective 1 (to be able to read and appreciate literature) tend to be the weakest performers on tests of listening comprehension, and vice-versa, the better performers on tests of aural comprehension tend to grant less importance to literature. Perhaps they are favoring what they do best.

8) There is a positive correlation between ratings of college effectiveness in the areas of cultural awareness and performance on both Test 1 and Test 2.
9) Students who spent more time in France or who took more courses from native speakers, tend to think more positively of their college language training (especially in the area of cultural awareness.) It is possible that these favorable ratings are partly due to their inclusion of study abroad as part of their college training.

10) The top priority objectives for students are 1) the ability to understand informal French, 2) the ability to communicate with people in all walks of life, and 3) an awareness and appreciation of daily patterns of living. These same objectives are respectively ranked 7th, 9th, and 6th in colleges' priorities (as perceived by students). On the other hand, top priorities for college language programs (as perceived by students) are 1) knowledge of French literature, and 2) familiarity with the great cultural achievements of the French people and 3) the ability to speak French in a careful, formal manner. These same objectives are ranked respectively 11th, 7th, and 13th according to student priorities. This reveals a sharp discrepancy between what students want and what college language programs offer them.

11) Judging from responses to the questionnaire, students feel that the greatest discrepancy between their desires and the actual college French curriculum lie in the areas represented by the following objectives, in order of decreasing importance. (These discrepancies are evidenced by the difference between $A = \text{the mean ratings of importance of the objective}$ and $B = \text{the ratings of the effectiveness of college training in preparing students to meet the same objectives.}$ The scale used ran from 0 to 4.)
Objective 4: (to be able to understand everyday informal French) (A-B = 1.944; p < 0.001)

Objective 7: (to be able to communicate with French people in all walks of life) (A-B = 1.925; p < 0.001)

Objective 6: (to be able to speak French both formally and informally according to which ever is called for by the circumstances of the communication) (A-B = 1.867; p < 0.001)

Objective 8: (to be aware of the different niveaux de langue and their socio-cultural implications) (A-B = 1.833; p < 0.001)

12) American students usually fail to perceive the appropriateness or lack of appropriateness of a given style to a given situation. A combination of language style and situation which sounds thoroughly comical to a French person, seem quite "normal" to American students. This lack of familiarity with the "niveaux de langue" and their cultural connotations may be as much a flaw in their ability to understand and appreciate literature as in their ability to understand spoken French accurately.

II. Conclusions and Recommendations.

A. It is evident from the findings that one of the major problems in the training of foreign language teachers is the lack of agreement between students and college faculty on the goals and objectives to be pursued. Greater and more open communication is needed so that each group can make its views known to the other, and so that they can work more effectively together towards the achievement of common goals. Rather than remaining in their ivory towers and perpetrating unquestioningly the same programs decade after decade, college language educators need to seek actively student feedback and to give students a greater voice in the shaping of the foreign language curriculum. This is not to say that
students should dictate the curriculum. Communication between students and faculty should work both ways and it is hoped that college language educators would thus be able to make students more sympathetic to their views. But as responsible educators, they also have an obligation to find out and try to meet the needs and interests of their students. Furthermore, once objectives have been clearly outlined and agreed upon, they should make provision for periodic assessment of the extent to which these objectives have been met and for eventual reorientation of priorities.

B. The poll of student opinion yielded by this study indicates that less emphasis should be placed on the teaching of literature and the formal aspects of language use, and that more emphasis should be placed on the development of communicative skills. This view is further supported by 1) the test results which show very poor comprehension of informal French; 2) the absence of correlation between the number of years of study of French in college and listening comprehension of either formal or informal French; 3) the fact that the greater discrepancies between ratings of importance of objectives and corresponding ratings of college effectiveness occurs for Objectives 4, 7, 6, and 8, which deal with the various aspects of communicative competence. These discrepancies indicate that it is in these areas that colleges need to put their greatest efforts if they wish to overcome their deficiencies and reconcile their instruction with students' interests.

The discrepancies revealed by this study may represent only a small portion of the existing ones; more thorough and systematic
investigations should be made in order first to fathom and then to reduce the communication gap between students and college language educators.

C. As part of the communicative competence goal, awareness of the "niveaux de langue" or speech styles and their socio-cultural implications should be of particular importance in the training of language majors. Although the rules are less binding and less clearly defined, the speech style has to agree with the situational context in the same way as different elements of the syntax have to agree (to be compatible) with one another. The principle of sandhi variation which applies to phonology and morphology and governs the realization of a particular morpheme according to the morpho-phonemic environment, also applies to the stylistics of communication. In this case, it is the situational constraints (e.g., age status, modality, etc.) which call for a certain form of expression rather than another. Failure to know and to observe these rules is just as much of a flaw in the subject's communicative skill as failure to observe grammatical rules. It is true that a foreigner can be understood even when he uses the inappropriate style but so can he when he uses "bad" grammar; yet most language educators do not question the importance of teaching correct grammar and some even spend a great deal of their time making sure students know every minute rule of the agreement of the past participle. The point is, if stylistic variations are a functional part of a communication system, then the student who aims to be fluent in that particular communication system should be given the proper training in interpreting them. Language majors should be aware of the socio-cultural appropriateness of different ways of expressing a
given message, including the possibility that the message itself may be modified, or only partly expressed or even totally out of place in certain situations. Such training should enable them to perceive fairly accurately the connotative as well as the denotative meaning of foreign utterances, and in their own speech production, to avoid the "faux pas" of over-familiarity or excessive formality, or unintentionally offending or amusing their native interlocutors. Finally, it would also help students to understand better many modern literary works which make extensive use of the different language styles, and particularly the colloquial style.

The writer, then, recommends for language majors the creation of a course in the stylistics of interpersonal communication which would familiarize them with phonological, syntactic, and lexical variations that are dependent upon situational variables. It is in this wider context and as part of the familiarity with a wider gamut of language uses that the place of colloquial French in the curriculum can be discussed most profitably.

D. Role and Place of Colloquial French in the Foreign Language Curriculum. A basic criterion for the shaping of a curriculum should be the relative productivity of its component parts—corpus, activities, materials—in terms of the objectives stated. For instance, it is this principle that prompted the research necessary to establish "Le français fondamental"; by identifying the words most frequently used in French, a basic corpus was provided to enable teachers and textbook writers to achieve the maximum output (understanding and speaking performance) for the lowest input (number of words and structures to be learned).
Keeping in mind the over-all goal of language study for effective communication, our first responsibility as educators is to teach the language style that will have the greater output in terms of ability to communicate. Such ability includes the skill of listening comprehension and the speaking skill. At the level of speech production, it seems rather evident that the kind of French usage which will enable the student to express himself adequately in the greater number and variety of situations and without unduly shocking his listeners, is the standard usage. A "middle of the road" language style is certainly more likely to be acceptable in all situations than a highly stylized one, be it formal or colloquial, although either one may be proper in certain situations. For instance, it is much safer to say "j'ai très bien mangé" then "j'ai vachement bien bouffé" or "votre festin m'a comblé" and it will be acceptable both at a banquet and in a student restaurant. It must also be noted that, somehow, a foreigner is usually expected by native speakers to use a more formal style, even when they use a fairly informal one. Use of a colloquial style by a foreigner may often be interpreted as condescension or over-familiarity. A third aspect of the productivity criterion deals with the linguistic "value" of the two styles (formal and colloquial). Given the standard form "je ne sais pas," it is possible to derive the colloquial form "chô pas" by applying the proper morpho-phonemic rules, but it is not possible to reverse the process. Thus, from a practical point of view, the students who know the standard form can figure out the colloquial form by derivation. (However, applied too strictly this principle could lead to an absurdity: modern French is also derived from Latin, yet it would be rather far-fetched
and illogical to study Latin, instead of French, in order to learn to understand and speak modern French.) Therefore, it seems important, as far as speaking is concerned, that the standard style should be taught and thoroughly mastered first.

Seen from the point of view of the receptive skill of listening comprehension, the answer to the problem is not as clear-cut. Knowledge of standard or formal French will allow the student to understand lectures, speeches, radio broadcasts, the careful self-conscious diction of language professors, or other natives whose professions call for a certain decorum. Some of the interlocutors may also be willing to recode their message into standard formal speech for the foreigner's sake. But one must admit that this creates a rather strained and undesirable situation. Furthermore, countless are the times when he will want to understand what French people are saying among themselves, when the conversation is not specifically directed at him, or to understand what the various people he encounters in stores, buses, cafés, etc. are saying in reply to his questions. In these situations, his knowledge of the kind of formal standard French he has been taught in college will be of very limited help to him, because informal, colloquial French is the style which is normal and proper for informal conversations between peers. As a listener, he has no control over the language style to be used by the native speakers. He has no choice but to adapt and try to understand, as best he can, the language as it is spoken.

In this frame of reference, the most productive type of knowledge or competence will be the one which allows the student to understand as
much as possible of what is said around him. If colloquial is indeed the common language style of informal social interaction—as it has been strongly and repeatedly established by linguistic studies as well as casual observations—then, knowledge of colloquial French may be as important, or even more important, for the comprehension of spoken French than knowledge of standard formal French. It is therefore our responsibility as language educators to familiarize our students with colloquial French as well as with formal French so that they may understand French, not only as it is spoken in formal situations, but also as French people speak it in their informal, daily exchanges. Moreover, it is also this type of social interaction in which students claim the most interest, because it reflects the culture in action, and because it is by listening to what common people say to one another and how they say it, that one can best discover the preoccupations, joys, attitudes, and values of a people.

Thus it is the writer's conclusions that:

1) Since colloquial French is widely and commonly used by native speakers, it should hold an important place in the curriculum of any French language program that stresses communicative competence as one of its goals. It is not within the language teacher's jurisdiction to make judgments about what is "good" or "bad" native French usage and to decide how French people "should" speak. Rather, their role should limit itself to presenting the language as it is and to prepare their students to understand it and to speak it in a manner which is compatible with native usage.

2) Since that aspect of language use has been traditionally neglected in French language programs, changes should be made so that it will
be given the attention it deserves.

3) Colloquial French should be taught mostly if not exclusively for recognition. In any program which emphasizes the communicative skills, it should be given an important place in the materials used for presentation of the spoken language and for developing listening comprehension. For instance, authenticity in dialogues or in supplementary materials such as sound films, should be stylistic as well as cultural. The protagonists should speak with the level of formality or of informality called for by the situation, by their relationship to one another, and by what they have to say to one another. Their speech should display the full phonological, syntactic, and lexical features that are characteristic of the style in question. In other words, if one of the characters is a bus driver, let him speak like a real bus driver! In this way, students would learn to understand real French rather than an expurgated version of it, while also developing an intuitive flair for appropriateness of style.

4) The presentation of colloquial French, however, should be accompanied by indications of the situations in which these forms can be expected to occur and of their affective and socio-cultural connotations. This means that colloquial French should not be taught to the exclusion of or in isolation from other language styles. Its proper context should be the stylistics of interpersonal communication, i.e., the way the forms of a given message vary according to the situational variables or constraints. The stylistics of communication, in turn, should be brought to the language student's
awareness soon after he has mastered the basic standard forms and throughout his study of the language, in the same way as his knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is constantly deepened and refined in the course of his language training.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Test I: Français Familier

Instructions: You will hear a spoken statement or question; on your test copy are printed four retorts or answers. Choose the best one and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet. Listen carefully. Each statement will be said twice. Ready?

Subtest A

1. Ils iraient peut-être au théâtre s'ils avaient le temps.

A. Elle m'a dit qu'elle n'était pas libre.
B. Volontiers. Mais croyez-vous qu'elle m'attendra?
C. Oui, mais je n'ai pas le temps.
D. Oui, et nous pourrions aller avec eux.

(V = 4.38; dif. = 0.461; D = 64.7)

2. Je pense qu'il va venir cet après-midi.

A. Yves? Je croyais qu'il était à Paris...
B. Comment veux-tu que je devine?
C. Moi, je crois qu'il arrivera seulement demain.
D. C'est impossible d'être prêt à midi.

(V = 4.04; dif. = 0.500; D = 25.6)

3. J'ai dû mon mieux, qu'est-ce qu'il veut de plus?

A. Moi. Donnez m'en encore un peu, s'il vous plaît.
B. N'aîtiez rien. C'est mieux comme ça.
C. C'est lui qui a le mieux réussi.
D. Fais ton possible et ne t'occupe pas de ce qu'il dit.

(V = 4.81; dif. = 0.477; D = 72.8)

4. Il m'a dit avant de partir.

A. Quelle maladie a-t-il?
B. Comment l'a-t-il su?
C. Où est-ce que nous irons?
D. Sais-tu ce qu'il fera demain?

(V = 5.00; dif. = 0.445; D = 45.3)

*V is the mean evaluation, on a 1 to 5 scale, of the "typicality" of the items, i.e. how representative it is of everyday informal French. dif. represents the relative difficulty of the item, i.e., the percentage of students missing the item. D is the discrimination index; it reflects the degree to which the item discriminates between the better and the poorer students (top and bottom 27.5 percent)
5. J'espère que tu dis et que tu répète, il faut que je m'en aille avant ce soir.

A. Ne t'impatiente pas, j'ai compris.
B. Laisse-le parler. Toi, tu es libre de faire ce que tu veux.
C. Pourquoi n'as-t-il répété cela à tout le monde?
D. Dans ce cas, nous avons encore trois jours avant ton départ.

(V = 4.62; dif. = 0.352; D = 57.4)


A. N'oubliez pas de m'apporter sa réponse.
B. Oui, mais ma part n'est pas aussi grosse que la vôtre.
C. Vous croyez qu'il dirait cela à mon sujet?
D. Vous savez bien que je suis de votre côté...

(V = 4.75; dif. = 0.750; D = 29.9)

7. Passez-moi celui qui est sur lit, s'il vous plaît.

A. Sully? C'était un ministre d'Henri IV, n'est-ce pas?
B. Je ne suis pas assez souple; je préfère passer à côté.
C. Voilà, je vous l'apporte tout de suite.
D. Je ne savais pas qu'il fallait l'essuyer.

(V = 4.44; dif. = 0.430; D = 12.6)

8. J'ai dit au revoir et je suis parti.

A. Vous êtes parti sans dire au-revoir?
B. C'est tout ce qu'il a dit?
C. Quelle a été sa réaction?
D. En Juillet, il fait beau pour voyager.

(V = 4.25; dif. = 0.453; D = 51.3)

Subtest B

9. Ce n'est pas celui-ci que je veux, c'est celui-là.

A. Je ne vois aucune différence entre ces deux huit.
B. Moi aussi, je suis complètement perdu.
C. Eh bien, prenez celui que vous voulez.
D. Vous avez raison; l'huile d'olive est meilleure.

(V = 4.69; dif. = 0.352; D = 44.5)

10. Dans ces cas-là, il n'y a plus qu'à recommencer.

A. N'y a-t-il pas moyen de faire autrement?
B. Mais je suis fatiguée de danser!
C. A quelle heure dis-tu que ça va commencer?
D. Tu es sûr que c'est lui qui a commencé?

(V = 5.00; dif. = 0.638; D = 51.9)
11. Je te promets de ne pas le vendre.

A. Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'il dit cela.
B. Il a besoin de soleil et de bonne nourriture.
C. C'est cela; mais ne tire pas trop fort.
D. D'accord; je compte sur toi.

(V = 4.81; dif. = .281; D = 41.7)

12. Je n'ai plus rien à met{tre} sur le dos.

A. Tu exagères! Ton armoire est pleine de vêtements.
B. Eh bien, met-le ailleurs.
C. Attends, je vais t'aider.
D. Moi non plus, je n'ai pas réussi.

(V = 4.69; dif. = .352; D = 54.8)

13. Il ne faut pas le dire, voyons!

A. Je ne suis pas encore prêt,
B. Pourquoi? C'est un secret?
C. Je ne m'en suis pas aperçu.
D. Maintenant, vous avez bien meilleure mine.

(V = 5.00; dif. = .258; D = 49.8)

14. Il n'y a qu'à ne pas faire attention à ce qu'il dit.

A. Si vous aviez mieux écouté, vous le sauriez.
B. Non, je n'ai pas remarqué qui a dit cela.
C. C'est pour cela qu'il n'a rien compris.
D. C'est le seul moyen d'avoir la paix.

(V = 4.69; dif. = .036; D = 17.1)

15. Et nous alors, on fait quoi en attendant qu'ils se décident?

A. Moi; je le ferai, si vous voulez.
B. Vous êtes libres de faire ce que vous voulez.
C. C'est ce qu'on nous a dit.
D. Vous savez bien que c'est toujours lui qui décide.

(V = 4.88; dif. = .648; D = 55.4)

16. C'est où qu'ils iront le bateau?

A. Ah? Je ne savais pas que c'étaient eux...
B. Vous croyez qu'ils osent faire cela?
C. Ils y iront demain.
D. Je crois que c'est à Calais.

(V = 4.38; dif. = .211; D = 39.0)
17. Toi, tu y crois à ce qu'il dit, lui maire?

[twa / tikrwaaskidi / lmcr]
A. Non, je t'assure que ce n'est pas moi qui lui ai dit cela.
B. C'est aussi mon avis.
C. Je ne sais pas... mais je fais comme si j'y croyais.
D. Je suis sûr que personne n'a dit une chose pareille.

(V = 4.63; dif. = .523; D = 23.8)

18. Tu veux que je t'dise, eh bien, ils n'avaient pas tort, les copains.

[tvyskozdiz / eizavspator / lokopz]
A. Mais oui, racontez-moi ce qu'on vous a fait.
B. Je n'en ai pas non plus.
C. Comment ont-ils pu faire cela?
D. C'est vrai; ils avaient bien raison.

(V = 4.56; dif. = .695; D = 5.3)

19. Tu sais, si je ne me retenais pas, je ne sais pas ce que je te dirais.

[tes / s3mortonepa / jespasktofre]
A. Offre-moi ce que tu voudras, c'est l'intention qui compte.
B. Pourquoi l'avez-vous fait chez lui?
C. Je t'assure que je ne l'ai pas fait exprès.
D. Sois tranquille; si tu meurs nous nous occuperons de tout.

(V = 4.50; dif. = .766; D = 7.5)

20. Surtout ne les perd pas, hein.

[syrzu / lopercpa / ə]
A. Dans ce cas, nous n'inviterons que les célibataires.
B. D'accord; je ferai très attention.
C. Oui, il y en avait partout.
D. C'est exact; il en reste un.

(V = 4.75; dif. = .734; D = 49.5)

21. (Il n'y en a eu que) quatre d'arrêtés.

[jänaykkaddareto]
A. Pourquoi ne lui en a-t-on pas donné plus?
B. C'est pour cette raison que je n'aime pas le poisson.
C. S'ils en avaient arrêté seulement quatre, on comprendrait.
D. Tous les autres ont été laissés en liberté?

(V = 4.88; dif. = .547; D = 44.7)

22. Je ne sais pas s'il y en aura assez. Ça va être juste.

[jepasjänoræaso / savæctyst]
A. Oui, il l'aura bien mérité.
B. C'est la bonne réponse, vous verrez.
C. Oui, vous avez raison, c'est ce qu'il était en train de faire.
D. Allons en acheter quatre ou cinq de plus.

(V = 4.75; dif. = .617; D = 77.8)
23. Vous êtes donc fâché, qu’on ne vous voit plus.

A. Oui, c’est pour ça que je suis en colère.
B. Mais non, c’est parce que j’ai été très occupé.
C. Oui, je regrette de n’avoir pas pu le faire.
D. Entre amis, on se dit "tu."

(V = 4.56; dif. = .695; D =33.5)

24. En voici un déplié.

A. Oui, nous arriverons à New Delhi dans une heure.
B. Non, laissez-le là.
C. Pourquoi ne l’a-t-il pas emporté?
D. Préparez-en encore deux, s’il vous plaît.

(V = 4.81; dif. = .750; D =10.4)

25. Je ne sais pas qu’ils sont venus.

A. Pourquoi ne sont-ils pas venus chez vous?
B. On m’a dit qu’ils ont déménagé.
C. Chez qui sont-ils passés en venant?
D. Je ne savais pas que vous faisiez du ski.

(V = 4.88; dif. = .695; D =37.1)

Subtest C

26. Il est pas marrant, ce bouquin.

A. Pourquoi sors-tu avec lui?
B. Lis Astérix, ce sera plus drôle.
C. Mais si, mange vite; ça te fera grandir.
D. Les livres coûtent de plus en plus cher.

(V = 5.00; dif. = .773; D =52.1)

27. Dans quelle boîte est-ce que tu travailles?

A. Aux usines Renault.
B. Dans ma chambre.
C. En chimie.
D. Dans le commerce des vins et liqueurs.

(V = 4.94; dif. = .539; D =17.2)

28. Il dit qu’il a la flèche aujourd’hui.

A. Je crois que ça lui arrive souvent.
B. Comment a-t-il attrapé cela?
C. Il devrait acheter un billet de la Lotoric Nationale.
D. Que pourrions nous faire pour l’aider à oublier ses soucis?

(V = 5.00; dif. = .742; D =18.9)
29. Il a l'air cloche.

A. Il devrait se reposer.
B. Savez-vous pourquoi il est en colère?
C. Pourtant, on dit qu'il est très intelligent.
D. Donne-lui un peu d'eau fraîche; ça lui fera du bien.
(V = 4.94; dif. = .750; D = 32.3)

30. Il mérite les pieds avec ses bavures.

A. Est-ce que vous souffrez beaucoup?
B. Eh bien, changez de médecin!
C. Ça ne m'étonne pas; c'est un voleur.
D. Il parle, il parle, c'est tout ce qu'il sait faire!
(V = 4.94; dif. = .656; D = 24.9)

31. Garçon! Un défi!

A. Oui monsieur, avec ou sans crème?
B. Oui monsieur, du vin blanc ou du rouge?
C. Oui monsieur, de la bière française ou allemande?
D. Oui monsieur, avec ou sans glace?
(V = 4.88; dif. = .742; D = 1.8)

32. Il s'est fait rouler.

A. Il aurait dû faire attention.
B. Monsieur voyage en taxi! Quel snob!
C. C'est une bonne idée; les voyages forment la jeunesse!
D. C'est la première fois qu'il est battu, n'est-ce pas?
(V = 5.00; dif. = .633; D = 36.1)

33. J'en ai marre de bûcher toute la journée.

A. Nous aussi, nous sommes bien amusés.
B. C'est vrai, on s'ennuie vite quand on ne fait rien.
C. Tu travailles trop; il faut te reposer.
D. Fais bien attention de ne pas prendre froid.
(V = 4.83; dif. = .609; D = 3.6)

34. Passez-nous donc un coup d'éponge avant de partir.

A. D'accord, et je vous dirai comment la réunion s'est passée.
B. Entendu, je vous l'envverrai par la poste.
C. Voilà. Avez-vous une aiguille?
D. C'est promis; je serai chez vous à onze heures.
(V = 5.00; dif. = .680; D = 44.4)
35. Oh vous savez, on s'y fait à la longue.
   A. Etes-vous sûr qu'on le prépare de cette manière?
   B. Non, je n'en ai jamais entendu parler.
   C. Ne serait-ce pas plus simple de l'acheter?
   D. Moi, je ne pourrais jamais m'y habituer.
   
   (V = 5.00; dif. = .617; D = 33.5)

Subtest D
36. Qu'est-ce qui te prend? Non mais...Tu n'as pas un peu dingue?
   [kESkliprA / nomé / tcpa=cpdzg]
   A. Rassure-toi, je ne suis pas fou.
   B. C'est Jacques qui m'a emmené.
   C. Le bandit! Il m'a poussé et il m'a volé mon argent.
   D. Oui, j'ai mal à l'estomac.
   
   (V = 5.00; dif. = .758; D = 18.7)

37. Tu n'as qu'à te servir, (il) y a ce qu'il faut dans le frigo.
   [takatservir / jasklfodafirigo]
   A. Dois-je le servir en entrée ou avec la viande.
   B. D'accord; je prendrai les outils dont j'aurai besoin.
   C. Bon, merci; je mangerai quand j'aurai faim.
   D. Il en faut deux par personne.
   
   (V = 5.00; dif. = .547; D = 39.2)

38. "Ben" c'est bien fait pour eux; ils avaient qu'à (n'*) pas faire les malins.
   [bESbifcpurz / izavcsoafotlemalz]
   A. Oui en effet, ils ont très bien réussi.
   B. Ceux-là, ils trouvent toujours quelqu'un pour faire leur travail!
   C. Ne soyez pas méchant; ça peut arriver à tout le monde.
   D. C'est la difficulté qui les rend intelligents.
   
   (V = 4.94; dif. = .602; D = 39.2)

39. C(e) qu'il peut être rasoir c(e) type-là, alors!
   [skipstrazwar / stipla / alor]
   A. Il a trop bu, ça se voit.
   B. Il parle pour ne rien dire.
   C. Il a beaucoup d'esprit, n'est-ce pas?
   D. Ce n'est pas étonnant; il sort de chez le coiffeur.
   
   (V = 5.00; dif. = .742; D = 4.91)

40. Penses-tu! Ils ont dit ce(ça) pour te faire marcher.
   [pusty / izoidasapurtfermarfo]
   A. Ils savent pourtant que j'ai mal aux pieds.
   B. D'accord, j'y réfléchirai.
   C. C'est parce qu'ils sont jaloux qu'ils disent cela.
   D. Tu es sûr que c'était une plaisanterie?
   
   (V = 4.94; dif. = .719; D = 49.5)
41. Qu'on peut faire suer dans cours, alors!

A. Vous pouvez faire la même chose.
B. Au bout de dix minutes, je commence à m'endormir.
C. Ouvrez les fenêtres, il fera moins chaud.
D. Je ne croyais pas que ce serait si difficile.

\[ V = 4.44; \; \text{dif.} = 0.844; \; D = 15.2 \]

42. C'est qui qui t'a refilé tuyau?

A. Oui, c'est lui qui l'a cassé.
B. Je ne sais pas où il l'a mis.
C. C'est Pierre qui l'a réparé.
D. Jacques, il est bien informé.

\[ V = 4.81; \; \text{dif.} = 0.867; \; D = 12.3 \]

43. C'est pas pour dire, mais il en fichait pas lourd, c'est qu'il y a.

A. Oui, il avait beaucoup maigri les derniers temps.
B. Comment ont-ils réussi à le prouver?
C. C'est vrai qu'il n'était pas très courageux.
D. Alors, pourquoi en parlez-vous?

\[ V = 4.56; \; \text{dif.} = 0.759; \; D = 32.1 \]

44. Ah oui, ça c'est malin, ma foi; vous vouliez bien avancé maintenant!

A. Oui, ça m'a permis d'aller très loin.
B. Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas moyen de revenir en arrière?
C. C'est grâce à vous que j'ai fait des progrès.
D. C'était une idée stupide, je le reconnais.

\[ V = 4.63; \; \text{dif.} = 0.859; \; D = 32.1 \]

45. Allez... (Ne) t'en fais donc pas, mon vieux; on va te donner un coup main.

A. Laissez-moi; je ne vous ai rien fait.
B. C'est vraiment gentil de votre part.
C. Vous avez de la chance que je suis trop vieux pour me défendre.
D. Mais non, je ne travaille pas trop.

\[ V = 5.00; \; \text{dif.} = 0.664; \; D = 33.0 \]

46. Et ta bagnolette, elle est où?

A. Elle est allée au cinéma avec Pierre.
B. Ils sont tous deux très heureux ensemble.
C. Je l'ai laissée au garage.
D. Dans l'armoire, en haut, à droite.

\[ V = 4.88; \; \text{dif.} = 0.578; \; D = 58.7 \]
47. Dis donc, tu suis à quoi ça sert, ce truc-là, toi?

A. Je ne m'en suis pas servi, je t'assure.
B. C'est une machine à calculer.
C. Ne serre pas tant! Tu vas me faire mal.
D. Un bifteck pommes frites et une salade.

(V = 5.00; dif. = .344; D = 65.6)

48. Ils sont faits rentrer dedans par un camion.

A. J'espère qu'ils n'ont pas été blessés.
B. Heureusement qu'il y avait assez de place.
C. Le camion était arrêté, bien sûr?
D. Ça leur permet de voyager sans dépenser beaucoup d'argent.

(V = 5.00; dif. = .727; D = 38.3)

49. Je n'en peux plus, je suis épuisé.

A. Mais si, prends-en encore, un peu.
B. Pourquoi Jean ne peut-il pas continuer?
C. Il est paresseux; c'est toi qui fais tout le travail.
D. Tu devrais te reposer.

(V = 4.94; dif. = .289; D = 57.4)

50. Ca vaut -i[l] [o] coup d'y aller?

A. Quand est-ce que la dispute a eu lieu?
B. Je ne savais pas que c'était si cher!
C. Nous avons pris un billet aller et retour.
D. Oui, c'est vraiment formidable!

(V = 4.44; dif. = .625; D = 25.1)

51. Toi, je te vois végétal, tu as encore besoin de fric, pas vrai?

A. Oui, j'en mangerais avec plaisir.
B. Evidemment, si tu pouvais me prêter cent francs, ça m'aiderait...
C. Tu te trompes, je n'y suis pas allé.
D. Oui, le voyage a été très fatigant; je vais me reposer un peu.

(V = 4.81; dif. = .695; D = 41.6)


A. Tu aurais dû lui dire de le mettre ailleurs.
B. Tu crois vraiment qu'on ne peut pas avoir confiance en lui?
C. Nous avons déjà parlé de ça.
D. C'est Pierre qui va le faire demain.

(V = 4.75; dif. = .664; D = 11.1)
53. C'est pas qu'il est bête, mais il n'est pas débrouillard, quoi!

A. Je dirai même qu'il est très laid!
B. Personne ne connaît ses origines.
C. Il n'a aucun sens pratique.
D. Tu préfères les garçons qui ont de l'argent, n'est-ce pas?

(V = 5.00; dif. = .438; D = 35.3)

54. Celui-là, alors, il nous en a fait voir de toutes les couleurs!

A. Et quelle couleur avez-vous choisie?
B. Est-ce que ça lui a pris beaucoup de temps.
C. C'est parce que vous étiez qu'il a fait cela.
D. Je vois qu'il vous a causé beaucoup de soucis.

(V = 4.94; dif. = .617; D = 53.0)

55. C'est elle qui lui court après! Je te dis...

A. Si c'est lui qui dit cela, je n'y crois pas.
B. Crois-tu qu'elle va le dépasser?
C. Crois-tu qu'il va l'épouser?
D. Qui est devant, lui ou elle?

(V = 4.94; dif. = .617; D = 53.0)

56. Eh bien, dites donc, celui-là, il ne s'en fait pas!

A. C'est parce que vous étiez là, qu'il n'a pas osé!
B. On ne peut pas gagner sa vie sans rien faire.
C. Est-ce qu'il est allé voir un médecin?
D. Oui, ça me plaît.

(V = 5.00; dif. = .680; D = 21.8)

57. Tu as vu le nouveau prof de gym? Il est vachement sympa.

A. Le mien est encore meilleur que le sien.
B. C'est vrai, hier il a puni toute la classe.
C. C'est vrai. As-tu vu comme il joue bien au tennis?
D. Oui, ça me plaît.

(V = 4.81; dif. = .672; D = 43.5)

58. Tu as pigé que j'ai choisi à quoi que le prof a raconté, toi?

A. Non, je n'y ai rien compris.
B. Moi, je ne suis pas d'accord avec ses idées.
C. On dit que c'est un professeur très sévère.
D. À mon avis, ses récits ne sont pas très intéressants.

(V = 4.84; dif. = .648; D = 74.7)
59. Dis, tu n’aurais pas cent balles à m’prêter?
   
   A. Pourquoi? Tu veux tuer quelqu’un?
   B. C’est pour jouer au tennis?
   C. Non, je refuse de dire cela.
   D. Je regrette, je n’ai pas d’argent sur moi.
   (V = 4.94; diff. = .531; D = 56.1)

60. Alors, qu’est-ce que tu en dis?

   A. Non, je n’ai pas beaucoup parlé.
   B. Il n’a rien dit.
   C. L’idée me paraît excellente.
   D. D’ailleurs, tu es aussi bavard que moi.
   (V = 4.94; diff. = .766; D = 57.6)

61. II s’y est mal pris.

   A. Que voulait-il faire avec ce bois?
   B. Est-ce qu’il est bien soigné maintenant?
   C. Montrez-lui comment il faut faire.
   D. Il savait pourtant qu’on ne doit pas voler.
   (V = 5.00; diff. = .648; D = 27.7)

62. Le pêpé? Ah...il s’agit de vieux, vous savez.

   A. Les adolescents veulent toujours paraître plus âgés qu’ils sont.
   B. C’est à cause de sa manière de s’habiller.
   C. Heureusement que ses petits enfants s’occupent bien de lui.
   D. Mais oui, après un certain temps, on s’en fatigue.
   (V = 4.88; diff. = .773; D = -28.0)

63. Ah oui! Je te l’aurais, des motos, moi, pour que d’autres aillent se casser la figure!...

   A. Leurs parents ne devraient pas leur acheter des machines aussi dangereuses.
   B. Je leur en donnerais aussi, si je pouvais.
   C. Ils ne pensent qu’à leur apparence.
   D. C’est sa faute, il ne devrait pas leur en donner.
   (V = 4.56; diff. = .656; D = 44.4)

64. Il faut arroser ça! Viens, je te paie un pot.

   A. Ce n’est pas nécessaire, je viens d’en acheter un.
   B. Merci chéri; tu sais que j’adore les fleurs.
   C. D’accord, si tu pales l’entrée, j’y vais.
   D. C’est gentil de ta part, je boirai volontiers quelque chose.
   (V = 4.81; diff. = .695; D = 44.0)
65. En attendant, c'est toujours ça d'jà pris.
[A. Ça ne change jamais.
B. Mais oui, il faut profiter de l'occasion.
C. Oui, comme ça, le temps passera plus vite.
D. Non, les prix n'ont pas changé récemment.
(V = 4.88; dif. = .891; D = 6.6)]

66. Plains toi pas, tu aurais bien pu y laisser ta peau!
[A. Oui, j'ai de la chance d'en être sorti vivant.
B. Si, j'ai trop mangé, je t'assure.
C. Oui, mais j'ai préféré l'emporter.
D. C'est vrai, j'ai failli l'oublier.
(V = 4.63; dif. = .785; D = 52.1)]

Subtest E
Instructions: You will now hear a short conversation taking place between Jacqueline and Henri. You will hear it only once so listen carefully.

Jacqueline: Dis, tu sais que je me suis fait coller au bac.
Henri: Oh dis, ça (ne) prend pas, tu essaies de me faire marcher...
Jacqueline: Non, c'est pas du la blague, je t'assure.
Henri: Ça alors! Mais enfin, comment ça s'est fait? Tu étais pourtant vachement calée en philo, non?
Jacqueline: Ben oui... en philo ça (a) pas mal marché, mais c'est en math que j'ai séché. (Il n'y a qu'une section du programme que je (n'avais pas bien révisée, et bien, manque de pot, c'est là-dessus que j'ai tombé.
Henri: Tu n'as vraiment pas eu du veino, ma pauvre vieille.
(V = 4.88)

Instructions: Now read the series of questions printed on your test copy, select the best answer according to the conversation you just heard and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet.

67. Cette conversation a lieu entre:
[A. Deux employés de bureau.
B. Deux lycéens.
C. Deux membres d'une équipe sportive.
D. Deux professeurs.
(dif. = .219; D = 25.9)]

68. Jacqueline annonce à son ami que:
[A. Elle vient de passer son permis de conduire.
B. Elle a été privée de sortie au lycée.
C. Elle n'a pas été reçue au baccalauréat.
D. Elle a eu un accident.
(dif. = .430; D = 67.7)
69. Henri pense d’abord que:
A. Elle lui dit cela pour qu’il aille faire les courses à sa place.
B. Elle essaie de se débarrasser de lui.
C. Elle n’ose pas le dire à ses parents.
D. Elle plaisante.
(dif. s. 391; D=67.7)

70. Il dit que Jacqueline:
A. Aurait dû faire attention.
B. N’a pas assez étudié.
C. Est très forte en philosophie.
D. A bien mérité ce qui lui arrive.
(dif. s. 664; D=50.2)

71. Jacqueline explique que:
A. Elle était pressée de rentrer pour se sécher.
B. Elle n’avait pas étudié le programme de philosophie.
C. Elle n’a pas su faire l’épreuve de mathématiques.
D. Elle n’a pas vu le pot de fleurs et elle est tombée.
(dif. s. 664; D=72.1)

72. La conclusion d’Henri est que:
A. Jacqueline n’a pas eu de chance.
B. Jacqueline est trop vieille pour ce genre d’aventures.
C. Jacqueline a eu beaucoup de chance.
D. C’est dommage qu’il n’y avait personne pour l’aider.
(dif. s. 477; D=53.7)

Instructions: You will now hear another conversation; this one takes place between a Paris bus driver and a passenger friend.

Chauffeur: C’est marrant, hein, les accidents... Tu vois là, (il) y a des fois, je vais pas en avoir de cinq, six mois, et puis tout d’un coup, quand ça s’y met, ça s’arrête plus...

Voyageur: A quoi qu’ça c’est dû?

Chauffeur: Et puis après, ben, j’en ai plus pendant un bon bout de temps.

Voyageur: Quand t’es en as eu un, t’as pas la frousse qu’(il) t’en arrive un autre?

Chauffeur: Ben, non, tu vois, j’y pense pas. Mais ça t’énerve; je sais pas...t’es peut-être comme qui dirait plus énervé. Mais tu sais, quand je les vois là, dans leur bagnoles, moi, (il) y a des fois, j’ai envie de leur rentrer dedans.

Voyageur: T’as d’voir t’en folloir la patience, c’est c’qu’(il) y a de sûr.

Chauffeur: Tiens, une fois, à St. Lazare...tu sais les gons, ils descendent et puis après (il faut aller tourner sur) la place; alors, tu sais un bus, ça tourne pas comme une bagnole. (Il) y avait un taxi qui voulait se mettre là-bas; voilà-t-il pas qu’(il) vient et il planter là, juste devant mon nez. "Eh ben," je lui dit,"pourquoi qu’te’s venu te mettre là-bas?" "Tu voyais pourtant bien qu’il j’allais tourner, non?" "Oh! qu’il dit,"moi j’ai le temps, je bouge pas." "Ah, tu veux pas bouger?" Alors, toé, aussi sec, j’ai mis en
Instructions: Read the series of questions printed on your test copy, select the best answer for each question according to the conversation you have just heard and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet.

73. Le chauffeur d'autobus pense que les accidents arrivent:
   A. Une fois de temps en temps.
   B. Par périodes.
   C. Quand on ne fait pas attention.
   D. A cause des femmes qui conduisent.
   (diff. = .617; D = 55.2)

74. Après avoir eu un accident sa réaction est:
   A. Il y pense tout le temps.
   B. Il fait plus attention que d'habitude.
   C. Il n'a plus confiance en lui-même.
   D. Il est énervé.
   (diff. = .352; D = 40.8)

75. Il dit que quelquefois, il a envie de:
   A. Abandonner son métier.
   B. Rentrer chez lui et dormir.
   C. Rentrer dans les voitures qui ne veulent pas se ranger.
   D. Insulter les gens qui conduisent mal.
   (diff. = .633; D = 50.2)

76. Il raconte qu'un jour, à la gare St. Lazare, un taxi:
   A. A failli écraser une personne qui descendait de l'autobus.
   B. A tourné à gauche sans prévenir.
   C. Ne s'est pas arrêté au feu rouge.
   D. Est venu s'arrêter devant lui.
   (diff. = .391; D = 57.2)

77. Le chauffeur de taxi n'a pas voulu bouger parce que:
   A. Il avait le temps.
   B. Il avait la priorité.
   C. Il attendait un client.
   D. Il voulait tourner.
   (diff. = .719; D = 51.9)

78. Alors, voici ce que le chauffeur d'autobus a fait:
   A. Il est allé chercher un agent.
   B. Il a tourné quand même et il a emporté un morceau du taxi.
   C. Il a essayé de passer à coté mais n'a pas réussi.
   D. Il a attendu qu'il y ait moins de circulation.
   (diff. = .406; D = 41.6)

*(Adapted from a transcription of a live recording used for the Elaboration du Français Fondamental, p. 252.*
79. Voyant cela, le chauffeur de taxi:
A. Est descendu de sa voiture.
B. A frappé le chauffeur d’autobus.
C. S’est mis à crier.
D. Est parti.
(dif. = .625; D = 41.6)

80. Le chauffeur d’autobus dit que:
A. Cet accident ne lui coûtera rien car c’est la compagnie qui paie.
B. C’est le chauffeur de taxi qui devra payer car il était dans son tort.
C. Il est très ennuyé car il va être obligé de payer.
D. Cet accident lui coûtera 160 francs mais il s’en moque.
(dif. = .547; D = 39.6)
APPENDIX B

Test II: Français Standard Recherché

Instructions:

You will hear a spoken statement or question; on your test copy are printed four retorts or answers. Choose the best one and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet. Listen carefully. Each statement will be said twice. Ready?

1. Ils iraient peut-être au théâtre s'ils avaient le temps.
   A. Elle m'a dit qu'elle n'était pas libre.
   B. Volontiers. Mais croyez-vous qu'elle m'attendra?
   C. Oui, mais je n'ai pas le temps.
   D. Oui, et nous pourrions aller avec eux.
   (dif. = .203; D = 52.9)*

2. Je pense qu'il va venir cet après-midi.
   A. Yves? Je croyais qu'il était à Paris...
   B. Comment veux-tu que je devine?
   C. Moi, je crois qu'il arrivera seulement demain.
   D. C'est impossible d'être prêt à midi.
   (dif. = .289; D = 5.9)

3. Je fais de mon mieux; que veut-il de plus?
   A. Moi. Donnez m'en encore un peu, s'il vous plaît.
   B. N'ajoutez rien. C'est mieux comme ça.
   C. C'est lui qui a le mieux réussi.
   D. Fais ton possible et ne t'occupe pas de ce qu'il dit.
   (dif. = .336; D = 50.0)

4. Il me l'a dit avant de partir.
   A. Quelle maladie a-t-il?
   B. Comment l'a-t-il su?
   C. Où est-ce que nous irons?
   D. Sais-tu ce qu'il fera demain?
   (dif. = .356; D = 50.0)

5. Je te le dis, et je te le répète, il faut que je m'en aille avant ce soir.
   A. Ne t'impatiente pas, j'ai compris.
   B. Laisse-le parler. Toi, tu es libre de faire ce que tu veux.
   C. Pourquoi a-t-il répété cela à tout le monde?
   D. Dans ce cas, nous avons encore trois jours avant ton départ.
   (dif. = .164; D = 38.2)

*dif. represents the relative difficulty of the item, i.e., the percentage of students missing the item.
D is the discrimination index; it reflects the degree to which the item discriminates between the better and the poorer students (top and bottom 27.5 percent).
6. Entendu; je lui dirai cela de votre part.
   A. N'oubliez pas de m'apporter sa réponse.
   B. Oui, mais ma part n'est pas aussi grosse que la vôtre.
   C. Vous croyez qu'il dirait cela à mon sujet?
   D. Vous savez bien que je suis de votre côté...
   (dif. = .492; D = 91.2)

7. Passez-moi celui qui est sur le lit, s'il vous plaît.
   A. Sully? C'était un ministre d'Henri IV, n'est-ce pas?
   B. Je ne suis pas assez souple; je prélèvre passer à côté.
   C. Voilà, je vous l'apporte tout de suite.
   D. Je ne savais pas qu'il fallait l'essuyer.
   (dif. = .136; D = 32.2)

8. Je lui ai dit au-revoir et puis je suis parti.
   A. Vous êtes parti sans dire au revoir?
   B. C'est tout ce qu'il a dit?
   C. De quelle a été sa réaction?
   D. En Juillet, il fait beau pour voyager.
   (dif. = .188; D = 44.1)

9. Ce n'est pas celui-ci que je veux; c'est celui-là.
   A. Je ne vois aucune différence entre ces deux huit.
   B. Moi aussi; je suis complètement perdu.
   C. Eh bien, prenez celui que vous voulez.
   D. Vous avez raison; l'huile d'olive est meilleure.
   (dif. = .070; D = 14.7)

10. Dans ce cas, il n'y a plus qu'à recommencer.
    A. N'y a-t-il pas moyen de faire autrement?
    B. Mais je suis fatiguée de danser!
    C. À quelle heure dis-tu que ça va commencer?
    D. Tu es sûr que c'est lui qui a commencé?
    (dif. = .359; D = 87.6)

11. Je te promets de ne pas le vendre.
    A. Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'il dit cela.
    B. Il a besoin de soleil et de bonne nourriture.
    C. C'est cela; mais ne tire pas trop fort.
    D. D'accord; je compte sur toi.
    (dif. = .133; D = 35.3)

12. Je n'ai plus rien à porter
    A. Tu exagères! Ton armoire est pleine de vêtements.
    B. Eh bien, mets-le ailleurs.
    C. Attends, je vais t'aider.
    D. Moi non plus, je n'ai pas réussi.
    (dif. = .086; D = 17.6)

13. Il ne faut pas le dire, voyons!
    A. Je ne suis pas encore prêt.
    B. Pourquoi? C'est un secret?
    C. Je ne m'en suis pas aperçu.
    D. Maintenant, vous avez bien meilleure mine.
    (dif. = .055; D = 17.6)
14. Le mieux, c'est de ne pas faire attention à ce qu'il dit.
   A. Si vous aviez mieux écouté, vous le sauriez.
   B. Non, je n'ai pas remarqué qui a dit cela.
   C. C'est pour cela qu'il n'a rien compris.
   D. C'est le seul moyen d'avoir la paix.
   (dif. = .242;  D = 70.6)

15. Qu'allons nous faire en attendant qu'ils se décident?
   A. Moi, je le ferai, si vous voulez.
   B. Vous êtes libres de faire ce que vous voulez.
   C. C'est ce qu'on nous a dit.
   D. Vous savez bien que c'est toujours lui qui décide.
   (dif. = .352;  D = 76.5)

16. Où iront-ils prendre ce bateau?
   A. Ah? Je ne savais pas que c'étaient eux...
   B. Vous croyez qu'ils oseront faire cela?
   C. Ils y iront demain.
   D. Je crois que c'est à Calais.
   (dif. = .023;  D = 5.9)

17. Crois-tu à ce que dit le maire?
   A. Non, je t'assure que c'est pas moi qui lui ai dit cela.
   B. C'est aussi mon avis.
   C. Je ne sais pas..., mais je fais comme si j'y croyais.
   D. Je suis sûr que personne n'a dit une chose pareille.
   (dif. = .266;  D = 35.3)

18. A mon avis, nos amis avaient bien raison.
   A. Mais oui, racontez moi ce qu'on vous a fait.
   B. Je n'en ai pas non plus.
   C. Comment ont-ils pu faire cela?
   D. Je suis d'accord avec vous.
   (dif. = .109;  D = 17.6)

19. Si je ne me contrôlais pas, je ne sais ce que je serais capable de te faire.
   A. Offre-moi ce que tu voudras, c'est l'intention qui compte.
   B. Pourquoi l'avez vous fait chez lui?
   C. Pardonne-moi, je ne l'ai pas fait exprès.
   D. Sois tranquille; si tu meurs nous nous occuperons de tout.
   (dif. = .648;  D = 64.7)

20. Fais bien attention à ne pas les perdre.
   A. Dans ce cas, nous n'inviterons que les célibataires.
   B. Je serai très prudent, je te le promets.
   C. Oui, il y en avait partout.
   D. C'est exact; il en reste un.
   (dif. = .094;  D = 32.4)

21. Il n'y a eu que quatre personnes qui ont été arrêtées.
   A. Pourquoi ne lui en a-t-on pas donné plus?
   B. C'est pour cette raison que je n'aime pas le poisson.
   C. S'ils en avaient arrêté seulement quatre, on comprendrait.
   D. Tous les autres ont été laissés en liberté?
   (dif. = .211;  D = 29.4)
22. Je ne sais pas s'il y en aura assez? Ça risque d'être insuffisant.
   A. Oui, il l'aura bien mérité.
   B. Oui, c'est un métier dangereux.
   C. Oui, vous avez raison, c'est ce qu'il était en train de faire.
   D. Allons en acheter quatre ou cinq de plus.
   (dif. = .183; D = 61.7)

23. Est-ce parce que vous êtes fâché, qu'on ne vous voit plus?
   A. Oui, c'est pour ça que je suis en colère.
   B. Mais non, c'est parce que j'ai été très occupé.
   C. Oui, je regrette de n'avoir pas pu le faire.
   D. Entre amis, on se dit "tu."
   (dif. = .336; D = 61.8)

24. En voici un qui est prêt.
   A. Oui, nous arriverons à New Delhi dans une heure.
   B. Non, laissez-le là.
   C. Pourquoi ne l'a-t-il pas emporté?
   D. Préparez-en encore deux, s'il vous plaît.
   (dif. = .352; D = 55.9)

25. Je ne sais pas ce qu'ils sont devenus.
   A. Pourquoi ne sont-ils pas venus chez vous?
   B. On m'a dit qu'ils ont déménagé.
   C. Chez qui sont-ils passés en venant?
   D. Je ne savais pas que vous faisiez du ski.
   (dif. = .211; D = 41.2)

26. Ce livre n'est vraiment pas amusant.
   A. Pourquoi sortez-vous avec lui?
   B. Lisiez Astérix, ce sera plus drôle.
   C. Mais si, mange vite; ça te fera grandir.
   D. Les livres coûtent de plus en plus cher.
   (dif. = .031; D = 8.8)

27. Dans quel établissement est-ce que tu travailles?
   A. Aux usines Renault.
   B. Dans ma chambre.
   C. En chimie.
   D. Dans le commerce des vins et liqueurs.
   (dif. = .188; D = 17.6)

28. Il dit qu'il n'a pas envie de travailler aujourd'hui.
   A. Je crois qu'à lui arrive souvent.
   B. Comment a-t-il attrapé cela?
   C. Il devrait acheter un billet de la Loterie Nationale.
   D. Que pourrions nous faire pour l'aider à oublier ses soucis?
   (dif. = .227; D = 44.1)

29. Il a l'air niais.
   A. Il devrait se reposer.
   B. Savez-vous pourquoi il est en colère?
   C. Pourtant, on dit qu'il est très intelligent.
   D. Donnez-lui un peu d'eau fraîche; ça lui fera du bien.
   (dif. = .719; D = 32.4)
30. Il m’ennuie avec ses discours.
   A. Est-ce que vous souffrez beaucoup?
   B. Eh bien, changez de médecin!
   C. Ça ne m’étonne pas, c’est un voleur.
   D. Quand il commence à parler, on ne peut plus l’arrêter.
   (diff. = 0.036; D = 26.5)

31. Garçon, apportez-moi une bière pression!
   A. Oui, monsieur, avec ou sans crème?
   B. Oui monsieur, du vin blanc ou du rouge?
   C. Oui monsieur, de la bière française ou allemande?
   D. Oui monsieur, avec ou sans glace?
   (diff. = 0.143; D = 14.7)

32. Il s’est fait voler.
   A. Il aurait dû faire attention.
   B. Monsieur voyage en avion! Quel snob!
   C. C’est une bonne idée, les voyages forment la jeunesse!
   D. C’est la première fois qu’il est battu, n’est-ce pas?
   (diff. = 0.555; D = 58.8)

33. Je suis fatigué de travailler toute la journée.
   A. Les voyages sont fatigants.
   B. C’est vrai, on s’ennuie vite quand on ne fait rien.
   C. Vous travaillez trop; il faut vous reposer.
   D. Faites bien attention de ne pas prendre froid.
   (diff. = 0.070; D = 14.7)

34. Téléphonez-nous avant de partir.
   A. D’accord, et je vous dirai comment la réunion s’est passée.
   B. Entendu, je vous l’envoie par la poste.
   C. Voilà. Avez-vous une aiguille?
   D. C’est promis, je serai chez vous à onze heures.
   (diff. = 0.234; D = 47.1)

35. Vous savez, avec le temps, on finit par s’y habituer.
   A. Je n’ai pas eu le temps de finir.
   B. Non, je n’en ai jamais entendu parler.
   C. Je viens de commencer.
   D. Quand on est jeune, on s’adapte plus facilement.
   (diff. = 0.313; D = 52.9)

36. Qu’est-ce que tu as? Tu es fou!
   A. Non, rassure-toi, je suis parfaitement lucide.
   B. C’est Jacques qui m’a emmené.
   C. Le bandit! Il m’a poussé et il m’a volé mon argent.
   D. Oui, j’ai mal à l’estomac.
   (diff. = 0.035; D = 8.8)

37. Il y a tout ce qu’il faut dans le réfrigérateur, vous n’avez qu’à vous servir.
   A. Dois-je le servir en entrée ou avec la viande?
   B. D’accord. Je prendrai les outils dont j’aurai besoin.
   C. Bon, merci; je mangerais quand j’aurai faim.
   D. Il en faut deux par personne.
   (diff. = 0.063; D = 17.6)
38. Ils l'ont bien mérité; ils n'auraient pas dû être aussi sûr d'eux.
   A. Ils sont formidables; on ne peut pas faire mieux!
   B. Ils trouvent toujours quelqu'un pour faire leur travail.
   C. Ne soyez pas si sévère, voyons!
   D. C'est la difficulté qui les rend intelligents.
   (dif. = .500; D = 61.8)

39. Que cet homme est ennuyeux!
   A. Il a trop bu, ça se voit.
   B. Il parle pour ne rien dire.
   C. Il a beaucoup d'esprit, n'est-ce pas?
   D. Oui, il sort souvent le soir.
   (dif. = .109; D = 23.5)

40. Mais non; ils ont dit cela pour plaisanter.
   A. Ils savent pourtant que j'ai mal aux pieds.
   B. D'accord, j'y réfléchirai.
   C. C'est parce qu'ils sont jaloux qu'ils disent cela.
   D. Etes-vous sûr qu'ils ont dit cela pour rire?
   (dif. = .195; D = 20.6)

41. Comme on s'ennuie dans ce cours!
   A. Vous pouvez faire la même chose.
   B. Au bout de dix minutes, je commence à m'endormir.
   C. Ouvrez les fenêtres, il fera moins chaud.
   D. Je ne croyais pas que ce serait si difficile.
   (dif. = .191; D = 35.3)

42. Qui vous a fourni ces renseignements?
   A. Oui, c'est lui qui l'a cassé.
   B. Je ne sais pas où il l'a mis.
   C. C'est Pierre qui l'a réparé.
   D. Jacques; il est bien informé, vous savez.
   (dif. = .102; D = 23.5)

43. Il ne travaillait pas beaucoup. C'est certain.
   A. Oui, il avait beaucoup maigri les derniers temps.
   B. C'est pour cela qu'il est fatigué.
   C. C'est vrai qu'il n'était pas très courageux!
   D. Alors, pourquoi en parlez-vous?
   (dif. = .102; D = 23.5)

44. C'était très intelligent, vraiment! A quoi cela vous a-t-il servi?
   A. Oui, je m'en suis servi plusieurs fois.
   B. Je ne sais pas comment faire.
   C. C'est grâce à vous que j'ai fait des progrès.
   D. C'était une idée stupide, je le reconnais.
   (dif. = .664; D = 76.5)

45. Ne vous inquiétez pas; nous allons vous aider.
   A. Laissez-moi; je ne vous ai rien fait.
   B. C'est vraiment gentil de votre part.
   C. Vous avez de la chance que je suis trop vieux pour me défendre.
   D. Mais non, je ne travaille pas trop.
   (dif. = .078; D = 23.5)
46. Où est votre voiture?
   A. Elle est allée au cinéma avec Pierre.
   B. Ils sont tous deux très heureux ensemble.
   C. Je l’ai laissée au garage.
   D. Dans l’armoire, en haut, à droite.
   (dif. ≈ .000; D = 0.0)

47. Savez-vous à quoi sort cet objet?
   A. Je ne m’en suis pas servi, je vous assure.
   B. C’est une machine à calculer.
   C. Ne serrez pas tant! Vous allez me faire mal.
   D. Un bifteck pommes frites et une salade.
   (dif. ≈ .047; D = 14.7)

48. Un camion est entré en collision avec leur voiture.
   A. J’espère qu’ils n’ont pas été blessés.
   B. Heureusement qu’il y avait assez de place.
   C. Le camion était arrêté, bien sûr?
   D. Ca leur permet de voyager sans dépenser beaucoup d’argent.
   (dif. ≈ .234; D = 20.6)

49. Je suis épuisée.
   A. Mais si, prenez-en encore un peu.
   B. Il n’en reste plus.
   C. Alors, achetez une nouvelle robe.
   D. Vous devriez vous reposer.
   (dif. ≈ .117; D = 20.7)

50. Est-ce que cela vaut la peine d’y aller?
   A. Elle a beaucoup pleuré.
   B. Je ne savais pas que c’était si cher!
   C. Nous avons pris un billet aller et retour.
   D. Oui, c’est vraiment formidable!
   (dif. ≈ .273; D = 61.8)

51. Je devine vos intentions: vous avez besoin d’argent, n’est-ce pas?
   A. Oui, j’en mangerais avec plaisir.
   B. Evidemment, si vous pouviez me prêter cent francs, ça m’aiderait...
   C. Vous vous trompez, je n’y suis pas allé.
   D. Oui, le voyage a été très fatigant; je vais me reposer un peu.
   (dif. ≈ .031; D = 11.8)

52. Eh bien, en effet, c’est un parfait hypocrite.
   A. Oui, c’est une très belle région.
   B. Vous croyez qu’on ne peut pas avoir confiance en lui?
   C. Nous avons déjà parlé de ça.
   D. Pouvez-vous me prêter votre stylo?
   (dif. ≈ .073; D = 11.8)

53. On ne peut pas dire qu’il soit bête; mais il faut reconnaître qu’il n’a aucun sens pratique.
   A. Je dirai même qu’il est très laid!
   B. Personne ne connaît ses origines.
   C. Oui, c’est un rêveur.
   D. Prenez cette direction, c’est plus simple.
   (dif. ≈ .211; D = 52.9)
54. Cet homme nous a causé toutes sortes d’ennuis.
   A. Est-ce que une maladie contagieuse?
   B. Est-ce que ça lui a pris beaucoup de temps?
   C. A-t-il parlé d’autre chose?
   D. Ça ne m’étonne pas; il cause des problèmes à tout le monde.
   (diff. = .070; $D = 14.7$)

55. C’est elle qui s’intéresse à lui, croyez-moi.
   A. Si c’est lui qui dit cela, je n’y crois pas.
   B. Oui, je compte sur vous.
   C. Croyez-vous qu’il va l’épouser?
   D. Je crois qu’elle ne nous a pas vu.
   (diff. = .203; $D = 5.9$)

56. Il ne se fait guère de soucis, c’est évident.
   A. Il en a fait deux.
   B. J’ai déjà fait mon service militaire.
   C. Est-ce qu’il est allé voir un médecin?
   D. Oui, il prend la vie comme elle vient.
   (diff. = .211; $D = 41.2$)

57. As-tu vu le nouveau professeur de gymnastique? Je le trouve très sympathique.
   A. Le mien est encore meilleur que le sien.
   B. C’est vrai et hier il a puni toute la classe.
   C. C’est vrai. As-tu vu comme il joue bien au tennis?
   D. Oui, ça me plaît.
   (diff. = .141; $D = 14.7$)

58. As-tu compris ce que le professeur a expliqué?
   A. Non, je n’y ai rien compris.
   B. Moi, je ne suis pas d’accord avec ses idées.
   C. On dit que c’est un professeur très sévère.
   D. A mon avis, ses récits ne sont pas très intéressants.
   (diff. = .031; $D = 5.9$)

59. Pourriez-vous me prêter cent francs?
   A. Pourquoi? Vous voulez interroger quelqu’un?
   B. J’en ai déjà.
   C. Je vous les montrerai demain.
   D. Je regrette, je n’ai pas d’argent sur moi.
   (diff. = .039; $D = 11.8$)

60. Qu’en pensez-vous?
   A. D’habitude, je déjeune à midi.
   B. Il n’a rien dit.
   C. L’idée me paraît excellente.
   D. J’ai oublié de le prévenir.
   (diff. = .109; $D = 32.4$)

61. Il n’a pas employé la bonne méthode.
   A. Que voulait-il faire avec ce bois?
   B. Est-ce qu’il est bien soigné maintenant?
   C. Montrez-lui comment il faut faire.
   D. Il savait pourtant qu’on ne doit pas voler.
   (diff. = .031; $D = 8.8$)
   A. Des adolescents veulent toujours paraître plus âgés qu'ils ne sont.
   B. C'est à cause de sa manière de s'habiller.
   C. Heureusement que ses petits enfants s'occupent bien de lui.
   D. Mais oui, après un certain temps, on s'en fatigue.
   (dif. = .234; D = 52.9)

63. Ce n'est certain pas moi qui leur donnerais des motos; c'est bien trop dangereux.
   A. Moi non plus. Je ne voudrais pas être responsable d'un accident.
   B. Je leur en donnerais aussi, si je pouvais.
   C. Ils ne pensent qu'à leur apparence.
   D. C'est votre faute.
   (dif. = .078; D = 29.4)

64. Il faut fêter cette occasion; venez, je vous offre quelque chose à boire.
   A. Ce n'est pas nécessaire, je viens d'en acheter un.
   B. C'est très bon marché en effet.
   C. D'accord, si vous payez l'entrée, j'y vais.
   D. C'est gentil de votre part, je boirai volontiers quelque chose.
   (dif. = .117; D = 26.5)

65. En tous cas, nous aurons au moins cela.
   A. Moi, j'en ai encore moins que vous.
   B. Mais oui, il faut profiter de l'occasion.
   C. C'est là qu'on range le vin.
   D. Non, les prix n'ont pas changé récemment.
   (dif. = .609; D = 44.1)

66. Ne te plains pas; tu aurais pu être tué.
   A. Oui, j'ai de la chance d'en être sorti vivant.
   B. Je ne mangerai pas trop.
   C. Oui, mais j'ai préféré l'emporter.
   D. C'est vrai, j'ai failli l'oublier.
   (dif. = .219; D = 44.1)

Instructions: You will now hear a short conversation taking place between Jacqueline and Henri. You will hear it only once so listen carefully.

Jacqueline: Tu as su que j'ai échoué au baccalauréat, n'est-ce pas?
Henri: Je ne te crois pas. Tu plaisantes.
Jacqueline: Non, c'est vrai, je t'assure.
Henri: Ce n'est pas possible! Tu étais pourtant très forte en philosophie, n'est-ce pas?
Jacqueline: Oui, en philosophie, tout a bien marché, mais je n'ai pas su faire l'épreuve de mathématiques. Il n'y a qu'une section du programme que je n'avais pas bien révisée, et par malchance, c'est précisément cette question là que j'ai eu à l'examen.
Henri: Tu n'as vraiment pas eu de chance.
Instructions: Now read the series of questions printed on your test copy, select the best answer according to the conversation you just heard and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet.

67. Cette conversation a lieu entre:
   A. Deux employés de bureau.
   B. Deux lycéens.
   C. Deux membres d'une équipe sportive.
   D. Deux professeurs.
   (dif. = .031; D = 5.9)

68. Jacqueline annonce à son ami que:
   A. Elle vient de passer son permis de conduire.
   B. Elle a été privée de sortie au lycée.
   C. Elle n'a pas été reçue au baccalauréat.
   D. Elle a eu un accident.
   (dif. = .086; D = 17.6)

69. Henri pense d'abord que:
   A. Elle lui dit cela pour qu'il aille faire les courses à sa place.
   B. Elle essaie de se débarrasser de lui.
   C. Elle n'ose pas le dire à ses parents.
   D. Elle plaisante.
   (dif. = .141; D = 41.2)

70. Il dit que Jacqueline:
   A. Aurait dû faire attention.
   B. N'a pas assez étudié.
   C. Est très forte en philosophie.
   D. A bien mérité ce qui lui arrive.
   (dif. = .031; D = 8.8)

71. Jacqueline explique que:
   A. Elle était pressée de rentrer pour se sécher.
   B. Elle n'avait pas étudié le programme de philosophie.
   C. Elle n'a pas su faire l'épreuve de mathématiques.
   D. Elle n'a pas vu le pot de fleurs et elle est tombée.
   (dif. = .031; D = 2.9)

72. La conclusion d'Henri est que:
   A. Jacqueline n'a pas eu de chance.
   B. Jacqueline est trop vieille pour ce genre d'aventures.
   C. Jacqueline a eu beaucoup de chance.
   D. C'est dommage qu'il n'y avait personne pour l'aider.
   (dif. = .172; D = 41.2)

Instructions: You will now hear another conversation; this one takes place between a Paris bus driver and a passenger friend.

Chauffeur: Les accidents sont vraiment étranges. Parfois, je n'en ai pas pendant cinq ou six mois, et puis brusquement, quand ça commence, ça ne s'arrête plus.

Voyageur: À votre avis, quelle en est la cause?
Chauffeur: Et puis après, je n'en ai plus pendant assez longtemps.

Voyageur: Quand vous avez eu un accident, n'avez-vous pas peur d'en avoir un autre?

Chauffeur: Non, voyez-vous, je n'y pense pas. Mais je me sens plus énervé. D'ailleurs, quand je les vois dans leur voiture, il m'arrive de vouloir les écraser.

Voyageur: Il doit vous falloir beaucoup de patience!

Chauffeur: En effet. Voici ce qui s'est passé un jour à la gare St. Lazare. Les gens descendent, et puis après, il faut aller tourner sur la place, et je vous assure qu'en autobus ne tourne pas aussi facilement qu'une voiture. Il y avait un taxi qui voulait se mettre là-bas. Il est venu s'arrêter juste devant moi. Alors, je lui ai dit "Pourquoi êtes-vous venu vous mettre là; vous voyez pourtant bien que j'allais tourner." Moi, j'ai le temps, je ne bouge pas" m'a-t-il répondu. Alors, voyant cela, j'ai passé la première et j'ai arraché son aile. Vous auriez dû l'entendre crier! "Vous n'avez pas voulu bouger, eh bien, êtes-vous satisfait maintenant?" lui ai-je dit. "Moi, ça va me coûter cent soixante francs, mais je m'en moque."

Instructions: Read the series of questions printed on your test copy, select the best answer for each question according to the conversation you have just heard and mark the corresponding letter on your answer sheet.

73. Le chauffeur d'autobus pense que les accidents arrivent:
   A. Une fois de temps en temps.
   B. Par périodes.
   C. Quand on ne fait pas attention.
   D. A cause des femmes qui conduisent.
   (dif. = .305; D = 55.9)

74. Après avoir eu un accident sa réaction est:
   A. Il y pense tout le temps.
   B. Il fait plus attention que d'habitude.
   C. Il n'a plus confiance en lui-même.
   D. Il est énervé.
   (dif. a = .180; D = 23.5)

75. Il dit que quelquefois, il a envie de:
   A. Abandonner son métier.
   B. Rentrer chez lui et dormir.
   C. Écraser les voitures qui ne veulent pas se ranger.
   D. Insulter les gens qui conduisent mal.
   (dif. = .320; D = 35.3)

76. Il raconte qu'un jour, à la gare St. Lazare, un taxi:
   A. A failli écraser une personne qui descendait de l'autobus.
   B. A tourné à gauche sans prévenir.
   C. Ne s'est pas arrêté au feu rouge.
   D. Est venu s'arrêter devant lui.
   (dif. = .117; D = 29.4)
77. Le chauffeur de taxi n’a pas voulu bouger parce que:
   A. Il avait le temps.
   B. Il avait la priorité.
   C. Il attendait un client.
   D. Il voulait tourner.
   (dif. = .477; D = 55.9)

78. Alors, voici ce que le chauffeur d’autobus a fait:
   A. Il est allé chercher un agent.
   B. Il a tourné quand même et il a emporté un morceau du taxi.
   C. Il a essayé de passer à côté mais n’a pas réussi.
   D. Il a attendu qu’il y ait moins de circulation.
   (dif. = .219; D = 55.9)

79. Voyant cela, le chauffeur de taxi:
   A. Est descendu de sa voiture.
   B. A frappé le chauffeur d’autobus.
   C. S’est mis à crier.
   D. Est parti.
   (dif. = .461; D = 55.9)

80. Le chauffeur d’autobus dit que:
   A. Cet accident ne lui coûtera rien car c’est la compagnie qui paie.
   B. C’est le chauffeur de taxi qui devra payer car il était dans son tort.
   C. Il est très ennuyé car il va être obligé de payer.
   D. Cet accident lui coûtera 160 francs mais il s’en moque.
   (dif. = .164; D = 53.9)
# APPENDIX C

## Item Number:

### COLLOQUIAL

**Stem:**

**Choices:** A, B, C, D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>Discrimination</th>
<th>% of Students Selecting Each Answer</th>
<th>Validity Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU 1</td>
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<td>OSU 2</td>
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<td>OSU 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Univ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Groups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Changes Made:**

### STANDARD

**Stem:**

**Choices:** A, B, C, D

| OSU 1       |       |                |   |   |   |   |
| OSU 2       |       |                |   |   |   |   |
| OSU 3       |       |                |   |   |   |   |
| Other Univ. |       |                |   |   |   |   |
| All Groups  |       |                |   |   |   |   |

**Changes Made:**

*Correct answer will be indicated by an asterisk*
APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:____________________________________

College(s) attended:_____________________________________________________

Quarter in which you expect to graduate:______________

Number of years of study of French
  A. High School:__________,
  B. College:______________

Method(s) used (traditional; audio-lingual; combination of both):
  A. High School:_______________________
  B. College:_____________________

Have you taken any courses taught by native French speakers? Yes____, No____.

If yes, how many?__________

Have you had informal contacts with French native speakers in the U.S.A.?______

If yes, to what extent? Few____; Quite a few____; Many____.

Have you spent any time in France or in French speaking countries? Yes____; No____.

If yes, how long?__________________

Are there any other experiences or factors which might have a bearing upon your
understanding of colloquial French?__________________________________________

What is the most important reason why you are studying French?_________________

There follows a list of possible objectives for the study of French.
Please rate each listed objective according to the importance you personally
attribute to it and record your answer in the first column. In the second column,
write your evaluation of how well your college language training prepared you to
achieve that objective. Use a 1 to 5 rating scale; 1= lowest in value; 5= highest
in value.

(Next page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Student personal evaluation of importance of objective</th>
<th>Effectiveness of college language training in preparing you to achieve that obj.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To be able to read and appreciate French literary works, both modern and classical.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To be able to read current newspapers, magazines, and articles of interest to you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. To be able to understand French as it is spoken by educated speakers in formal situations such as radio and TV broadcasts, lectures, plays, speeches, and formal social intercourse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. To be able to understand French as it is spoken informally both by educated speakers and &quot;ordinary&quot; people, in everyday types of situations, when these people are talking among peers or friends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. To learn to speak French in a careful, formal manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. To learn to speak French both in a careful, formal way and in a carefree colloquial way according to whichever is called for by the circumstances of the communication.</td>
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<td>7. To be able to communicate with French people in all walks of life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. To become familiar with the different &quot;niveaux de langue&quot; or manners of expressing oneself in different situations and their socio-cultural implications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the great cultural achievements of the French people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. To become familiar with and develop appreciation for the way of life, system of values and patterns of daily living of the French people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. To become aware of the way in which the culture is reflected in the language and vice versa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. To develop your knowledge and appreciation of the modern means of creative expression using both language and audio-visual technology such as films, songs, humorous cartoons, TV shows, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. To be able to understand with reasonable ease the language and the cultural connotations of French commercial films you might wish to see.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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