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THE USE OF OCCITAN DIALECTS IN LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON, FRANCE

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

Oxford
May 2014

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Abstract

Since the medieval period, the Occitan dialects of southern France have been a significant part of the culture of the Midi region of France. In the past, it was the language of the state and literature. However, Occitan dialects have been in a slow decline, beginning with the Ordinance of Villers-Coterêts in 1539 which banned the use of Occitan in state affairs. While this did little to affect the daily life and usage of Occitan, it established a precedent that is still referred to in modern arguments about the use of regional languages (Costa, 2). In the beginning of the 21st century, the position of Occitan dialects in Midi is precarious.

This thesis will investigate the current use of Occitan dialects in and around Montpellier, France, particularly which dialects are most commonly used in the region of Languedoc-Roussillon (where Montpellier is located), the environment in which they are learned, the methods of transmission, and the general attitude towards Occitan. It will also discuss Occitan's current use in literature, music, and politics. While the primary geographic focus of this thesis will be on Montpellier and its surroundings, it should be somewhat applicable to the whole of Occitan speaking France. The information for this thesis will be gathered from two sources. The first is the varied literature on the subject of Occitan dialects and their uses. The second is a series of interviews with Occitan speakers of Montpellier and Beziers conducted in the spring of 2013.

The suspected conclusion is that the Occitan speakers of Languedoc-Roussillon are fighting a battle that they cannot win. Though the speakers themselves may do all that they possibly can breathe life into their language, political pressure from the national

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government will not allow Occitan to flourish as a viable and independent language with fully native speakers. In a few generations, Occitan will be a dead language (Pach, 91).

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Chapter I
Literature Review

Occitan as a language has its roots in the Roman occupation of France, when the local Gallic language was blended with Latin for ease of communication between the Roman conquerors and the local residents. Unlike the northern portion of France, the southern version of Gallo-Roman was also heavily influenced by the Iberian languages of the region. After the decline of Roman influence after the arrival of the Wisigoths in 418, the differences between the languages of northern and southern France became more pronounced. The northern dialects were significantly influenced by the Germanic language of their Frank conquerors. The dialects of the south, however, experienced minimal Germanic influence, and almost none due to the Frankish conquerors of their northern counterpart (Bec, 20-21). These two distinct groups became known as the Langue d'Oïl and the Lengua d'Oc respectively, due to their pronunciation of the word 'yes'. In Figure 1, Langue d'Oïl regions are colored green, tan, or yellow, Langue d'Oc regions are outlined in red, Franco-Provencal dialects are outlined in blue, and Basque and Breton speaking regions are outlined in gray.

Due in part to the different environments in which they developed, French and Occitan have key differences in pronunciation and vocabulary. While French, which developed from the Langue d'Oïl, was heavily influenced by Germanic languages, Occitan was not. As such, Occitan does not have the same tendency to be spoken in the throat as French, and has a pronunciation similar to Spanish or Catalan. The latter of

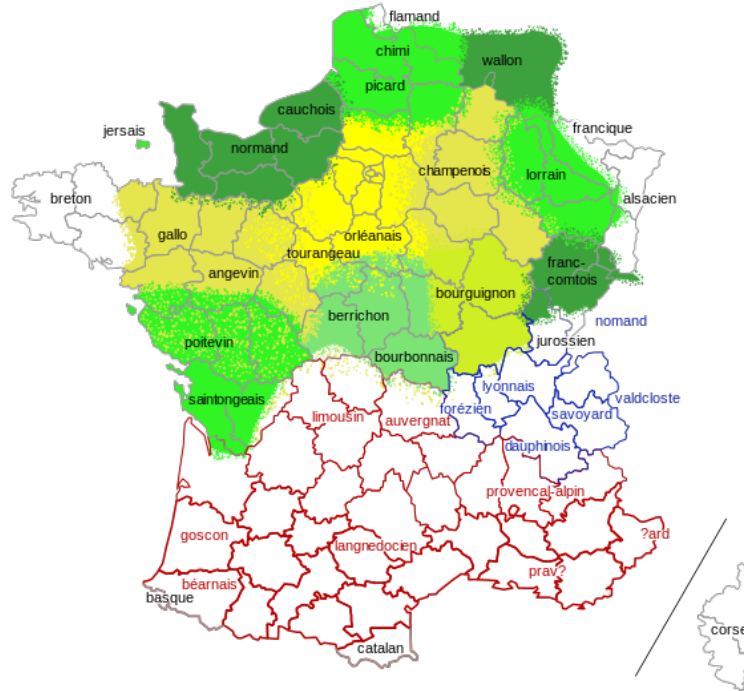


Figure 1. Langue d’Oïl 2.svg. January 22, 2014

which is Occitan’s closest relative, as it is one of the few other Occitano-Romance languages.

The north and south of France were separated by more than just language. By the middle ages, northern France was ruled by the kings of France from Paris. Southern France, specifically the region known as the Midi, was part of the kingdom of Aragon, with its nobles swearing fealty to its king. There were also several ideological differences between the two regions, one of which was the Midi’s practice of religious tolerance. This belief would eventually lead to the Albigensian Crusades of the early 13th century and eventual absorption of the Midi into France under the direction of the French king Philippe II (Costa, 141-160). For a time, this only affected the linguistics of

the Midi in small ways. The Langue d'Oïl was spoken little more than it had been within the bounds of the Midi.

With time, however, one dialect of the Langue d'Oïl, specifically the dialect spoken in and around Paris, found its way into one very specific area of use. For the sake of clarity, court scribes began to use the occasional word or phrase of this dialect, known as *françois*, in the government documents they wrote to be sent off to the northern, *françois* speaking government (Safran,41). This use for *françois* was made mandatory by the Ordinance of Villers-Coterrêts in 1539, which stipulated that all official documents were to be written in *françois*. This mandate, it should be noted, was not made in the interest of linguistic unity due to both a massive variance in orthography and the illiterate state of the general populous, but instead to increase the significance of the Parisian court as a seat of power. It did, however, lend *françois* a certain cachet, enabling it to be seen as more official than its provincial counterparts in an attempt to give the Parisian king an authoritative advantage over his more localized counterparts (Safran, 41).

In part due to this prestige, by the end of the 18th century, Occitan dialects were not as commonly spoken by the upper classes or the bourgeoisie. There was no particular stigma attached to them as a regional dialect (this is unusual), but Occitan tended to be the language of the countryside and lower classes. That lack of stigma changed with the dawning of the French Revolution and the Jacobin era. Unlike the Bourbon dynasty (see French dynastic timeline, Appendix B), which had seen the futility of attempting to force a multi-lingual society to speak one dialect out of many regional languages with any consistency, the Jacobins were determined to use French as a unifying force for their post-revolutionary country (Safran, 42). Admittedly, they faced fewer obstacles than the

Bourbons. By 1795, French orthography had become more or less stabilized and the language that had evolved from *françois* had come to be used in the predominantly French speaking portions of France. It did not, however, hold sway over all of the regions that spoke regional languages other than French. In order to promote a government based on the idea of the general collective will of the people of France, the Jacobins needed to remove any and all intermediaries between the citizens, including regional languages (Safran, 42).

This desire to cater to a general will leads to several laws being instated by the revolutionary government. The first was the decree of the 2 Thermidor, year II (July of 1794), which dictated that “no public act, no matter what part of the republic, may be written in any language other than French.” Violators of this decree were punished with imprisonment and loss of their government posts. The next decree was not focused on adults and government officials, but on education and schooling. The Lakanal decree of November 1794 mandated that all schooling be conducted in French, with any regional languages being used only as an aid (Safran, 42).

The Lakanal decree was passed largely due to the report of the Abbé Grégoire, known as the *Rapport sur la Nécessité et les Moyens d'anéantir les Patois et d'universaliser l'Usage de la Langue française*,¹ which estimated that the eight million French citizens spoke one of at least 30 distinctly different patois, and could do no more than babble a few phrases of proper French. Occitan was listed as a group of mutually unintelligible dialects. The Abbé further asserted that such inferior languages clearly needed to be abandoned in favor of the far superior French (Bell, 115). Although the

¹ Report on the Necessity and Means to annihilate the Patois and to universalize the Usage of the French Language

Abbé and his report appear to have been the root of this opinion, his report nevertheless fueled the trend towards the absolute domination of the French language in the guise of a quest for mutual comprehension, possibly as a way of avoiding the failings of the revolutionary government (Bell, 123-4). By its downfall, the campaign against regional dialects had gained enough momentum to continue on its own. In 1820, the domination of the French language was made official by Article 2 of the French constitution, which stated “La langue de la République est le français.” These simple words were an attempt to further entrenched French as superior to the other languages found within its borders.

Still, French did not completely take hold of all of its regions. Officials reported back to Paris that the hold of French in the provinces was tenuous at best. These reports were underscored by an official survey undertaken in 1863 which concluded that in 8,381 communities, nearly a fourth of France’s 37,510 communes, no French was spoken whatsoever. It further concluded that of France’s four million school children, 448,328 could not speak French, and roughly 1.5 million were not literate in French. Thus it was concluded that for at least half the population of France, the national language was a foreign language. For a government still holding firmly to the Jacobin teaching that regional languages were sewers of dissention and disruption of national unity, this was not to be borne. Teachers going to areas where the local language was strong found themselves with a secondary task: to stamp out any language other than French (Jacobs and Gordon, 114-5).

This use of teachers as a force of language destruction was increased by the introduction of a free, public, and mandatory education system. A series of laws passed in 1882 known as the Ferry Laws continued this trend. Although the primary goal of the

Ferry laws was to take the control of the education of young French minds away from the Catholic Church and place it firmly in the control of the laic and secular hands of the government, there was a secondary motivation. Jules Ferry, the creator and namesake of these laws, was a devoted follower of Jacobin philosophies. For him, French was the language of nationalism, and the best place to wage war against the opposing regional languages was in the classroom. Students were trained to speak in French instead of their regional languages by means of humiliating punishments, such as having ‘tokens’ like a rusted *sou* hung around the neck of a student caught speaking their regional language (Beer, 116-7). This ritualistic shaming of regional languages became known as *la vergonha* in Occitan, which translates to ‘the shaming’, which some consider to be ongoing.

The destruction of regional dialects was only furthered by military conscription. Made mandatory because of various German threats, French became a crucial means of communication between soldiers whose regional languages were as varied as Occitan and Catalan to Breton and Alsatian. By the end of World War I, Occitan and other regional dialects were in a position exactly opposite of the one they had possessed just forty years earlier. The youth of France were predominantly French speaking, with regional dialects consigned to a very definite second place position (Jacob and Gordon, 117). This position was solidified during World War II, when the Nazis began using the regional dialects in an attempt to create separatist claims based on the use of regional dialects. While this tactic was focused on the strongest of the regional languages, that is to say Breton, Alsatian, and Flemish, all of the regional dialects would be seen as lacking in patriotism because of it (Safran, 43).

In spite of this unfortunate use of regional languages, interest in the regional dialects of France surged in the years following World War II. Occitan in particular benefited from this interest in the form of La Loi de Deixonne. Passed on January 11, 1951, La Loi de Deixonne turned over several decades of French educational policy to permit the teaching of a highly limited selection of regional languages. Occitan was one such language. However, la Loi de Deixonne was nowhere near as monumental as it appeared to be. Certainly, it made the teaching of Occitan legal once again, but it provided no real motivation for students to study the language, or any other regional dialects. Courses could be taken as supplementary to their primary education, but would not be taught during regular class hours (Neville, 149-50). Further, there was no government support for these classes and little to no training available to interested teachers (Safran, 44).

After the student uprisings of May and June of 1968, an increasing number of speakers of regional dialects, including Occitan speakers, began to articulate a 'desire to be different', and began to push for a greater recognition of the fact that France was not a single homogenous culture as previously believed, but instead multi-cultural, and perhaps more importantly, multi-lingual (Safran, 45). These sentiments were largely ignored for several years until the Socialists came into power through the Mitterrand presidency in 1981. As they viewed the promotion of regional languages as a means of furthering their goal of the decentralization of the government, the Socialist government threw its support behind them, creating the National Council for Regional Languages and Cultures. At the height of this support, schools even began to allow students to take their secondary exams

in a regional dialect, something that would have been completely unheard of as little as a decade prior (Safran, 45-6).

This heyday vanished with the reinstatement of the Gaullist government in 1986. While they did not remove any of the programs already in place, neither did they actively support them. Gaullists have long since been considered the French ‘intellectual elite’, ardently defending the purity of the French language from outside influences. Although they recognized that French was no longer in any danger from regional dialects, another exterior threat was making its presence known: English. The popularity and practicality of English due to its increasing importance as a language of international affairs offered a terrifying future to the Gaullists: the potential for French language so corrupted by borrowed words that it for all intents and purposes became English (Safran, 48-50). The solution to the problem came in 1994 with the adoption of the final variation of the Toubon Law, which mandated the use of French in schools, workplaces, and public services. The law also mandates the use of French in all product packaging and advertising. When proposed in Parliament, there was some worry of the potential effects of this legislation on regional languages. Although no such problems have arisen, the fact that such consequences could exist is troubling (Safran, 50-3).

Despite the participation of the federal government, for better or for worse, in the use and application of Occitan, governmental support for Occitan is not solely in its hands. The regional governments also play an active role in the support of Occitan. Unfortunately, Occitan is used in multiple regions, and the corresponding regional governments do not have an established inter regional program to make for a unified front in language preservation. Thus, while some regions have a relatively strong

Occitan support system in place, others are little better than the federal government (Driver, 4). In the region of Languedoc-Roussillon, which has its capital in Montpellier, the support of the regional government for Occitan is directed by the Office régional de la Culture. The office was founded in the early 1980s, in response to public support for Occitan and Catalan. Unfortunately, it has not proved to be dreadfully effective. It does not have a solid and concrete policy on how to promote Occitan.

In 2005, a study was published, describing the situation of Occitan in the region. It was La Consulta, and it detailed the measures that the office should take in order to promote the language, and ensure its survival (Driver, 6). It is split into six parts, the first establishing the context for La Consulta's creation. The second describes the history of Occitan, beginning with the Troubadours and ending with the current state of the Occitan language in the region. The third focused on a diagnostic of perceptions of Occitan politically, economically, and socially. The fourth and fifth sections outlined what measures should be taken in order to promote Occitan and how the regional government should handle them. The sixth section outlined a twenty year plan for the political status of Occitan (Raimondi, 2). The Office régional de la Culture used la Consulta to develop a public policy document outlining a plan of action for the promotion of Occitan, notably by increasing the budget for Occitan related governmental activities. This public policy document was, unfortunately, more than a little vague in terms of exactly what actions should be taken to achieve the desired results, rendering it significantly less effective (Driver, 8).

Despite this shortcoming, the public policy document developed from la Consulta has recognized the areas of weakness in terms of Occitan and its usage in Languedoc-

Roussillon (Driver, 8). Notably, la Consulta addresses the need for an Occitan presence in the media. It discusses the current use of Occitan in the domains of television, radio, and newsprint, and offers a set of goals for a ten year development plan for encouraging Occitan's use and presence on the internet (Raimondi, 24). Unfortunately, it does not give any concrete plans as to how this is to be carried out. While the public policy document and la Consulta did provide a ten year track as to the desired progress of Occitan and its use, neither document offered very much in the way of an explanation as to how those goal points were going to be achieved (Driver, 8). This vague help has left many Occitan speakers in Languedoc-Roussillon unhappy with the regional linguistic policies (Driver, 17).

Despite frustration with the regional government's policies towards Occitan, the language itself is important to many speakers of the language. The 1991 survey indicates that 49% of respondents consider themselves fairly or strongly attached to Occitan, with another 13% feeling a little attached to it (Manzano, 75). Regardless, there is very little opportunity to use Occitan in most public settings. The results of Manzano's survey show that Occitan is not frequently used at work, in shops, or local markets, with less than 10% of respondents using Occitan in those environments. However, Occitan is used significantly more frequently in social situations and at home, with 21% of respondents stating to use Occitan in those environments. Further questions lead to the revelation that while Occitan is used with friends and family, it is not used with authority figures, and rarely at work (Manzano, 76). For the most part, this reflects the attitudes of the Occitan speakers interviewed for this thesis.

Chapter II

Methodology

Participants in the study for this thesis were found through their place of employment or schooling. The source organizations were located through personal association with the Université Paul Valéry and its Occitan department, and by recommendation. Two of the three source organizations, Radio Lengadoc and Lo CIRDOC, were recommended by Jean-Claude Forêt, a professor of the Université Paul Valéry's Occitan department. The third was recommended by several of the subjects of Lo CIRDOC after interviews were completed. Interviews were conducted at four sites in Montpellier and Beziers, France.

Charted information includes the participant's employment, marital status, and whether or not the participant had children. These two pieces of information were taken both to establish the demographic of these Occitan speakers, but also to establish the continuity of Occitan. Those participants with children were asked about their children's ability to speak Occitan as a means of measuring traditional transmission of the language. Marital status, while discussed less frequently than the number of children, has been noted as it occasionally affected whether or not children were taught Occitan.

The first group consisted of students participating in Occitan courses at the Université Paul Valéry. Most were full time students averaging about 21 years of age, with one significant outlier in a part time student aged 65. These participants were found through the Université Paul Valéry, specifically through its Occitan department, as all

students were taking classes in that department. Half of the participants were seeking a bachelor's degree from the Université with an Occitan specialization. The other half took one course in that department in order to gain a more thorough groundwork in grammar and to be able to practice Occitan. Three members of this group were single without children. The fourth member was married with multiple children, although only one of those children spoke Occitan. Three of the four members were male. All four members of this group were at least proficient in Occitan, describing themselves as “plus ou moins au courant” (“more or less fluent”). Table 1 provides a list of the participants found through the Université Paul Valéry identified by number with accompanying demographic information (age, gender, occupation, marital status, and whether or not the participant had children). Ages ranged from three 21 year old participants to the lone 65 year old participants. Gender ratio for this group was 3:1, with a greater number of male participants.

The second group of interviews was conducted at the offices of Radio Lengadoc, located in downtown Montpellier, an interview source recommended by Jean Claude Forêt, a professor of Occitan at the Université Paul Valéry. The subjects were employees of the station, ranging from reporters to the technical team. The subjects' ages were more varied, with a mean age of 32.43, with a significant outlier of age 61, which, when removed, reduced the average age of the subjects to 27.67. This group had a more varied educational background. Only one subject was still a traditional student, studying journalism, not Occitan. Two of the other subjects were non-traditional students of Occitan at university. Most of the subjects of group two learned Occitan after the start of their employment at Radio Lengadoc. Of the seven subjects interviewed as part of this

Table.

Participants found through the Université Paul Valéry, 2013.

Participant ID number	Age	Gender	Occupation	Marital Status	Children
1	21	Female	Student	Single	No
2	65	Male	Retired, part time student	Married	Yes
3	21	Male	Student	Single	No
4	21	Male	Student	Single	No

group, only one was female. Only one member of group two stated that he was married, although several did not state their marital status. He was also only member of group two who had children. His son also spoke Occitan. Also varied were the subjects' levels of Occitan proficiency. Two of the subjects could not speak Occitan at all, although over the course of their employment they had become fairly proficient at Occitan comprehension. Three classified themselves as fluent speakers of Occitan. The two remaining subjects stated that they were not fluent, but were learning the language as a result of their work. Participants found through Radio Lengadoc are listed by identification number on table 2 below with accompanying demographic information. Ages for this interview group ranged from the youngest participant, aged 21 to the oldest participant, aged 61. The gender ratio for this group was 6:1, with a greater number of male participants.

Table 2.

Participants found through Radio Lengadoc.

ID number	Age	Gender	Occupation	Marital Status	Children?
5	61	Male	Director, Radio Lengadoc	Married	Yes
6	28	Male	Employee, Radio Lengadoc	n/a	No
7	21	Male	Employee, Radio Lengadoc, Student	Single	No
8	29	Male	Employee, Radio Lengadoc	n/a	n/a
9	35	Male	Employee, Radio Lengadoc	Single	No
10	26	Male	Employee, Radio Lengadoc, student	Single	No
11	27	Female	Employee, Radio Lengadoc, student	Single	No

The third group of interviews was conducted in Beziers, France, at the central office of Lo Cirdoc. This source was also recommended by Jean Claude Forêt. Subjects were employees of that organization. Ages were varied among the seven employees interviewed, averaging at about 29.14 years of age. Marital status was generally not given, with only one subject offering that information. She was married, and was also the only subject in this group to have a child. Her son did not speak Occitan. Their levels of Occitan proficiency were relatively varied. All subjects in this group were speakers of Occitan, but while most were proficient, two stated themselves to be “beginning” speakers of Occitan. Educational background was not stated, although all had some sort of university degree, and several had studied Occitan at university. Participants found through lo CIRDOC are listed in the table 3 below, by identification number, and are accompanied by demographic information. Age range of participants from this group was from 24 years of age to 33 years. The gender ratio was 1:6, with more female participants than male.

The final set of interviews was conducted at the offices of CFPO, le Centre de Formation Professionnelle Occitan, located in Beziers, France. This source was recommended by Lo Cirdoc. Subjects were employees of le CFPO. This fourth group offered the highest average age of its subjects, at 48.25 years. All four subjects were women, and all were married and had children. Not all of their children, however, spoke Occitan. All subjects classified themselves as fluent speakers of Occitan. As was the case at Lo CIRDOC, all subjects had some sort of university education, but the exact nature of those degrees was not discussed. The participants found at the CFPO are listed with demographic information by identifying number in table 4. Age range of

Table 3.

Participants found through lo CIRDOC.

ID number	Age	Gender	Occupation	Marital Status	Children?
12	25	Female	Administrator	n/a	No
13	27	Female	Occitan music and dance specialist	n/a	No
14	32	Female	Audiovisual coordinator	n/a	No
15	33	Female	Archives and manuscripts, graphic collections	Married	Yes
16	24	Female	General employee	n/a	No
17	31	Female	Electronic documentation and Occitan bibliography	n/a	No
18	32	Male	Director and conservator for political science and cultural studies	n/a	No

Table 4.

Participants found through le CFPO.

ID number	Age	Gender	Occupation	Marital Status	Children?
19	45	Female	Employee, CFPO	Married	No
20	44	Female	Employee, CFPO	Married	Yes
21	52	Female	Employee, CFPO	Married	Yes
22	52	Female	Employee, CFPO	Married	Yes

participants from this group went from age 44 to age 52. The gender ratio was 0:4, consisting entirely of female participants.

Interviews were all fairly brief, lasting between three and sixteen minutes. Questions asked during the interview were centered in three basic sections. The first dealt with where the subject had learned Occitan, and in which contexts the subject used Occitan. The second and third sections were somewhat interchangeable, as the second section dealt with the continuation of Occitan and the third dealt with the use of Occitan in the classroom. Interview subjects who had finished university were asked the second section of questions, which focused on the question of whether or not these Occitan speakers were passing or would pass Occitan to their children. The third section focused on how students used Occitan in their lives at university, including how Occitan was or was not used in classes outside of the Occitan department. A copy of the interview schedule, both in English and French can be found in Appendix A.

Chapter III Results

Interview processes involved in the study aside, the worries over the Toubon Law have not ended the political struggle for Occitan and other regional languages in France. In 1992, the Council of Europe prepared the European charter on minority languages, which would mandate permission for the speakers of regional languages to use those languages in both a public and private setting. Further, it would require the French government to defend the rights of regional language speakers to do so (Safran, 55-6). This was made more significant with the recent presidential election. During a presidential debate, Hollande stated “Moi président, je ratifierai la Charte européenne des langues régionales...”² (Mouret, pars.1). Over a year after his election, Hollande has failed to do so. This failure, coupled with a new legislative proposal minister of education Victor Peillon that brought the future of Occitan in public schools into question, lead to a demonstration on February 16, 2013 by three hundred Occitan speakers in the streets of Montpellier (Midi Libre, pars.1-2).

The worrisome legislature has not yet proven as detrimental to the teaching of Occitan in schools. There has been a tradition of bilingual schooling in Occitanie since the 1970s, when the government bowed to parental pressure and began opening bilingual primary schools. Since then, the government has developed bilingual secondary schools, as well. While the schools are not completely bilingual, the trend is to have one bilingual

² Myself as president, I will ratify the European Charter on minority languages...”

track among several monolingual tracks, they can be found at both the primary and secondary level, and are reasonably successful, if not the predominant educational choice (Costa and Lambert, 22). The French government is not the only group offering Occitan education, however. Begun in 1979, les Calandretas are a group of Occitan immersion schools, established as “a response to the need to safeguard and transmit the Occitan language” (Domp martin-Normand, pars 11). There are 55 Calandretas elementary schools and two participating middle schools, found in 17 departments of France, with 3,278 students presently enrolled (Calandreta).

For les Calandretas, the difficulty seems to be convincing their students to speak Occitan outside of the classroom. One Calandreta student said that “Si je la rencontre dans la rue, si elle me parle en occitan, moi, je vais lui repondre en français, parce que c’est pas l’école”³ (Domp martin-Normand, pars 16). A Calandreta teacher speculated that this is in part due to a desire to conform to the uniformity of their non-Occitan speaking peers, particularly as they get older (Domp martin-Normand, pars 34). This desire to conform demonstrates one of the largest problems facing not only the Calandretas, but Occitan as a whole: the question of socialization, and the ability to use the language in the varied circumstances of everyday life, a necessity to the continued use of Occitan as a living language (Domp martin-Normand, pars 72).

The struggle of the Calandretas to perpetuate the use of Occitan, underscored by others who desire to see Occitan progress to the next generation, is latest incarnation of the political battle between Jacobin philosophies of linguistic unity and the regional languages it strives to eliminate. The language of the Republic may be French, but la

³ “If I meet her in the street, if she speaks to me in Occitan, me, I will respond to her in French, because it’s not school.”

Lenga d'Oc is the language of the Midi. The question becomes whether or not it will be able to continue as more than a symbol of southern culture in the generations to come.

For the most part, the outlook is not very optimistic. Occitan has been recognized as an endangered language on UNESCO for several years. Most researchers have looked at the steadily shrinking pool of Occitan speakers and the lack of governmental support and have come to the conclusion that it is only a matter of time before the language dies completely.

Further problems facing Occitan revolve around the fact that Occitan is not one linguistic entity. There are multiple dialects of Occitan, which are usually grouped into three geographic regions: le nord-occitan (northern Occitan), l'occitan méridionale (central Occitan), and le gascon (Gascon) (Belasco, 7). The region of Languedoc-Roussillon falls into the l'occitan méridionale geographic region. As such, most speakers of Occitan in Languedoc-Roussillon identify themselves as speakers of a dialect falling into the category of l'occitan méridionale. All of the participants interviewed as part of the study conducted for this thesis identified themselves either as speakers of the dialect 'Languedocien', which has been historically connected to Montpellier and Languedoc-Roussillon, or in the case of two subjects, non-speakers of Occitan who could understand the language. The approximate boundaries of the dialectal regions can be seen in figure 2. It should be noted that figure 2 uses Occitan names and terms for the regions and dialects of Occitan it mentions.

One participant in the study for this thesis also stated that they spoke some 'Provençale', another well known dialect associated with the Provence region of France, further to the east of Languedoc-Roussillon. It is also one of the better known dialects of Occitan,



Figure 2. “Dialectes de l’occitan selon Pierre Bec”. September 2009. *Revue Linguistica Occitana*.

courtesy of Frédéric Mistral, who won the 1904 Nobel Prize in Literature and wrote his poetry exclusively in Provençal. Mistral also started le Félibrige, a society dedicated to maintaining Provençal (Frenz). However, in part because of Mistral's association of Provençal with a specific region of Provence, le Félibrige has established the entirety of Occitan speaking lands as a bland monotony of similar country side, lacking in literary panache and linguistic diversity (Manzano, 69). Two other subjects stated that they also spoke at least some of other, less significant dialects, Auvergnat and Limousin. Both are nord-occitan dialects (Belasco, 7). The dialects of the participants are listed in the table below, with their primary dialect listed as 'Dialect of Occitan spoken' and their secondary dialect listed as 'Secondary Dialect', (see Table 5).

Despite the apparent prevalence of Languedocien in the Languedoc-Roussillon region as seen in table 5, the population at large does not seem to recognize the term. A 1991 survey taken by the regional government asked the question "Aside from French, are there any other language spoken in the Languedoc –Roussillon?" (Manzano, 73) showed that only 2% of respondents answered 'Languedocien', with another 4% listing 'Langue d'oc', and an additional 4% citing Provençale. Less than twenty respondents offered a highly localized Occitan dialect, while 'Occitan' merited 19% of respondents, and an overwhelming 36% responded with 'patois', a derogatory term meaning 'peasant language' that is used to refer to regional dialects. The remaining responses were devoted primarily to non-local languages, such as Spanish, Italian, or Arabic (Manzano, 73).

Another, similar question focused slightly more on location. It asked "What about here [Montpellier], where the survey is taking place. Is there a local dialect?" (Manzano, 73).

Table 5.

Dialects of Occitan spoken by interview participants.

Participant Identification Number	Dialect of Occitan Spoken	Secondary Dialect
1	Langudocien	n/a
2	Languedocien	n/a
3	Languedocien	n/a
4	Languedocien	n/a
5	Languedocien	n/a
6	Languedocien	Provençale
7	n/a	n/a
8	n/a	n/a
9	Multiple (pleasantries in most dialects)	n/a
10	Languedocien	n/a
11	Langudocien	n/a
12	Languedocien	n/a
13	Languedocien	n/a
14	Languedocien	Auvergnat
15	Languedocien	n/a
16	Languedocien	Limousin
17	Langudocien	n/a
18	Languedocien	n/a
19	Languedocien	n/a
20	Languedocien	n/a
21	Languedocien	n/a
22	Languedocien	n/a

The responses were, once again heavily skewed in favor of the term ‘patois’, consisting of 44% of the responses. ‘Occitan’ received just 9% of the responses, with ‘Langue d’oc’ and ‘Languedocien’ trailing behind with 3% and 2% respectively. The answer ‘Provençale’ also merited 2% of the responses, as did the enigmatic ‘dialect’. Perhaps more disturbing is the fact that 28% of the remaining responses stated that no regional dialect was spoken in Montpellier at all (Manzano, 73). This offers the conclusion that Occitan is spoken predominantly in the countryside, furthering the association between Mistral’s pastoral Provençale and the more desirable perception of Occitan as a multifaceted language that can be spoken in multiple settings. It also further demonstrates the continued belief that Occitan is merely a patois, which is even more notable in an urban context.

Given the predominance of the description ‘patois’ for Occitan, as well as the typical pro-French dominance that accompanies the term, the continued use and dominance of this term does not bode well for the continued use of Occitan. This tendency extends to speakers of Occitan, as well. During one interview, the participant stated

“ En générale, les gens qui ne comprennent pas, c’est vrai que... c’est plutôt assimilé avec du patois, des langues anciens, des pas très bien... comprises en général ou pas très bien appréciées, les gens comme ça... plutôt beeeen... ils ne comprennent pas pourquoi on l’apprend, en effet.... souvent.⁴

(Participant 1)

⁴ In general, people who don’t speak Occitan, it’s true that... it’s more associated with peasant languages, the old languages, the not very well... understood in general or not well appreciated, the people like that... Mostly weeeeeell, often, they don’t understand why one learns it, in fact.

While this participant was the only one who directly cited Occitan being termed a patois as part of her reasoning in not speaking Occitan in certain contexts, others also made comments about not speaking Occitan with those who did not understand it, or in government buildings. Several participants mentioned not speaking Occitan with the French government administration or the police. One notably said responded to the question “is there anyone with whom you would not speak Occitan?” with « François Hollande, sûrement. Parce qu’il veut apparent lâche la charte des langues minoritaires. »⁵ (Participant 6), referring to the fact that the French president has yet to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in spite of promises made during his campaign.

In addition to what dialect of Occitan they spoke, subjects were asked where they learned to speak Occitan, leading to fairly broad variety of responses. However, it is notable the most did not learn Occitan from their parents, particularly those over the age of 22. This trend continued to the subjects themselves, as several of those with children did not teach their children Occitan for a variety of reasons. Instead of, or occasionally in conjunction with, traditional in-home language transmission, the several of the subjects cited school programs, either the standard public school programs or those of the Calandretas as their initial introduction to Occitan. Others picked up Occitan as a result of finding work in an Occitan based environment, such as Radio Lengadoc or lo CIRDOC. Two subjects do not speak Occitan, but have learned to understand it as a result of their work with Radio Lengadoc. These tendencies not reflected in the 1991 survey, as 85% of those respondents stated that they learned Occitan at home or within their community circle, and only 2% said that they learned Occitan in school (Manzano,

⁵ François Hollande, certainly. Because he apparently wants to drop the Charter for Minority Languages.

77). This discrepancy could be due to the difference in generations. Manzano notes that the 1991 survey only interested itself in adults, all of whom were raised in or before the 1980s, before Occitan education became more readily available in the French school system (Manzano, 82). The subjects interviewed for this thesis were primarily born in the late 1980s or early 1990s, and therefore had more access to Occitan schooling options, possibly accounting for the difference in the location and context of the Occitan transmission. Table 6 shows the responses to the question “Where did you learn to speak Occitan?”, with both the primary location where the participant learned Occitan, as well as a secondary location, if available. Thus, if a participant learned Occitan primarily through a school program, but additionally learned Occitan from a grandfather occasionally telling him stories in Occitan, school would be listed as his primary response, with grandfather as his secondary response on table 6.

When asked about where they used Occitan, participants tended to offer the same three locations: at home, at school or work, or with their friends. This is somewhat consistent with the findings of the 1991 study, wherein 21% of respondents said that they spoke Occitan at home most frequently. Another 9% said that they used Occitan most frequently at cafes, with another 12% citing other social gatherings. However, only 5% spoke Occitan at work (Hammel, 182). This shift is most likely due to the subject pool of this study; all interview subjects were found through their place of employment or schooling, all of which were Occitan organizations, where speaking Occitan is a part of the work. From this, it is possible to conclude that the given subject pool is not accurate to the Occitan speaking community as a whole in regards to the frequency of which Occitan is spoken in the workplace. Thus, one can conclude that for the Occitan

Table 6.

Responses to the question “Where did you learn to speak Occitan?”.

Subject	Primary response	Secondary response
1	From grandparents	At university
2	At work (with parents and in mines)	At school (clandestine)
3	At university	n/a
4	From father	At school (Calandreta)
5	Worked in Occitan theatre	Self-taught
6	School (Calandreta and public)	Spoken with grandfather
7	At work (comprehension)	n/a
8	At work (comprehension)	n/a
9	At work (Radio Lengadoc)	n/a
10	At school (Calandreta)	Rarely spoken with mother
11	University	Spoken at home, but not to subject
12	At work (lo CIRDOC)	Taking classes at CFPO
13	At work (lo CIRDOC)	n/a
14	parents and grandmother	n/a
15	At work (lo CIRDOC)	n/a
16	High school and university	n/a
17	Middle school and university	Classes at CFPO
18	At work (lo CIRDOC)	n/a
19	At work (secretarial post)	n/a
20	At home	n/a
21	As a result of daughter learning	n/a
22	At home	n/a

community at large, Occitan is spoken primarily in social and family oriented places.

Table 7 lists where the participants stated that they use Occitan,

Continuing in that vein, when asked with whom they tended to speak Occitan, the subjects responded with friends, coworkers, and other speakers of Occitan. Occitan was only spoken with family if they could speak Occitan themselves. However, when their family members could speak Occitan, they were always included in this response.

Similarly to the question of where Occitan was spoken, these findings were at least somewhat consistent with the findings of the 1991 survey, with friends and acquaintances being the most likely group of fellow Occitan speakers at 30%, with family a close second with 27% (Hammel, 183). As was the case with locations, coworkers and other job connections were not frequently named as people with whom Occitan speakers held conversations in Occitan. The discrepancy is most likely for similar reasons as to why work appeared so frequently as a place of speaking Occitan in the study for this thesis as opposed to the 1991 survey data. The responses to the question “With whom do you speak Occitan?” obtained through the interview process are listed below (see table 8)

From the information in table 8, it can be concluded that Occitan is not typically a language spoken with outsiders. It is a language spoken with family and friends. For those who work with the language, it is a language spoken with other Occitan speakers, particularly with those whom one is connected by an acquaintance. Occitan is not spoken with a random person on the street. This is not necessarily because of a desire to keep Occitan to oneself. When asked about whether or not there were contexts in which they would not speak Occitan, many of the subjects stated that they would most likely not speak Occitan with people they had not met, or knew did not speak Occitan. When asked,

Table 7.

Response to the question “Where do you use Occitan?”.

ID	Locations given
1	At home with grandparents and in Occitan classes at university
2	In the countryside, in Occitan classes at university, with Occitan or Catalan speaking friends
3	Occitan classes at university, at home with father, in villages with older people
4	At home with father, Occitan classes at university, with other Occitan speakers
5	At work (Radio Lengadoc and in theater), on the phone with his son, with Occitan speaking friends
6	At home, at work (Radio Lengadoc), with friends, on the phone, in email, on a blog and other Occitan websites
7	Not Occitan speaker, hears it in Occitan music at work (Radio Lengadoc)
8	Not Occitan speaker, hears it at work (Radio Lengadoc)
9	At work (Radio Lengadoc), when meeting another Occitan speaker
10	With friends, at home, at work (Radio Lengadoc), in Occitan classes at university
11	At work and in Occitan studies
12	Exclusively at work (Lo CIRDOC)
13	Primarily at work (Lo CIRDOC), sometimes with grandfather
14	At work (Lo CIRDOC), sometimes with parents or their friends, or at Occitan events
15	At work (Lo CIRDOC), with Occitan speaking friends
16	In Toulouse at certain bars and concerts with friends, with her Occitan classmates, at her internship (Lo CIRDOC)
17	At work (Lo CIRDOC)
18	At work (Lo CIRDOC), with friends
19	At work (le CFPO)
20	At work (le CFPO) and at home
21	At work (le CFPO)
22	At work (le CFPO) and in cultural activities (singing and dancing)

Table 8.

Response to the question “With whom do you speak Occitan?”.

ID	People with whom Occitan is spoken
1	Grandparents and classmates in Occitan courses
2	With friends, family
3	With parents, with friends who speak Occitan, Occitan classmates
4	Father, family, friends who speak Occitan, Occitan department at university
5	His son, his coworkers, people met through the radio and theater, neighbors who speak a bit of Occitan, with others who speak a bit of Occitan.
6	With family, friends, and coworkers
7	n/a
8	n/a
9	With coworkers and those met through work
10	With people he knows are Occitan speakers, friends
11	Students and professors
12	Coworkers and those met through work
13	Coworkers and those met through work, grandfather
14	Father or grandmother, coworkers, those met through work
15	Coworkers and those met through work
16	Friends, and those met through internship
17	With coworkers
18	With known Occitan speakers
19	With coworkers and those known to speak Occitan
20	With family, with students at school and their parents, and coworkers
21	Those known to speak Occitan
22	Those known to speak Occitan

they elaborated that they did want to confuse anyone, or, more bluntly, that they did not speak Occitan with strangers or people they knew did not speak Occitan because they would not understand the language. Interestingly, several subjects also said that there were not people with whom they would not speak Occitan in spite of this qualification.

Strangers were not the only people with whom speakers of Occitan do not tend to speak Occitan. Several subjects said that they would never use Occitan in the context of the administration, a sentiment indirectly seconded by the 1991 study, wherein approximately 0% of respondents spoke Occitan in banks and other administrative places. Two respondents out of 404 did mark down that they spoke Occitan at the post office, making for just under 0.5% (Hammel, 183). Those subjects who stated that they would not speak Occitan in an administrative context indicated that this was for several reasons. The first was for the same reasons that they rarely spoke Occitan to other non-Occitan speakers; there was no point in speaking Occitan to those who do not understand the language. A second reason was because Occitan was not acknowledged by the national government, rendering it more or less useless in an official context. The only circumstance under which any subject stated that they would use Occitan in an official capacity was in the context of a pro-Occitan protest, or similar event, and even then, only one subject allowed for this circumstance. The contexts in which and people with whom interview participants said that they would not use Occitan is listed below (see table 9).

In spite of the results of Table 9, the subjects interviewed did not seem to attach as much shame to speaking Occitan as the participants of the 1991 survey. When asked if there were specific people with whom they would never speak Occitan, most said that no, there was not anyone that they would never speak Occitan, although they might not

Table 9.

Response to the questions “Is there any context in which you would not use Occitan?”
and “Is there anyone with whom you would never speak Occitan?”.

ID	Contexts	People
1	With people who do not speak Occitan	People who do not speak Occitan
2	No	No (inconvenient with non-Occitan speakers)
3	It's not public, but it's not forbidden	People who don't speak Occitan
4	French administration	People who don't speak Occitan
5	No	No
6	At the bank, at the police, French administration	François Hollande, otherwise no.
7	n/a	n/a
8	n/a	n/a
9	No	No
10	French administration	Depending on context, no (no to a police officer when on duty, but yes when off duty)
11	No	No
12	n/a	n/a
13	No	People who don't speak Occitan
14	No	People who don't speak Occitan
15	With people who don't speak Occitan	People who don't speak Occitan
16	French institutions (administrative)	Strangers (might not know Occitan)
17	With those who do not speak Occitan	People who don't speak Occitan
18	When there are only French speakers	Theoretically no, practically non Occitan speakers
19	French administration	Sister (doesn't want to hear about it), no real limitations
20	French administration	Father (it bothers him)
21	French administration, in the presence of Anglophones	People who don't speak Occitan
22	French administration	People who don't speak Occitan

speak it depending on the context. Participant 5 summed up the general sentiment with his statement,

“Je pense qu’il n’y a pas de personne avec qui on ne puisse pas parler de l’occitan ou en occitan. Même si c’est pas une conversation cent pourcent, ça peut être.... Ça fait partie de moi. Ça fait partie de ce que je suis. C’est pas quelque chose que... que je cache.”⁶

This lack of shame and attachment of Occitan to personal identity, while not across the board, was a trend among those interviewed, one which is shared with most cultural language maintenance movements, including several in the United States. Participants in these movements see their languages as essential to their cultural identity as individuals and the validity of their culture as a whole (Fishman, 296). As this sentiment was echoed by several participants and the organizations for which they worked, it is likely that viewing Occitan as a means of identity is widespread throughout the Occitan community. The accompanying attachment to Occitan is noted in the 1991 survey, with 20% of respondents stating that they were very attached to the language, 26% being attached ‘enough’ to it, and an additional 13% admitting to being a little attached to Occitan, making for a total of 58% of the respondents with some sense of attachment to Occitan (Hammel, 181).

This sense of attachment to Occitan can most likely be linked to a sense of regionalism. All of the subjects interviewed who themselves spoke Occitan said that yes, they believed others should learn Occitan. Although their reasons varied, many said that it was because it was the language of the Midi, and to really understand the culture of the

⁶ I think that there isn’t anyone with whom one cannot speak about or in Occitan. Even if the conversation isn’t one hundred percent, it can be.... This is part of me. This is part of who I am. It’s not something that... that I hide.

Midi, one needed to be able to speak its language. This is consistent with the generally approved opinion that Occitan is a sheltering language, aiding in the maintenance of the history and culture of the Midi region. It is the language of those seeking to relocate their roots, which perhaps explains why so many of those in the 1991 survey, even those who did not speak Occitan themselves, felt some attachment to Occitan (Manzano, 75, 81). Furthering this idea of Occitan's attachment to the regional identity is the response to a question on the 1991 survey. "You speak Occitan. To which of these positions do you feel the closest?" 56% of the responding Occitan speakers replied that they spoke Occitan because they were of the region, indicating a very definite attachment between regional identity, and their identity as an Occitan speaker (Hammel, 184).

The level of their attachment to Occitan may affect the next generation of Occitan speakers. While most of the participants interviewed did not have children, those that did tended to be mixed as to whether or not they taught their children how to speak Occitan. While many did say yes, they did teach their children Occitan (or, in one notable instance, a child provided her mother with the impetus to learn Occitan after picking it up in school), several others said no, they did not teach their children Occitan, for a variety of reasons. Most negatives pertained to heritage. One subject said that they had not taught their children Occitan because their spouse was not Occitan. Another said that they had not taught their child Occitan because she was, in fact, Spanish and felt that their children needed to be able to speak Spanish in order to speak with her relatives, and therefore taught the children Spanish instead of Occitan.

It should be noted as an interesting trend that more often than not, it is fathers who transmit the Occitan language to their children. This tendency can be seen both in

the subjects themselves and in the transmission of Occitan to their children. Participant 5 went so far as to jokingly call Occitan his son's 'langue paternelle', as opposed to the more traditional 'langue maternelle'. This trend is characteristic of the Occitan population at large, as there is a larger number of male speakers of Occitan than female. This is most likely a remnant of the days when women stopped speaking Occitan, a rural or peasant dialect, in the hopes of leaving rural communities behind through marriage. These women would teach their children French as their maternal language as a means of attempting to ensure that their children had the benefit of the more urban language as their mother tongue (Fields, 41). The more recent results of direct transmission in regards to the interview participants are noted below (see table 10).

As seen in Table 10, the transmission of Occitan in the home, therefore, seems to be less than definitive, even among populations where there is at least some sort of devotion to teaching and encouraging the use of Occitan. All participants were found as members of an Occitan enriched environment, as a student of the language at university or as workers of projects devoted to the promotion of Occitan through radio, written word, or training for future teachers of Occitan. Furthermore, nearly all subjects said that they felt that it was important for non-Occitan speakers to learn the language, most saying that it was culturally significant to the Midi region. This discrepancy between this opinion and the results shown in Table 10 is unusual, although perhaps it makes sense given that cultural significance was main motivation for the continued teaching of Occitan. If a child was in a position wherein Occitan was not culturally significant, such as if a parent was from a non-Occitan speaking region, then the need to transmit Occitan might be lowered.

Table 10.

Responses to the questions “Do you have children? Do they speak Occitan? If not, why not?”.

Participant	Do you have children?	Do they speak Occitan?	If not, why not?
1	No	n/a	n/a
2	Yes	One yes, two no	Spouse is not an Occitan speaker
3	No	n/a	n/a
4	No	n/a	n/a
5	Yes	Yes	n/a
6	No	n/a	n/a
7	No	n/a	n/a
8	No	n/a	n/a
9	No	n/a	n/a
10	No	n/a	n/a
11	No	n/a	n/a
12	No	n/a	n/a
13	No	n/a	n/a
14	No	n/a	n/a
15	Yes	No	Family is moving to Paris. If she were staying, she would.
16	No	n/a	n/a
17	No	n/a	n/a
18	No	n/a	n/a
19	Yes	No	No Calandreta, Spanish origins
20	Yes	Yes	n/a
21	Yes	Yes	n/a
22	No	n/a	n/a

An interesting point of comparison is that although several participants stated that one or more of their parents spoke Occitan, more than one did not learn Occitan at home, even in part. Others indicated that their grandparents spoke Occitan, but their parents did not, implying that their grandparents did not teach them the language. Participant 6 in particular noted this, saying “...On lui à dit qu’il ne fallait pas parler Occitan. Alors que, lui, il le parlait, et donc il ne l’a pas appris à ses enfants.”⁷, implying that the lack of direct transmission from his Occitan speaking grandfather to his unspecified parent was due at least in part due to the *vergonha* and systematic shaming of Occitan in schools. These generational skips in the direct transmission of Occitan can be compared with the gaps in direct transmission displayed by parents participating in the study for this thesis. Other studies second these findings; intergenerational transmission of Occitan was been chancy at best and plummeted at worst for the majority of the twentieth century (Manzano, 81). Whether or not the parents or grandparents of participants is listed below, along with whether or not the participant learned Occitan through direct transmission and if yes, from whom Occitan was transmitted is listed in table 11.

Never the less, this lack of natural transmission of Occitan is part of a significant downturn in the number of Occitan speakers since the early 1900s. As the effectiveness of the federal governments’ measures against Occitan took hold, the number of Occitan speakers began to dwindle. As of now, Occitan is considered an endangered language by UNESCO (Driver, 1). Languedocien in particular is listed as severely endangered on the UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger due to its low numbers of speakers (Moseley).

⁷ People told him that he must not speak Occitan. And so, him, he spoke it, but he did not teach it to his children.

To make the future of Occitan even more uncertain, the average age of Occitan speakers is still high, with most speakers being above the age of 40 (Fields, 41). According to the 1991 survey, Occitan is least likely to be spoken well by those under the age of 34, with 4% to 6% of speakers of that age being able to speak in short

Table 11.

Did the respondent learn Occitan from parents or grandparents, and do parents speak Occitan?.

Participant	Direct transmission?	Parents speak Occitan?	Grandparents?
1	Yes (grandparents)	No	Yes
2	Yes (parents)	Yes	n/a
3	No	Yes (father)	n/a
4	Yes (father)	Yes (father)	n/a
5	No	No	n/a
6	Yes (grandfather)	No	Yes
7	No	No	n/a
8	No	No	n/a
9	No	No	n/a
10	Yes (mother)	Yes (mother)	n/a
11	No	No	Yes
12	No	n/a	n/a
13	No	n/a	Yes
14	Yes (parents and grandmother)	Yes (both)	Yes
15	No	No	n/a
16	No	No	n/a
17	No	No	Yes
18	No	No	n/a
19	No	No	n/a
20	Yes	Yes	n/a
21	No	No	n/a
22	Yes	Yes	n/a

conversations and only 2% using it regularly. (Hammel, 54). While this was not the case in the subject pool for those interviewed for this thesis, as the majority of participants fell between the ages of 20 and 34, this could again be contributed to the source of these subjects. Students attempting to gain a license in Occitan would have a high level of competence in Occitan, as would those who worked routinely with or around Occitan as part of their work. A typical Occitan speaker would not be in such routine close proximity with Occitan. Also significant is the fact that at the time of the interviews, all of those who had participated in the 1991 survey would no longer be in the under 34 age demographic. This problem of lack of younger speakers may have been ameliorated by improved Occitan education in schools to produce the sample taken in April of 2013. Contrasting with the younger demographic's inability to speak Occitan in conversation, the older generation, that above the age of 55, has 40% of its members speaking Occitan well and frequently (Hammel, 60). The two members of this demographic interviewed as part of the subject pool followed this trend. The age group between these two, that of speakers of Occitan between the ages of 35 and 54, is similarly in the middle in terms of Occitan speaking ability. With 26% of these speakers capable of speaking Occitan well, their overall linguistic capability is significantly higher than that of younger speakers, but also significantly lower than that of older speakers (Hammel, 57).

Another hardship that Occitan must overcome is that in many ways, Occitan is not considered a 'practical' language. It cannot be used in any official capacity, as the French government does not fully acknowledge its existence, which is part of the reason that it is rarely used in administrative contexts. During one interview, a subject stated

« Un fois, on a insulté la police en occitan... ça peut être une façon aussi..... Mais c'est un billet de lutter contre l'autorité. Parce que c'est un code qu'ils n'acceptent pas, puis qu'ils considèrent que ce n'est pas une langue, du compte, on peut utiliser ce code de fin de critique politique sans pourrait être censuré. C'est un moyen de résistance politique, la langue. »⁸ (Subject 10)

The most recent generation of Occitan speakers may consider Occitan a means of political rebellion, which may be in part because their reasons for speaking Occitan are different from their older counterparts. Fields commented that there is a newer group of Occitan speakers, a young, urban population who learned Occitan not so much at home, but in school or as a result of political reflection (Fields, 42). This is linguistic group into which most of the interviewed subjects fall. It is also one of the smallest groups of Occitan speakers.

A larger group of Occitan speakers also has presence in the subject pool for this study through subject 2, who grew up in an environment wherein Occitan was present but not the primary language, and then gained a greater knowledge of Occitan through his time as an agricultural worker. This group makes up a larger portion of Occitan speakers than the aforementioned urbanite group (Fields, 42), although this is not reflected in the subject pool. This variety of transmission is still present, particularly in more rural areas. Occitan is the language of agriculture and the countryside, whereas French is the language of social betterment and the cities (Fields, 43).

⁸ One time, we insulted the police in Occitan. That can be a method as well...But it's a way to go against authority. Because it's a code that they do not accept, as they don't consider it to be a language, in that way, one can use this language as a means of political critique without being censored. It's a means of political resistance, language.

In part because of this association with the countryside, speaking Occitan has traditionally been met with shame in the cities. However, in recent times that has begun to shift. This is not to say that Occitan is universally accepted, simply that Occitan is not automatically considered shameful. This may be due to the fact that Occitan is more accessible than in the past. Children of the 1990s were the first to have been given the advantage of the linguistic reforms put in place by the government of Languedoc-Roussillon and to truly be able to take advantage of the availability of Occitan education. While Occitan instruction is not mandatory and many students do not take the offered classes, it does raise awareness of the languages and cultures of southern France (Manzano, 82). While Manzano sees this awareness as a potential negative aspect, it does reach other students, including a steadily rising number who chose to participate in studying Occitan themselves. The number of Calandretas has risen from six Calandretas in 1982 to 58 elementary schools and three middle schools in 2013 (Calandreta). The neighboring region of Midi-Pyranees has seen a similar rise in the number of students in public schools taking Occitan courses. It is reasonable to assume that similar increases in students have been occurring in Languedoc-Roussillon (Manzano, 83).

This is not to say that the shift is complete, simply that it is significant, at least among speakers of Occitan themselves. Occitan is still very much associated with the country side, as seen in what images are typically associated with the language. 58% of images of Occitan have to do with death and old age, which is reasonable, considering that many fluent speakers of Occitan are elderly. Another 26% are stereotypically folkloric or rural. The remaining 16% are less not so blatantly affiliated with death or

country life. 10% portray Occitan as a nostalgic language, offering connections to the past and familial roots, or the beauty and harmony of the language itself (Manzano, 84).

However, even in light of the shift in perceptions of Occitan, the fact remains that Occitan is not a language that is used uniquely, or, in many cases, in daily life. Nearly all speakers of Occitan are bilingual, with French, not Occitan as their primary language. This was the case for all of the subjects interviewed as part of this study. Several participants stated that they did not use Occitan with people they did not know, as most people do not understand Occitan, and nearly all stated that they would not use Occitan with people who did not speak the language. This is part of the underlying problem facing Occitan. The dominance of the French language has become so great that Occitan has been completely marginalized, just as the post revolutionary government wished.

The voluntary relegation of Occitan to specific environments and the data collected from the 1991 survey, la Consulta and similar studies has lead to two trains of thought on the future of Occitan, one more likely than the other. One is optimistic. It regards the future of Occitan as hopeful. Perhaps it will never again achieve the same prestige or breadth of usage that it did during its medieval heyday, but it is not ready to disappear just yet. The second train of thought is decidedly less hopeful. It points out the small number of speakers, their age, and the blocks stacked against it, both political and cultural, very logically leading to the conclusion that Occitan does not have very much time as a living language.

The optimistic point of view consists of several points, with the first being the recent upswing in Occitan notoriety. Overall, the 1991 survey said that 78% recognized that a regional dialect or patois was spoken in Languedoc-Roussillon. Eliminating the 2%

who listed Catalan as the language spoken in the region, it could be argued that 76% of the respondents recognized Occitan in some form, shape, or fashion as at the very least a dialect or patois spoken in the region. Of that 76%, just over 19% deliberately cited some variety of Occitan as the dialect spoken in the region. The remaining 56% recognized that a dialect or patois was spoken there (Hammel, 178). Despite the fact that not being able to identify the language spoken is not necessarily a positive point, Occitan remains identified as a different language, increasing its notoriety. Thus, Occitan in some form remains a legitimate part of the regional conscious, a point even more notable within the context of the regional population, consisting of those who spent their childhood south of the Loire River. Within the context of regional population, the percentage of respondents who recognized that Occitan, including those who recognized a patois or dialect, was calculated by the surveyor to be roughly 94%. This demonstrates that Occitan is still a presence in the Midi, at least in the context of regional sentiment and population (Hammel, 166-7).

This should come as no real surprise. The population of Languedoc-Roussillon is very attached to Occitan, with 1991 survey finding that 46% of the population was attached or very attached to Occitan, with most of that percentage consisting of those who spent their childhood in the region. Another 13% were somewhat attached to the language. It is therefore reasonable to assume that attachment to Occitan is connected, at least on an emotional level, to regional heritage, either by blood or by birth (Hammel, 171). However, it is not only the natives of Languedoc-Roussillon who interest themselves in Occitan. An additional 7% of people attached to Occitan, including one of

the participants in this study, were outsiders to the Midi who gained an attachment to the language after moving to the region (Hammel, 172).

Perhaps most notably, Occitan has the benefit of its age and past reputation. In the past, Occitan was a major literary language, as it was the language of the troubadours and offered several other significant literary contributions over the years. Its passed prestige, combined with its more recent connection to the countryside and folklore thanks to the members of Féliberge, has produced a sense that Occitan is connected to a sort of utopian sense of the old times (Hammel, 168). Manzano takes this a step further and offers that Occitan has become a sort of 'shelter language', a reminder of days and a culture past. However, he also notes that this will give Occitan a chance of survival in that it remains the language of the grassroots history of the region (Manzano, 81).

Another key point in the optimistic view of Occitan's future is the rise of Occitan in schools. Far from shaming students for speaking their regional dialects, the number of schools offering courses in Occitan is steadily rising, as is the number of students taking those courses. Although numbers remains highest in the elementary age group, the number of high school students taking Occitan is also rising. Interestingly, there is a great deal of support for Occitan in schools from an unanticipated source, that of parents and grandparents who did not transmit Occitan to their children. These people, who most likely had the concept of Occitan being a patois and therefore something shameful, may well put a great deal of hope in the very institution that taught them to be ashamed. This is a sign of just how much hope has been placed on schools as a place of transmission (Manzano, 80).

While these points are well taken, there is a great deal more support for the pessimistic opinion of Occitan. One of the first difficulties facing the language is its nearly continual identification as a patois. The term, which does not have an exact English parallel, is generally translated as ‘peasant language’. In French, after the continual usage of the term by governmental officials in association with activities such as the negative treatment of students for speaking their dialect, it has a decidedly negative connotation, implying that the language being referred is inferior and therefore something of which one should be ashamed. Further attached to the term is the sense that it is something that does not, or at the very least *should* not, belong in France. The opinion that only French should be spoken in France does not refer only to foreign language usage in France; it also applies to competing regional dialects. And it is this opinion that the media portrays to excess of public opinion (Hammel, 161).

Whether or not the Jacobin French superiority dogma is portrayed in excess by the media, it does not deny the fact that French has become the only practical language for public interaction. Very few speakers of Occitan, if any, remain who are uniquely speakers of Occitan. Nearly all are bilingual, as was the case with those interviewed for this study. While not openly problematic, this causes difficulties due to the lack of necessity in teaching Occitan. In the eyes of many, Occitan is not a practical language. After all, anyone who speaks Occitan also speaks French, so why bother learning a second language that cannot be used in the public sector?

Furthering this problem is the tendency of Occitan speakers to speak Occitan uniquely with other Occitan speakers. As most participants in this study noted, the tendency is for Occitan speakers to identify other Occitan speakers and use it uniquely

with each other, as that aids in the prevention of misunderstandings. This is all well and good, but it does little for the promotion of the language. A non-Occitan speaker can easily spend weeks in the Midi without hearing a word of Occitan (Pach, 91). This is not necessarily because there is no Occitan community near him, but simply that he has been identified as someone who would not understand Occitan and is therefore only to be spoken to in French, which does not help increase either the notoriety or the usage of Occitan. It is also an opinion that has been passed down to the youngest generation of speakers. Calandreta students have stated that they do not want to use Occitan outside of school for a variety of reasons. One stated “En classe, on parlait tous le temps occitan, mais sitôt dehors, on parlait pas trop l’occitan.”⁹ (Domp martin-Normand, 16). This attitude towards Occitan, that of speaking it only in spaces and contexts where there are other Occitan speakers adds to the implications that there is something separate and perhaps inferior about the language.

Further exacerbating the problem is that despite having a connection to the historical culture of the Midi, it does not have a distinct identity. Whereas Catalan, Basque, and Bretons have distinct ethnic identities upon which they can use as a source for new speakers, Occitan does not. Speakers of Occitan are French. Most do not identify themselves as ‘Occitan’ and have never considered themselves as such (Manzano). This would not be problematic, except for the fact that this renders teaching Occitan as a means of ethnic identity, as is the case with Basque or Breton, is not a viable motivation. Occitan has cultural meaning to inhabitants of the Midi, yes, but it is no longer their core identity.

⁹ In class, we spoke Occitan all the time, but once we were outside, we didn’t speak Occitan very much.

Another difficulty facing Occitan is the decidedly disjointed nature of the language as a whole. As Occitan has multiple dialects, it lacks the overarching unity to be able to further Occitan more easily. Because there is no particular standardized version, there is a great deal of infighting as to what should be promoted as ‘Occitan’ (Hammel, 165). While the opinion in the Languedoc-Roussillon region would tend to lean heavily towards Lengadocien being the predominant variation of Occitan, those further west, who speak Gascon, would tend to disagree. Provençal and Lengadocien have been fighting this particular debate since the publication of the *Félibrige*, which based itself entirely on Provençal and made no consideration of Lengadocien or the northern dialects. This lack of cohesion makes the spread of Occitan more difficult; instead of trying to pass on one language, it is more like trying to pass on two or three of them, each with their own literary history and even spelling. This is particularly problematic when the inability of the dialects to work together as a harmonious whole in terms of improving the state of Occitan is taken into account (Pach, 91).

More troubling still is the fact that frankly, numbers are not on Occitan’s side. While there are an 800,000 estimated speakers of Occitan, most do not use Occitan on a regular basis. Pach estimates the number of people who use Occitan as an everyday language is closer to 500,000 (Pach, 90). Given Occitan’s difficulty with direct transmission over the course of the twentieth century and the fact that those difficulties do not appear to be ameliorating, not even the introduction of schools will be enough to see the continuation as a viable, living, language.

As such, it appears that of these two possible futures, it is, unfortunately, the negative path that is, at present, more viable. Due to this negative outlook, most experts

agree that Occitan is dying a slow and painful death, despite attempts to keep it alive. It is a matter of attempting to keep a ship afloat when its seams are not water tight; one can bail out as much water as one can, but in the end, the waters will rise and drag the ship under. This is the fate that Occitan as a living language is currently undergoing, and all of the determination of its supporters to see it otherwise cannot save it. In time, Occitan will be studied not as a language spoken in the present, but rather like Latin, a language that is culturally significant, but not used a surviving civilization.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate the status of Occitan dialects in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of France, with particular attention being paid to the areas of which dialects are most commonly used in the region of Languedoc-Roussillon, the environment in which they are learned, the context in which they are used, and the general attitude towards Occitan in the region. Empirical evidence located through the study done for this thesis and another, larger scale survey done in 1991 has provided the following answers to these questions.

Languedocien is the predominant dialect of Occitan spoken in Languedoc-Roussillon. This is reasonable given that Languedoc-Roussillon is located within the bounds of the Occitan méridionale, and is historically associated with that dialect. However, other dialects are also known to appear, either in the form of highly localized dialects that can also be classified as Occitan méridionale or in that of dialects from other regions. It should be noted these dialects were not as frequent as that of Languedocien, and were typically cited as a secondary dialect of which the participant knew a little because of work.

Transmission of Occitan is most frequently done within the home, although this could be changing. The 1991 study shows that most speakers of Occitan learn the language within the context of their own home, through direct transmission. However, the results of the study for this thesis demonstrate that this is shifting towards learning

Occitan in schools, possibly due to the greater availability of Occitan in the school system. Also of note is the fact that direct transmission of Occitan is inconsistent, with the oldest generation not teaching the next, but in more recent years teaching the youngest generation the language. There were multiple examples of this generational skip in this study. This fits in well with the Manzano's assertion that direct transmission of Occitan demonstrated a significant decline over the twentieth century (Manzano, 81).

Speakers of Occitan are most likely to use Occitan in private settings, with people they know, particularly if those people speak Occitan. Occitan is therefore the sociofunctional domain of friends and family, with the occasional other Occitan speaking acquaintance added in for good measure. It is not for public use, particularly if that public involves someone who does not speak Occitan or the French administration. There are multiple reasons for this, from the lingering stigma attached to Occitan as a 'patois', to a general lack of desire for misunderstandings to occur. Participants in the study for this thesis tended to at the very least state that their reasoning fell along the lines of the latter. The 1991 survey results imply that the classification of patois is a more significant factor than the results of this study noted. The lack of use of Occitan in the French administration goes back to the French government's lack of desire to recognize Occitan or other regional languages. Occitan speakers therefore will not use Occitan in a context in which it will not be acknowledged.

The general attitude towards Occitan seems to be surprisingly good, with 59% of all participants in the 1991 survey stating that they were at least somewhat attached to the language, with 46% being attached or very attached. This attachment is most likely connected at least in part to regionalism; the majority of the 46% attached or very

attached to Occitan grew up south of the Loire River, where Occitan has traditionally been spoken. Within the Occitan community, the shame attached to speaking Occitan caused by the *vergonha* and similar programs seems to have lessened, as none of the participants in the study for this thesis admitted to feeling ashamed of speaking Occitan. The general sentiment was instead that Occitan was a part of the participant's identity, and that it was not something of which they should be ashamed.

This sentimental tie of Occitan to the region delves back into the history of Occitan. While prior to the Albigensian Crusade, Occitan was highly regarded as a literary language with roots connecting it to Latin, it lost some of its standing when the Midi was absorbed by France. This loss in status was only heightened with the arrival of the Ordinance of Villers-Coterêts in 1539, mandating the use of the state dialect, *françois*, in official documents. Occitan began retreat even further - by the Jacobin policies of the revolutionary government, such as the Lakanal decree. This retreat was further encouraged by those who wanted to see France with one language, such as the Abbé Grégoire. This decline became even more rapid after the creation of the Ferry laws, named in honor of creator and enforcer Jules Ferry, in 1863. These laws triggered the public shaming of Occitan and other regional languages in the classroom, marking the dawn of the *vergonha*. Military conscription also became a factor in encouraging the rise of French and decline of regional languages in the name of communicating with other members of the unit.

While modern times have seen some advancements to the plight of Occitan, most notably the passing of la Loi de Deixonne in 1951, these were typically fairly empty

advancements, with no real means or intention of enforcing them. More significant has been one of Occitan's detractors, the Toubon Law. Although it is primarily attempting to curtail the influence of English over French, it has multiple potential repercussions for regional dialects as well, including Occitan. Also troubling is the government's repeated refusal to ratify the European Charter of Minority or Regional Languages, despite President Hollande's campaign promises to the contrary.

The methods used to conduct the study used in this paper were fairly straightforward. Contact was made with Occitan speakers through their university or place of employment. Interviews were conducted at the university or place of employment, and were fairly brief, lasting from three to sixteen minutes. Participants were found through the Université Paul Valéry, Radio Lengadoc, Lo CIRDOC, and le CPFO. Participants were asked a series of questions split into three parts, the first round of general questions which were used to determine which dialect of Occitan they spoke, as well as the contexts in which they did and did not use Occitan. The second portion was aimed at those who had children were asked about direct transmission of Occitan, and whether or not they taught their children as Occitan, while the third section of questions was for university students and focused on the use of Occitan at the university. Those results were then analyzed using charts and comparison.

The main means of comparison of the data collected from the interviews was way by comparing and contrasting the results of the study with the results of the 1991 survey compiled by Etienne Hammel. Comparison allowed for a broader range of Occitan speakers and opinions than the 22 interviews that made up this study. However, time is also a factor that needed to be taken into account, as at the time that this thesis was

written; the 1991 survey was over twenty years old, a significant span of time which could allow for a great many changes to be made in the Occitan community. Thus, while comparison was useful, it was not without difficulties. Nevertheless, the 1991 survey is a primary source of information about the Occitan speaking community of the Languedoc-Roussillon region, the survey was still one of the definitive pieces of information on the use of Occitan in recent years, and as such, it still has import. Several of the comparisons of the thesis study and the 1991 survey demonstrated that despite being over two decades out of date, many of the same opinions, such as the dislike of speaking Occitan in front of strangers.

The findings of the thesis, after being compared to the 1991 survey, demonstrated several basic trends in the use of Occitan as seen in the Languedoc-Roussillon. First, Occitan is a private language. For most speakers, Occitan is a language that is used with close friends, family, and acquaintances who speak Occitan. For many participants in the study for this thesis, Occitan is also a language of work, as Occitan proved to be an important part of their work lives due to the Occitan based nature of their work. This again reflects the private nature of Occitan, while not necessarily friends or family, people met through work, such as coworkers, are known quantities. If they are met through work related to Occitan, they are most likely Occitan speakers. Thus, they become a known quantity who can speak Occitan as well, bringing them into the group of people with whom it is safe to speak Occitan.

Secondly, Occitan speakers dislike speaking Occitan within the realms of the French administration. This is most likely due to a combination of reasons, but one of the predominant ones is that the French administration has consistently refused to

acknowledge Occitan. Therefore, it only makes sense that Occitan speakers refuse to speak Occitan in administrative contexts, as even if they happened to chance upon a worker who did speak Occitan, it would not matter, as the administration would not acknowledge it. No transactions would be made due to governmental rejection of languages other than French. Several of the thesis study responses to indicate that Occitan speakers understand this rejection, and while they hope for it to change, have decided to retaliate by not speaking it in the first place.

Thirdly, the survey and the thesis study both indicated that Occitan is attached to the region, and that attachment to the region is often accompanied by attachment to the language. In the study, this was manifested by the consistent idea that others should learn Occitan due to its cultural significance to Languedoc-Roussillon and the Midi at large. If one is going to live in the Midi, many respondents reasoned, one should try to learn the language that is its culture. Similarly, the survey showed a surprisingly high percentage of its respondents were attached to Occitan to a greater or lesser degree. This percentage only rose when the respondents were limited to those who had grown up south of the Loire River.

However, the thesis study and the 1991 survey also displayed significant differences. The first and less significant difference was that while the results of the 1991 survey demonstrated that Occitan was almost never spoken in the workplace. The thesis results proved to be exactly the opposite, with all participants citing work or university as being the primary place where they spoke Occitan. This difference resulted in the disregard for the results of the thesis study, as were most likely not indicative of Occitan speakers as a whole, due to the way in which participants were found. The second

difference was where and how Occitan was learned. The results of the survey were significantly skewed in favor of direct transmission, with most respondents stating that they learned Occitan at home. The thesis study results, however, found that most of its participants learned Occitan predominantly outside of the home, usually at work or at school. While a few of those who learned Occitan at school also had a parent or grandparent at home who spoke Occitan, this was not the case for the majority of participants. This, combined with the increasing number of students taking Occitan in school, could be indicative of a potential shift in the place where Occitan is learned, from the home to school.

The thesis study also demonstrated the inconsistency in direct transmission. Participants did not always teach their children Occitan, for a variety of reasons. Similarly, not all participants with Occitan speaking parents or grandparents learned Occitan through direct transmission. Other participants spoke Occitan with their grandparents, but their parents could not speak Occitan themselves. This was found to be demonstrative in the overall downward trend in the direct transmission of Occitan.

The state of Occitan brings up several interesting points for potential future studies. The lack of consistency of direct transmission and the motivations behind it, for example, could prove interesting, as while it has been documented on multiple occasions, it is an intriguing deviation from typical transmission methods for languages. Such a study would focus on attempting to uncover the reasons as to why the oldest generation of Occitan speakers may not have taught their children how to speak Occitan, but are now attempting to teach their grandchildren the language. Side studies could include

grandchildren learning Occitan independently of their Occitan speaking grandparents and non Occitan speaking parents.

Such a study would require a larger subject pool than the one used for this study. While one would be tempted to use a survey to gain this information, an interview might be preferable, as there would then be the potential for the interviewer to ask deeper questions about the motivations of the interviewee.

Another potential area of interest brought on by data from this study could focus on the effects of Occitan in schools on the number of Occitan speakers and the perception of Occitan outside of the classroom. Emphasis could then be placed on the differences of the effects of bilingual schools, such as the Calandretas, and schools with classes that treated Occitan like a foreign language. Further inquiries for either study could be made in regards to the why members of the Occitan community who do not otherwise support Occitan are so keen on seeing Occitan taught in schools. This study would again need a larger pool of participants in order to be effective, and would focus on the students of Occitan programs and their families. More data about the effect of Occitan school son the general public could be obtained from families living in the general environ of Occitan schools but not attending those schools as a means of assessing that effect. This second survey would again require a larger participant pool than the one used for this study.

It can easily be seen that the methods used to gain data for this study were flawed. This can be traced back to two primary problems. First, the participant pool was not large enough to make any meaningful conclusions about the Occitan population at large. While the 22 participants interviewed offered insight into the Occitan community, there

were not enough participants to verify whether these views were particular to these 22 participants, or a small portion of the Occitan speaking community, or indicative of Occitan speakers as a whole. Another attempt at this study would require a larger pool of Occitan speakers, in an attempt to ensure that the resulting data could provide a generalized opinion of the Occitan community at large without worrying that the results obtained would pertain only to one portion of the Occitan community. This enlarged participant pool would also aid in the attempt to document as many perspectives and opinions within the Occitan community as possible, which leads us into the solution for the second flaw in the resource methods.

The secondary flaw in the study is an extension of its small size. Due to the way in which participants were found, results in some areas were highly skewed away from the norm. A second study would need to ensure a greater variety of Occitan speakers, so that all groups could be represented properly. The most notable example in this study of this difficulty was that all participants in the study cited work or university classes as a place where they frequently heard and used Occitan. However, past studies show that this is not the case for Occitan speakers at large. This discrepancy can be attributed to the fact that all participants were found through their Occitan related jobs or university studies. If this study was to be undertaken a second time, it would be better to find a way to attract Occitan speakers of all kinds, including those who did not use Occitan in their careers, as is the case with most speakers. A more balanced pool of speakers would help ensure that the data was not as skewed. Age would be another factor that should be monitored as a potential source of lack of variance. While this study was fortunate to find at least one member of each age group to interview, there were still significantly

more participants under the age of 35. This is not consistent with the actual age distribution of Occitan speakers, which is actually weighted in favor of speakers above the age of 55. Similarly, the gender ratio provided by the study is not strictly accurate either, as there are many more male Occitan speakers than there are female. These discrepancies could be fixed by using more varied sources to locate participants, instead of using place of employment as an exclusive means of locating perspective participants, as was the case in this study.

The question would then become a matter of how to locate these more diverse groups of speakers. Certainly, younger speakers might be reachable through the Calandretas or other school programs, but that would not ameliorate the problem of the difficulties of locating older speakers of Occitan, or those more reluctant to speak Occitan publically. While there are Occitan interest groups, which function as something like clubs where Occitan speakers come together to speak Occitan, this would solve only one of the two problems. Contacting these groups could provide a study with older speakers of Occitan, but it would still leave the difficulty of the less open demographic. It could be that this gap in demographic is unavoidable unless members are pointed out directly to a researcher by another Occitan speaker. This would tend to make locating such speakers difficult, and could lead again to the difficulty of not having a sufficient sample size to provide generally applicable data.

Occitan is a language with a rich literary history that has been largely eliminated through systematic degradation in the classroom. This degradation has had the desired effect of disrupting the transmission, as evidenced by the decline of direct transmission over the course of the twentieth century. Despite this, Occitan has soldiered onwards,

with its speakers doing their best to ensure that Occitan remains a viable living language. Unfortunately, considering its endangered status, as well as the fact that there are no longer very many, if any, truly native speakers of Occitan who use it as their primary language, it is becoming more and more evident that Occitan is on a steady decline towards a quiet death. That does not mean that it will die unnoticed. Its cultural significance to Languedoc Roussillon and the rest of the Midi have allowed Occitan to gain attention from those who have been raised in the Midi. This connection to Occitan, combined with the development of Occitan education through the Calandretas and French public schooling could prove Occitan's salvation, but only as a secondary language. The goal of the Jacobins has been met. The language of the Republic is very definitely French, and no regional dialect, even one with such a rich history as Occitan, will ever be able to overcome it.

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Appendix A

Interview Schedule (English translation)

General Questions:

What is your name?

How old are you?

Which dialect of Occitan do you speak? (Langue d'Oc, Provençal, ect.)

Do you speak this dialect fluently?

Where did you learn to speak Occitan? If not at home, why did you decide to learn it?

Is this dialect your principal language?

Where do you use Occitan?

In which contexts do you use Occitan?

Are there contexts in which you would never speak Occitan? Why not?

In general, with whom do you speak Occitan?

Are there people with whom you would never speak Occitan? Why not?

For those who have a family:

Do you have children? Grandchildren? Do they also speak Occitan?

If yes, where did they learn Occitan? Did you teach them?

If no, why did you decide not to teach them Occitan?

When you were a student, did you speak Occitan at elementary school? If not, why not?

For those still in university:

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Do you speak Occitan at university?

If not, why not?

Do any of your classmates speak Occitan? Do you speak Occitan when you talk to each other?

Do your professors speak Occitan? Do they ever speak Occitan to you in class?

Do you think it is important for other students to learn Occitan?

Interview Schedule (French translation)

Les questions générales

Comment vous appelez-vous?

Quel âge avez-vous?

Lequel dialecte d'occitan est-ce que vous parlez? (Langue d'Oc, Provençal, etc.)

Parlez-vous ce dialecte couramment?

Est-ce que ce dialecte votre langue principale? Si non, parlez-vous le français comme votre langue principale?

Où utilisez-vous l'occitan?

Dans lesquelles contextes utilisez-vous l'occitan?

Est-ce qu'il y a des contextes dans lesquelles vous ne parleriez jamais l'occitan? Pourquoi pas?

En général, avec qui parlez-vous l'occitan?

Est-ce qu'il y a des gens avec qui vous ne parleriez jamais l'occitan? Pourquoi pas?

Pour ceux qui ont une famille:

Avez-vous des enfants? Des petits enfants? Parlent-ils l'occitan aussi?

Si oui, où apprenaient-ils l'occitan? Les enseignez-vous?

Si non, pourquoi avez-vous décidé de ne les enseigner l'occitan?

Quand vous étiez étudiant, parliez-vous l'occitan à l'école?

Si non, pourquoi pas?

Pour ceux qui sont encore à l'université:

Est-ce que vous parlez l'Occitan à l'université?

Si non, pour quoi pas?

Est-ce que quelques de vos camarades de classes parle l'Occitan ? Parlez-vous l'Occitan quand vous parlez ensemble?

Est-ce que vos professeurs parlent l'Occitan? Est-ce qu'ils parlent l'Occitan pendant le cours?

Est-ce que vous pensez que c'est important pour les autres étudiants à apprendre l'Occitan ?

Appendix B
Timeline of French Dynasties

Merovingian Dynasty (447-751) Germanic, this is the dynasty that took over from the Romans. They were eventually supplanted by their stronger supporters, the Carolingians.

Carolingian Dynasty (751-987) The dynasty to which Charlemagne belonged, it arguably began during the reign of Dagobert I with a series of ‘mayors of the palace’, the last of whom (Pepin III, the Short) eventually took power in his own right.

Capetian Dynasty (987-1328) This was the dynasty containing Philippe II Augustus, who was the king responsible for the Albigensian Crusade, and the absorption of the Midi into France.

Valois Dynasty (1328-1589) This dynasty included François I, who enacted the Ordinance of Villers-Coterêts in 1539.

Bourbon Dynasty (Original) (1589-1795) The dynasty containing both Louis XIV and Louis XVI, the original incarnation of this dynasty was in power during the French Revolution.

First Republic (1799-1814) This dynasty was essentially the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte, and is also known as the First Empire from 1804-1814. This time period included the rule of Jacobin mentality, legally encouraging the shaming and degradation of regional dialects, including Occitan. Of particular note is the Lakanal Decree of 1794, which mandated that school be taught in French.

Bourbon Dynasty (Restored) (1814-1848) The relatively brief restoration of the Bourbon dynasty after Napoleon’s defeat and exile. This marked the last dynasty of France, as they discarded the monarchy after 1848.

Second Republic (1848-1851) The precursor to the Second Empire, it was mostly a means of placing Louis Napoleon Bonaparte into a position of political power, which he then took advantage of by staging a coup d’état in 1850.

Second Empire (1851-1871) Headed by Napoleon III, this period saw the 1863 survey which drew the conclusions that many French school children regarded French as a foreign language.

Third Republic (1871-1947) Set up after Napoleon III's abject failure of the Franco-Prussian War, the third republic saw the dawn of the Ferry Laws, and Jules Ferry's anti-regional dialect policies. Generally considered to be a starting point of the *vergonha*, as this is when the shaming of Occitan in schools became standard practice.

Fourth Republic (1947-1959) Post-Nazi France saw a new government and improvements in sentiment for some regional dialects, including Occitan. The Fourth Republic passed the Deixonne Law, which granted the right for Occitan to be taught in schools under limited circumstances.

Fifth Republic (1959-present) Although there has been a rise in Occitan sentiment during the current incarnation of the French government, this does not mean that the French government smiles upon it, as seen by governmental refusal to ratify the European Chart of Minority Languages, and potential complications that could arise from the Toubon Law.