Bourgeois, S. (2021) '"Ok, qui d'autre na, nobody on the line right now?": A Diasystematic Construction Grammar approach to discourse markers in bilingual Cajun speech', in Boas, H.C. & Höder, S. (eds.), Constructions in Contact 2: Language change, multilingual practices, and additional language acquisition. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 56–80. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1075/cal.30.03bou

"Ok, qui d'autre na, nobody on the line right now?" A Diasystematic Construction Grammar approach to Discourse Markers in Bilingual Cajun Speech

Abstract

Discourse markers (DMs) in bilingual speech have received much attention in language contact studies because their semantic and syntactic detachability make them easy targets for being used bilingually. Though past studies on multilingual DM usage have provided rich insights, open questions remain with regard to non-salient examples and the emergence of mixed code DMs. This paper looks at the DM system of Cajun bilinguals in Louisiana using a Diasystematic Construction Grammar approach. The analysis demonstrates that the DM systems of Cajun bilinguals are simultaneously active. Besides using DMs outside of their native languages, evidence of the congruence of the two systems is further supported by the documentation of mixed code DMs such as *na*, *yeah mais* and *mais yeah*.

Keywords: discourse markers, language contact, bilingualism, Diasystematic Construction Grammar, Cajun French, English

1 Introduction[1]

Discourse marker (DM) systems in bilingual language use have received much attention in past studies because DMs have been identified as easily code-switched or borrowed across languages due to their semantic and syntactic detachability (e.g. Maschler, 2000; Torres, 2006; Muysken, 2011). A broad definition of DMs is offered by Schiffrin (1987, p. 31) who labels them as "sequentially dependent particles which bracket units of talk". More specifically, Biber *et al.* (1999, p. 1086) describe DMs as "inserts which tend

[1] Many thanks to the anonymous reviwers for their constructive comments. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own.

to occur at the beginning of a turn or utterance and combine two roles: (a) to signal a transition in the evolving progress of the conversation, and (b) to signal an interactive relationship between speaker, hearer, and message". Aijmer (2013, p. 13) further discusses how DMs obtain and continue to refine their meanings through 'dynamic sense-making' that is strongly dependent on the context of the exchange between the speaker and hearer, which explains their multifunctionality.

When it comes to language contact situations, some studies on bilingual DM usage highlight the progressive adaptation of one DM system to the other. This has been observed in the American-German dialects of Texas, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. These language contact situations are similar to the case of southern Louisiana due to the overarching dominance of English. Furthermore, in these Texas-German dialects, it has been found that frequent English DMs (*well*, *you know*, etc.) have been progressively code-switched and then incorporated into the American-German DM system.[2] Some studies of the DM system of the American-German dialects go so far as to say that the English DMs have essentially supplanted the entire native system (e.g. Salmons, 1990; Goss & Salmons, 2000). The supplanting of one language's DM system by another, usually in favor of DMs of the dominant language, is

[2] The terms 'incorporation/infiltration' are used in this paper to express the usage of DMs from one language in another in a fashion that is neither code-switching nor borrowing in the strict sense. Instead, what happens is that the DMs are gradually integrated into the other language. In some language contact studies, this restricted phenomenon is also called 'borrowing' (e.g. Goss & Salmons, 2000; Boas & Weilbacher, 2006).

also discussed in Matras (2000) who looks at the non-separation of DM systems in bilinguals. In his paper, he discusses what he calls 'fusion' which is defined as the "wholesale, class-specific nonseparation of two systems" that can eventually lead to the replacement of one system by the other (*ibid*., p. 526). Other studies on the American-German dialects, however, while still suggesting heavy English DM infiltration, also indicate situations where certain German DMs retain either some or all of their functions (e.g. Boas & Weilbacher, 2006). In another situation, English DMs have also been found to be integrated into Chiac, a variety of French spoken in New Brunswick, Canada. Chevalier (2007) demonstrates that *so* and *but* are fully incorporated into Chiac, while *well* also appears to be used but co-exists with its Chiac equivalent *ben.* In this co-existence, *well* specializes on the roles of marking turn taking while *ben* is used more often in the interior of a turn (Chevalier, 2002, 2007).

Other studies on language contact situations emphasize that DMs, particularly those of the prestige language are utilized to saliently strengthen discourse cohesion and coherence. For example, in a language contact situation with Shaba Swahili and French speakers in Katanga, a southwestern province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, de Rooij (2000) argues that French DMs are used and preferred in Shaba Swahili by bilingual speakers in order to create and strengthen discourse cohesion and coherence. Furthermore, de

Rooij (2000) hypothesizes that French DMs are used in these circumstances because they are much more salient to the hearer than the native ones.[3]

Though such studies of multilingual DM usage have provided rich insights, open questions remain with regard to non-salient uses and the emergence of mixed code DMs. Using data from a bilingual radio program, this paper looks at the DM system of Cajun French (CF) and English speakers in Evangeline Parish, a parish in southern Louisiana, using the Diasystematic Construction Grammar (DCxG) approach as introduced in Höder (2012, 2014). This approach analyzes contact phenomena from a multilingual standpoint rather than assigning the parts of a multilingual utterance to one particular language, as has been the case with many theoretical approaches to code-switching (e.g. Poplack 1980; Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002). Therefore, in this approach, the focus will not be on whether an element (in this case) a DM in a multilingual utterance belongs (or can be analyzed as belonging) to language A or B, but, instead, on whether it represents some common structure shared between the two languages (Höder, 2012, p. 244). Such a focus is particularly crucial when taking into account mixed code elements that do not have a clear origin from one language or the other but instead have a multilingual one.

[3] See Myers-Scotton (1993) for definitions of *marked* and *unmarked* code-switches.

This idea that shared structures are in some way accessible to and are thus used by multilingual speakers can be traced back to Weinreich's (1954, p. 390) notion of a 'diasystem'. This notion was introduced to explain regular correspondences between different structures in closely related dialects (in the case of Weinreich's study, Yiddish dialects) in an attempt to introduce a structuralist approach to dialectology. Therefore, it has mostly been applied to dialectal phonology. However, Höder (2012, p. 245) argues that the concept can easily be extended to also cover "(a) other parts of the language system and (b) different languages in addition to different dialects". Establishing such a diasystem is done through the process of 'interlingual identification' (Weinreich 1964, p. 7), which is the establishment of a functional or formal equivalence between elements of different languages by multilingual speakers. This process, according to Höder (2012, 2014), eventually allows for the construction of linguistic 'diasystems' that consist of interconnected language-specific constructions and language-unspecific 'diaconstructions'. This establishment of diaconstructions, however, is arbitrary to some degree and is at least partially dependent on social conventions of the multilingual groups involved (Höder, 2014, p.142). Therefore, this DCxG approach not only emphasizes that multilinguals process their languages interactively, a fact supported by psycholinguistic studies (e.g. Grosjean, 1989, 2008), but it also argues that "the grammatical description of a language system in a multilingual environment – i.e. the socially conventionalized set of all structural elements shared by a specific

speaker group as well as cognitively stored and processed by the individual speakers – must include structures of all languages or varieties involved, and the social establishment and individual acquisition of such a system must be inherently multilingual" (Höder, 2014, p. 140).

When looking at DM system of CF and English bilinguals in the region of Evangeline Parish, Louisiana, it will be argued that diasystematic links should be expected to lead to or at least facilitate increasing interlingual congruence between the DM systems of CF and English. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that in opposition to what has been observed in other similar North American contact situations, there is little indication that CF DMs are being supplanted by English ones. A few notable exceptions will be discussed in section 4. On the contrary, the analysis of this investigation shows that the DM systems of Cajun bilinguals are simultaneously active to these bilingual speakers. Along with evidence pointing to the development of a combined CF and English DM network in which, for example, English DMs can be used in CF (see example 1 below), things are taken one step further with the development of mixed code DMs that are neither completely English nor CF. Furthermore, the mixed code DMs *na* (see example 2 below)*, yeah mais* and *mais yeah* are used both in CF and English. In addition to all this, the radio show data demonstrates that English as well as mixed code DMs are occurring at the border of the speaker's mid-utterance switching of languages from CF to English or English to CF. This can all be accounted for using a DCxG

perspective because, as Höder (2012, p. 255) argues, multilingual speakers know (consciously or unconsciously), use and conventionalize diasystematic relations between their known languages. Furthermore, it is argued that "(t)hey establish and expand regular correspondences, generalise and abstract on the basis of language-specific structures, and eventually organise their languages into a common system" (*ibid.*).

(1) Host 1: À Mamou, *of course*, ça c'est juste le jour de Mardi Gras, et là, il y a toutes sortes de célébrations.
'In Mamou, of course, that is on the actual day of Mardi Gras, and there, there are all kinds of celebrations.'

(2) Host 1 : Ok, ****, qui d'autre *na* ce matin ?
'Ok, ****, who else this morning?'

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 briefly surveys the linguistic background of Southern Louisiana and the current contact situation. Section 3 discusses where the data came from and what phenomena were investigated. Section 4 offers a general overview of the results. Section 5 reviews the evidence of pro-diasystematic change and makes the argument that there is evidence of the DM systems of CF and English merging into one. Section 5.1 discusses the mixed code DMs *na*, *mais yeah* and *yeah mais*. Section 5.2 explores a phenomenon which has, to my knowledge, not received detailed investigation. Namely, it presents the argument that English DMs and particularly *na*, in addition to their normal functions, also appear at the border of mid-utterance switching of languages. This occurs from CF to English and

vice versa. Section 6 summarizes the major contributions of this paper and lays out future work that remains to be done.

2 Historical background and current language contact situation

Contemporary Cajun French (also called Cadien French or more generally Louisiana French[4]) has its origins from multiple sources (Valdman *et al.,* 2010). These sources include a variety of regional French dialects from colonists from different parts of France and Quebec that arrived during the French Colonial Period (1699-1762). A second major influence came with the arrival of approximately 3,000 Acadian exiles who arrived in Louisiana between 1764 and 1765 after being expelled from their homeland in present-day Nova Scotia in 1755 by the British. The Acadian dialect of French had strong roots in the dialects of western France. The last major group to influence Cajun French was the French of the upper classes that is known as Plantation Society French, which more closely resembled the standard European French of the time. Plantation Society French was spoken by the colonists who arrived primarily in the first half of the 19th century from the former colony of Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti) and from France. These colonists came to Louisiana because they were interested in participating in Louisiana's then flourishing plantation economy. Though Plantation Society

[4] For a discussion on the problems associated with the popular label for present-day French in Louisiana as 'Cajun French' and alternative labels for this variety, see Klingler (2015).

French has all but disappeared today, these various French varieties[5] were in constant contact through the early 19th century. Through this contact, the French of the Acadians and the other French varieties spoken in the region led to the development of what is today, Louisiana French (popularly called Cajun French), though it still shows significant regional variation (Valdman *et al*., 2010, pp xii; Picone, 2015, p. 274; Klinglerm, 2015).

In Louisiana, French was the language of everyday life and government into the 19th century. However, the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and statehood in 1812 put serious pressure on the French speaking population of Louisiana to conform into the language and culture of the United States.[6] This pressure was initially felt strongly by the upper class French Creoles who quickly understood that English was henceforth the language of power and prestige. They therefore progressively shifted from French to English, particularly after the Civil War when the plantation economy collapsed (Marshall, 1996; Picone, 2015). Being more geographically and socially isolated in the rural areas of what today constitutes the 22 Parish area that is popularly called 'Acadiana', the Cajuns[7] continued to speak primarily CF into the 20th century

[5] In addition to the various French dialects discussed here, the presence of Louisiana Creole spoken primarily by Louisianans of African descent also added to the complexity of the linguistic situation in Louisiana.

[6] See Picone (2003) for a discussion on the influence of a substantial influx of English-speaking slaves on the language shift in Louisiana in the 19th century.

and therefore avoided the progressive anglicization for a longer period than other francophone communities of Louisiana (Brasseaux, 1992).

It was around the end of the 19th and into the 20th century that the social and economic pressures pushed the Cajuns further toward assimilation (e.g. Bernard, 2003). Pressures began to mount in the late 19th century with the arrival of Anglo-American farmers and then continued due to the development of the oil industry along with the arrival of oil workers from Texas, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania in the early 20th century. Furthermore, starting in 1916, free public education became available throughout the state and mandatory English language education was imposed in southern Louisiana. Things went even further when the 1921 state constitution included a clause that required all school instruction be conducted in English only. All of this, coupled with widespread modernization of the region following the Second World War, led to English becoming more and more the language of high prestige and the key to economic success (Bernard, 2003). Furthermore, because CF was highly stigmatized for the first few generations of bilingual Cajun speakers, many of them stopped using CF with their own children out of the belief that it might help them avoid the negative stereotypes associated with being francophone (*ibid.*). This explains, in fact,

[7] Over time, the designation of Cajun has come to mean more just than someone who descended from the Acadian refugees. It was eventually employed to refer to all persons of French descent and low economic standing. By the end of the 19th century, this included poor (white) Creoles, downwardly mobile Anglos and 19th century French immigrants (Brasseaux, 1992, p. 104).

the obvious gap of CF competence between the older generations and those born in the second half of the 20th century.

Despite this rapid Americanization, however, there was a pushback against this trend in the 1960s in what is popularly called the Cajun Renaissance. This movement led to, amongst other things, a renewed appreciation of Cajun music and cultural events, the creation of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL)[8] in 1968 and the recognition of the twenty-two parish area that is officially called *The Heart of Acadiana* in 1971.[9] Though CODOFIL programs were not successful in preventing the decline of CF, continued interest in French immersion programs in local schools continues to this day (e.g. Bernard, 2003, p. 101-11). Furthermore, as recently as August 2017 two new immersion programs have opened in Evangeline Parish, the parish from which the data for this study comes, with the support of local authorities in Ville Platte and Mamou (Burgess, 2017).

Recent census data[10] estimates that the francophone population of Louisiana makes up roughly 2.8% of the total population. However, the percentages range anywhere from 4 – 18 % in the Acadiana region.

[8] More information on CODOFIL can be found at the following website: http://www.codofil.org, date of access 15.08.2019

[9] See Bernard (2003) for more information on the cultural and political movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

[10] Current Census data can be viewed from the following website: https://apps.mla.org/map_data, date of access 15.08.2019

3 Data and methods

The data from this study comes from a call-in radio program entitled *La Tasse de Café* that airs four times a week on the Ville Platte radio station KVPI 1050AM/92.5FM.[11] This program was chosen as a resource because it is, to my knowledge, the only regular English/CF bilingual call-in radio program offered in the region. Furthermore, this station is located in the county seat of Evangeline Parish, which is also the parish with one of the highest percentages of CF speakers in the state (18% according to the 2010 U.S. census). The program has two hosts. One of the hosts is designated as the French expert[12]. This role designates him to give the French word of the day at the beginning of each episode, and he answers all queries pertaining to the language. The co-host[13] is also bilingual but usually delegates all specific questions concerning CF to the expert. It is important, however, to point out that neither of the two people who play the role of the expert host are linguists nor educators. The people who regularly play the roles of expert and co-host are all local radio veterans who have been involved in local radio for decades and regularly speak both CF and English during the program. Furthermore, these hosts are, by far, the participants who speak the most in the totality of

[11] It is possible to listen to the show online from the following website: http://kvpiam.tunegenie.com/onair/, date of access 15.08.2019

[12] There are two people who fill this role. The one labelled Host 1 participates on Mondays and Wednesdays; Host 1b is there on Thursdays and Fridays.

[13] The co-host is usually the same person and is labelled as Host 2. However, during one episode, the co-host was replaced by a substitute. This substitute is labelled as Host 2b. Unlike this original co-host, this participant is much younger and has been a DJ at the radio station only for the past 5 years at the time of the transcription.

the *Tasse de Café* transcriptions. Table 1 provides the limited amount of demographic information available on the four people who played the roles of expert host or co-host during the episodes transcribed in 2017 and 2018. This information is available on the website of the radio station and the *Tasse de Café* Facebook page.

Hosts	Gender	Languages Spoken	Number of Episodes	Time working at Station
Host 1	Male	CF & English	3	>50 years
Host 1b	Male	CF & English	3	>40 years
Host 2	Male	CF & English	5	>50 years
Host 2b	Female	CF & English	1	5 years

Table 1. Demographic Information of Hosts of *La Tasse de Café*

Recordings of six episodes[14] of *La Tasse de Café* were transcribed with the help the CLAN software (MacWhinney, 2000). The combined length of the recordings of the episodes is approximately 8.25 hours. Each episode starts with the 'News in French' and is then followed by the morning talk show segment that lasts an hour. This segment begins with the expert host introducing the French word of the day. After that, telephone lines are opened to the public. During the remainder of the show, people are invited to participate and respond to any questions that came up during the show or to ask any other question that they might have. Common topics for conversation include Cajun music, CF, local history, community events and the local lifestyle. Periodically throughout the program, the two hosts announce public

[14] The recordings that make up this corpus come from three episodes from 2017 and three from 2018.

events and advertise for local companies in both CF and English. Speaking in CF is actively encouraged, but participants are welcome to speak in English as well. As a matter of fact, this constant flux between CF and English is acknowledged and celebrated on the program's Facebook page in the 'about' caption where it is written, "Tune-in to 'La Tasse de Café' every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. for LIVE talk with callers in Frenglish!"[15]

When it comes to the call-in participants in the six episodes transcribed, there was a total of 64 participants including the hosts. Of these 64 participants, 17 of them actually spoke in CF during the show for at least part of their turn(s). Of these 17 participants who spoke CF in the show, only three were female. Other participants, like discussed in Dubois & Horvath (2002), would use some CF vocabulary in their English speech but did not demonstrate any further proficiency of CF. Unfortunately, since the data for this study comes from a radio show, it is not possible to discern any demographic information about the callers besides what one can discern from the dialogue themselves. Therefore, participants who spoke English only during the program were regarded as monolingual English speakers for the purposes of this study. Their uses of DMs were thus excluded from the final data.

[15] La Tasse de Café's Facebook page can be accessed from the following link: https://www.facebook.com/pg/latassedecafekvpi/about/?ref=page_internal, date of access 15.08.2019

Through the transcription process, it became clear that many of the call-in guests participated in more than just one of the transcribed episodes. Furthermore, it is clear from the context of these conversations that some of them are regular participants of the show. In the six episodes that were transcribed, for example, ten of the participants appear at in at least two episodes. When one considers that this is a local radio program coming from the small radio station in rural Louisiana with a cult following of participants calling from the local area, it is evident that the *Tasse de Café* program represents a sort of mini-culture or 'community of practice' (c.f. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1999) in its own right within the community in Evangeline Parish. Furthermore, it functions as a public forum for using CF, therefore encouraging the members of this ever-decreasing population to participate. For example, roughly 27% of the participants in the Tasse de Café data spoke in CF for at least part of their turn(s). This is a substantial percentage if one considers that that CF speaking population of Evangeline Parish was reported at 18% back in 2010 according to the U.S. Census.

Once completed, the transcriptions of these episodes were then run through the concordancer AntConc (Anthony, 2017) in order to look specifically at occurrences of key CF and English DMs in their respective contexts. During the transcription process, special attention was given to the usage of DMs within the dialogue, particularly those which have been shown to be frequently used in multilingual speech such as *well*, *you know*, *but* and *of*

course (e.g. Goss & Salmons, 2000; Chevalier, 2007; Dajko & Carmichael, 2014). I also searched for English DMs that have already been attested in CF. Neumann-Holzschuh (2008), for example, investigated 'doubled' English and French DM pairs that co-exist in Cajun French. These doubled DM pairs include *mais*/but, *tu connais, tu sais*/you know, *oui, ouais*/yeah[16], *(eh) ben*/well and *ça fait(que), fait/*so. However, I also tried to find French DMs in the English dialogue. This search was influenced by past works that have pin-pointed stereotypical CF usages that are used by bilinguals and also monolingual English speakers of Cajun ancestry. Dubois & Horvath (2002, p. 273), for example, note the emblematic use of the typically Cajun DMs such as *tu connais* (you know), *mais yeah*[17] (but yeah) and the interjection *poo-yie* (wow) as a way for people of Cajun heritage to represent their Cajunness while speaking English. This is similar to Poplack's (1980) study that observed monolingual English Puerto Ricans of New York city who inserted their Puerto Rican identity into their English speech with Spanish words and phrases. Furthermore, Dajko & Carmichael (2014) in their study also found uses of *mais* in the English speech of bilingual Cajun speakers as well as, to an extent, the use of *but* in their CF dialogue. In their study, some of the interesting examples of *mais* in the English speech involved the performance of Boudreaux and Thibodeaux jokes that center around two

[16] A rare variation to this was the mixed code is *oui yeah*.

[17] See the package image of Jamie Bergeron's Cajun Jerky from the following website for an example of *mais yeah* used to rhetorically represent Cajunness: https://jamie-bergeron-gear.myshopify.com/products/jamie-bergerons-original-cajun-jerky, date of access 15.08.2019

stereotypically dumb and backwards Cajuns who display certain stereotypical Cajun English features, such as the two duplicated examples in (3) and (4) (Dajko & Carmichael 2014, p. 165):

(3) She asked, "Where I can find the tomato sauce?" I said, "*Mais*, same place you got them six cans you got in your hand!"

(4) *Mais* I had to go to a school for my engineer's license, you know, to learn all the stuff to pass a test.

In the end, however, though there are various similarities between *La Tasse de Café* data and the previous studies on CF and Cajun English, some aspects of the data are unexpected. For example, there were no CF DMs found to be used significantly in English dialogue. Only *na,* a mixed code DM was found in English more than once. *Na* is half the time pronounced with a nasalized vowel /nã/ though in other examples the vowel can be less nasalized or not nasalized and instead pronounced as /na/. *Mais ouais* (but yeah) and *bien sûr* (of course) were used once each in English, and the mixed code DMs *Mais yeah* and *yeah mais* occurred once each in the entirety of the radio show data. In particular, *mais yeah* occurred in English dialogue, and *yeah mais* was found in French dialogue. These mixed code DMs will be discussed in more detail in section 5.1. In addition to annotating the usages of DMs in the show, special attention was also added to the language being used when the DM occurred. Furthermore, this study not only looked into DMs occurring outside of their origin languages, but it also observed DMs occurring at the

boundaries of CF and English. These DMs occurring at the border of the speakers switching languages will be further discussed in section 5.2.

4 Overview of DM use across both languages

The participants in this call-in radio program, hosts and guest callers alike, produced a substantial variety of DMs when speaking in both languages, but only a small portion of those were used outside of their origin languages. A list of the DMs being used bilingually[18] can be found in Table 2.

Discourse Marker	English Dialogue	French Dialogue	Switching Languages	Total
well	144 (89%)	18 (11)%	0	162
of course	31 (65%)	15 (31%)	2 (4%)	48
you see	6 (23%)	20 (77%)	0	26
you know	121 (97%)	1 (1%)	3 (2%)	125
but	154 (99%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	156
bien sûr 'of course'	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0	4
na 'now'	6 (60%)	2 (20%)	2 (20%)	10
mais yeah	1 (100%)	0	0	1
yeah mais	0	1 (100%)	0	1
mais ouais 'but yeah'	1 (17%)	5 (83%)	0	6

Table 2. Bilingual DMs in *Tasse de Café* Transcriptions

The table also shows how often these DMs were used in English, CF and when they were used at the border of switching languages. The most common English DMs found in CF were *well*, *you know*, *of course*, and *you see*. What

[18] One element that appears in many examples but is not included in this analysis is *ok*. *Ok* is left out of this analysis of DMs being used bilingually because it has been fully borrowed into various varieties of French since the 20th century. It can be found in the Larousse online dictionary at the following link, where it is defined as a familiar variant of *d'accord*:
https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/OK/55817?q=ok#55458

these DMs all have in common is that they are all highly multifunctional and can therefore be used for purposes such as marking text coherence and the speaker's attitudes. Furthermore, the usage of the DMs *well, you know*, *you see*, and *of course* bilingually in such a language contact situation is neither surprising nor unique. Much discussion exists in multilingual DM studies on which types of English DMs are more likely or easily incorporated into the grammars of the other language over others. Matras (1998) accounts for this phenomenon in language contact situations according to a hierarchy of pragmatic detachability. According to this framework, whether or not a DM is easily incorporated depends on three different scales. The first scale is pragmatic detachability. This stipulates that more turn-related DMs such as *well* are incorporated more easily than context-related ones such as *but*. The second scale is the category-sensitive scale. This demonstrates that DMs that are more lexical or deictic are incorporated last. Finally, the third scale is the semantic scale, and it illustrates that DMs that show contrast, restriction or change are more easily incorporated than those that mark addition, elaboration or continuation. Though many of the English DMs found in CF such as *well*, *you know*, *you see* and *of course* are similar to those that have been found in other studies like those of the American-German dialects (e.g. Salmons, 1990; Fuller, 2001), the results also demonstrate some differences to the predictions of the hierarchy of pragmatic detachability. This is similar to what was observed in Boas & Weilbacher's (2007) investigation of DMs in Texas German where some usages of *you know/weisst(e)* appeared to

follow Matras' (1998) prediction while other DMs such as *but* and *aber* did not. Further counter-evidence against this hierarchy of detachability can be noticed in the data here where *well*, which is supposedly one of the most likely to be utilized according to the pragmatic detachability scale, does not appear to be used proportionally in CF dialogue as much as supposed lower level DMs such as *you see* and *of course.* Instead of relying of such a scale, taking a DCxG approach would instead be more fitting because it takes into account the knowledge of multilinguals and, therefore, allows us to see why certain DMs are used bilingually. For example, Neumann-Holzschuh (2008, p. 480) noted that only English DMs that had CF equivalents with matching functions were utilized in CF. Such findings demonstrate that linguistic knowledge and the equivalent functionality (e.g. interlingual identification) of the items being used in this situation play a significant role in determining which English DMs are incorporated into CF.

What is also immediately apparent in the data is that even in cases where the DMs are being utilized in the other language, there is an obvious preference for native DMs over foreign ones when speaking in either CF or English. Therefore, we cannot say that we are in an exact situation like that discussed in the American-German dialects where the usage of English DMs is more intense (c.f. Salmons, 1990; Boas, 2010). However, somewhat similar to what was found with Chiac (e.g. Chevalier, 2007), there are signs in the data that a few English DMs are preferred in CF over the CF equivalents. This involves

the usage of *well*, *you see*, and, to a lesser extent, *of course* in CF dialogue. *Well* and *you see* appear to be used almost exclusively over their CF counterparts *(et) ben* and *tu vois*, while *of course* still co-exists with its equivalent *bien sûr*. Despite these few exceptions, however, what we are seeing is what is perhaps an indication of this overall process where the DM systems of CF and English are starting to become congruent. This is what Höder (2012, p. 255) calls the "simplification of the common system" where, in this case, the DM system as a whole is becoming increasingly congruent which, in turn, also makes the common system more complex. In this particular case, the list of available DMs is growing because it is including DMs from CF and English as well as mixed code DMs, which will be discussed in 5.1.

When looking at the usage of CF DMs in English dialogue, the situation is different. When we exclude the mixed code DMs, *mais oua*is and *bien sûr* (see examples 5 and 6) are the only the only pure CF DMs that are found in English. Though this is not uncommon and has been seen in similar multilingual situations, it does put in doubt some assertions about the stereotypes of Cajun English. For example, it was rather surprising to see that there was a complete lack of the use of the CF *tu connais, tu sais*, *cher/ère,* and *poo-yie* in any English dialogue of these episodes. Furthermore, the two mixed code variants *yeah mais* and *mais yeah*, were indeed found, but it is still compelling how rarely they were used since *yeah mais* has been cited in

other studies as one of the most stereotypical elements in Cajun English (e.g. Dajko & Carmichael, 2014, p.166; Deborah & Horvath, 2002, p. 273).

(5) Caller G: *Mais ouais,* it's just that people didn't have <much> [//] too much education in those days, you know?

(6) Host 2b: Right, *bien sûr*, but they were only for about three years. They divorced back in 1954, so.

Furthermore, there is only one example where *but* is used in CF. Interestingly, as well, it is not an example of *but* being used in a stereotypically marked fashion as would be expected based on previous observations. Rather, in this case, it is functioning as a regular contrast connective. This example can be observed in (7):

(7) Host 1b: Yeah, ok. How about slaughterhouse?

Host 2: Oh, I know that, <un> [//] une tuerie.
Host 1b: Une tuerie, *but* il y a un autre mot (.) abattoir.
'A slaughterhouse, but there's another word butchery.'

Here the usage of *but* is notable because it is a great instance of how English words can be used in CF in remarkably unmarked ways. For example, it does not seem to be a case where it is used as a continuation/word searching marker after a considerable pause. Also, it does not appear to be used to mark a major contrast, nor is it an occurrence of a speaker rhetorically acting out his/her Cajunness. Rather this can be best explained as an indication of an

interlingual network where DMs from both languages, in this case *mais* and *but*, are both readily available.

5 Signs of Congruence of two DM systems in Cajun Bilinguals

It has already been demonstrated that the congruence between the DM systems of the two languages appears to be far more apparent when the participants speak CF than when they speak English. Furthermore, there were also surprisingly no examples of some of the more rhetorical markers of Cajunness in the English dialogue. Though Dubois *et al.* (2006, p. 213) also found that English words are used in CF more than the other way around, the total absence of some of the so-called typical Cajun DMs such as *tu connais*, *tu sais, cher(e)*, and *poo-yie* brings up the need to further investigate the current reality of what constitutes Cajun English.

However, there is still a strong argument to be made in favor of pro-diasystematic change where we see the merging of the DM systems of Cajun bilingual speakers. One of the biggest pieces of evidence for this comes from examples like (7) with *but* where we see the usage of an English connective being used in CF in an unmarked way. More frequent examples of this sort of DM interlanguage include the examples below that involve *of course*, one of the most frequently used English DMs found in CF:

(8) Host 1: Le numéro de phone à Gurvis: trois, six, trois, sept, zéro, un, un. And, *of course*, il peut vous servir en français aussi bien qu'en anglais.
'The phone number of Gurvis: three, six, three, seven, zero, one, one. And, of course, he can serve you in French as well as in English.'

(9) Caller H: Et, *of course*, il y avait le même conte pour les chats noirs.
'And, of course, there was the same fairytale about black cats'

(10) Unknown Caller 1 (07.13.18): Oh ouais, *of course*, ça va bien !
'Oh yeah, of course, all is well!'

In examples (8) (9) and (10), *of course* is being executed much in the same way one would expect to see it used in English speech. It demonstrates the speaker's awareness of the structure and how the utterance fits in with the preceding speech as well as also helping guide the listener to understand how the current information fits in with the rest (c.f. Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen 2004, p. 1783). As a matter of fact, the only thing worth citing in this example as noteworthy is that the English *of course* is being used and not a French equivalent such as *bien sûr*.

Similar examples can be found involving the English DM *well* where there are also indications of congruence between the bilingual DM systems. In the examples below, *well* also appears and functions as if it were being used in a typical way except for the fact that it is occurring in CF speech. Furthermore, it is also notable that *well* is being utilized in more than just one of its normal English functions. Namely, we see in (11) an example where it is being used

as a response marker that qualifies the speaker's previous complaint of being tired from reporting the news. In (12), we see another function of *well* being used to mark the transition to a new subject (c.f. Aijmer, 2013, 35). Once again, had these examples come from English dialogue, there would be nothing remarkable about these uses. Instead, what is intriguing is simply that the CF equivalent *(eh) ben* was not employed.

(11) Host 2: Un tas de nouvelles ce matin?
'A heap of news this morning?'
Host 1b: *Well*, uh, c'est comme on dit tout le temps, c'est pour ça qu'on est icitte !
'Well, uh, it's like we say all the time, that's why we're here!'

(12) Host 1: Guillroy's Title and Notary Service droit là à 302 la rue Sud Châtaignier. *Well*, le bureau du temps nous dit qu'on peut espérer du temps sévère (.) aujourd'hui.
'Guillroy's Title and Notary Service right there at 302 South Chataignier. Well, the weather bureau tells us that we can expect severe weather today.'

Another example of an English DM found in CF is *you see*. In (13), Host 1b uses it to mark important information in the narrative for the listeners about a special ledger that he received from a peer that contains information on old restaurants from decades back:

(13) Host 1b: Et il a donné un livre icitte par le, <c'est> [//] c'est un livre, *you see*, il y a des noms dedans celles-ci [sic] que moi j'ai jamais entendu avant.
'and he gave a book here by the, <it's> [//] it's a book, you see, there are names inside it that myself I've never heard of before.'

In this section, the argument has been made that there is convincing evidence that the DM system of these Cajun bilinguals is in the process of combining into a single congruent system where both the English and CF DMs are available resources to them, especially while they speak CF. This preference to using English DMs in CF speech as opposed to vice versa is due undoubtedly to the overarching dominance of English in contemporary Louisiana society, including Evangeline Parish. This section has also displayed how the use of English DMs in CF need not be explained as having the function of marking extreme contrast or as a word-searching marker in cases of uncertainty. Rather, many of the examples in the data occur as if they form part of the normal CF DM system. In the next sections, some of the more particular findings from this data will be presented as further evidence of the interlingual development of a common bilingual DM system.

5.1. The DM Na and Mais Yeah/Yeah mais

Additional evidence of the congruence of the CF and English DM systems is found in the usage of the mixed code DMs that are neither inherently CF nor English. This includes the DM, *na* and the two-word mixed code DMs *mais yeah* and *yeah mais.* The usage of mixed code DMs that are unique to this group of bilingual speakers provide further evidence of the convergence of the two DM systems into one combined DM network. However, it must be stressed that the usage of items that are neither purely English nor CF in the

speech of the Cajun bilinguals, in and of itself, is not a new discovery. For example, Picone (1996) investigates a phenomenon where CF speakers use non-assimilated English lexical items in their speech. Picone (1996, p. 91) calls this alternative to the binary distinction between fully integrated borrowings and code-switches 'intercode' because the usage of these English lexical items without inflection in CF speech can be neither considered as belonging completely to English or CF. This is used particularly to fill lexical gaps that exist in CF, or it is used for specific vocabulary from domains where English is the dominant language (Valdman, 2016, p. 290). Similar findings were also noted in Dubois *et al*. (2006, p. 210). When discussing intercode in CF, Picone (1996, p. 92) gives, amongst others, the following example in which all non-assimilated words that are also pronounced in the English are written in capital letters:

(14) Le COUNTY AGENT'S OFFICE[19] de Marksville a SCHEDULE trois MEETING pour les récolteurs et ceux-là qui travaillent dans les clos pour avoir une carte pour user des CHEMICAL et des poisons.
'The county agent's office of Marksville scheduled three meetings for the farmers and those who work in the fields in order to have a card for using chemicals and poisons.'

The usage of these non-assimilated words, however, is different from the observations of this study in a couple of ways. First of all, DMs are not lexical words. Furthermore, the usage of these mixed code DMs is not used to fill in

[19] The usage of English proper nouns in CF is a different phenomenon from the other lexical items used without inflexions (intercode) in this example. See Picone (1996) for further discussion.

any gaps, and they are not specialized words that come from a specific domain. In fact, these mixed code DMs co-exist with both CF and English equivalents.

This discussion of mixed code DMs will begin with the DM *na*, which, to my knowledge, has not yet been discussed in the literature of CF DMs. The reasons for this DM being overlooked includes the fact that it is not used very frequently and the ambiguity of its origin. Of the possible origins of *na,* one could be a variant of the French DM *na* which is pronounced /na/. The standard French item *na* is used to support an affirmation or a negation and could be translated into English into 'so there!'.[20] In observing the examples of *na* from the *Tasse de Café* transcriptions, it is clear that these two DMs are not exactly the same, but the similar form and slight overlap of functions in terms of supporting affirmations or negations raises the possibility that both of these forms have common origins. Another potential origin for *na* is the English DM *now*. This DM in Southern American English can also be pronounced with nasalization which would make its pronunciation closer to the *na* observed in the data. However, it is important to make clear that *now* pronounced as /naʊ/ as an adverb and DM were also used by the same participants who used *na*. Due to the small number of examples and no prior research on *na* in CF nor Cajun English, it is not possible at this time to pin

[20] A more detailed definition of French *na* can be found on the Larousse dictionary online at: https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/na_/53665?q=na!#53316, date of access 15.08.2019

down the its exact origin.[21] Adding further complication to identifying the origin of *na* is that, in some cases, it could also be a variant of CF *non* or Southern English *naw* both meaning 'no'. In two cases, such as in (15) and (18) more than one interpretation seems equally possible. Importantly, different speakers may rely on different folk etymologies in their own language use, and some speakers may even not make any connection at all between *na* and its possible historical sources. The interpretations taken in this article will thus be informed by the context of the actual speech situations. *Na* was found ten times in *La Tasse de Café* data: six times in the English speech, twice in French, and twice at the border line between the switching of languages, which will be addressed in the next section. All ten examples come from the two people who played the role of expert host.

(15) Caller H: Probably the hardest thing a Cajun can give up for Lent is probably beer.
Host 1: Yeah, *na*, you're right about that! A lot of people have given up the suds for the Lenten season.

(16) Host 1: *Na* I'm not sure who is climbing the flagpole, but he had to be pretty good.

(17) Host 1 : Ok, ****, qui d'autre *na* ce matin ?
'Ok, ****, who else this morning?'

(18) Caller B: What of chocolate Oreos?
Host 1b: Ohhh, *na* come on ***** you're making me hungry, quit that!

[21] In Louisiana Creole, *na* (or *ina*) is also an equivalent of the French *il y a* (there is) and it can also be used like the prepositions *since* (ça fait/depuis) or *ago* (il y a) (Valdman *et al*., 1998, p.197-8). Moreover Valdman *et al*. (2010, p. 662) show that *il y a* can also be produced as *il n-a* in CF. Judging by the examples found in the radio show data, it does not appear that this variant of '*il y a*' has any relation with the DM *na* discussed here.

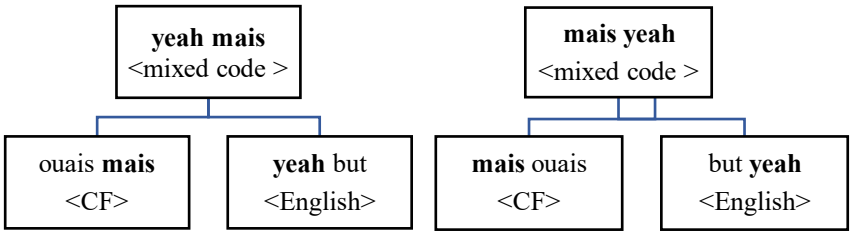
(19) Host 1b: *Na* Sooner Auto Salvage (.) aussitte de vous offrir les services…
'Now Sooner Auto Salvage as well as offering you services…'

(20) Host 1b: And ya take care *na*!

(21) Host 1b: *Na* it was founded by Louisiana's own Tony and Elaine P***** in 1988.

(22) Caller P: [laughter].
Host 1b: You are getting naughty *na*!

What is clear from the examples above is that whatever its origin, *na* is usable in both CF and English. Examples (15), (16), (18) and (22) from English speech are response markers that also indicate attitude. In (15) it is marking agreement. In (16) it is marking an assessment of the person climbing a flagpole. In examples (18) and (22) it is functioning as a hedge that marks Host 1b's playful face threatening acts against fellow participants. Examples (17) and (19) in CF are procedural markers that more clearly function on the coherence level of the speech serving an organizing function that signals to the audience the important information to come in the advertisement. *Na*'s usage in English, CF, and at the border of the switching of languages points to it being well integrated into the combined Cajun bilingual DM network. As *na* is not clearly identifiable as belonging to one language or the other, while maintaining characteristics that could be recognizable in either CF or English, the argument can be made that *na* is, in fact, a mixed code DM that developed as would be predicted by the DCxG framework.



Figures 1 & 2 (left to right): Development CF and English Mixed Code DMs *yeah mais* and *mais yeah*

Other examples of mixed code DMs, though even more rare than *na,* include the literal two-word mixed code DMs *mais yeah* and *yeah mais*. These two DMs can be observed below:

(23) Host 2: So one's for the sun and one's for the rain?
Host 1b: *Mais yeah*!
Host 2: Can't the umbrellas be used for both?
Host 1b: Yes they can be!

(24) Host 1b: *Yeah mais* il y <a> [//] il y a des différentes parts qu'on peut nettoyer asteur, ok ?
'Yeah but there <are> [//] there are different parts that one can clean now, ok?'

Though not as difficult to translate as the *na* examples can be, examples (23) and (24) also demonstrate the existence of multiword mixed code DMs that use both CF and English items. These two examples give further evidence of a diasystematic DM system immerging. Figure 1 exemplifies the development of *yeah mais*, and Figure 2 exemplifies the development of *mais yeah.* Both of these two-word mixed code DMs are very similar and thus undoubtedly developed along the same lines.

5.2. DMs at the border of Language Switching

A final notable find in the radio program data is the usage of DMs that mark the border before the switching of languages. All the examples for this convention, with the exception of one, come from Host 1. Therefore, the observations cannot yet be taken as a community wide convention. However, it is worth noting that these language switching examples have similarities to what Muysken (2000) calls 'alternations'. Alternations are explained as a code-mixing strategy in which the two languages present in the clause remain relatively separate (*ibid.,* p. 96). Dubois *et al.* (2006) also note examples of this in CF where several clauses or sentences of English are inserted in CF dialogue. Example (24) from the radio show data fits this definition rather well as we see a momentary switch into English during an advertisement for a local car dealership:

(25) Host 1: Et là, tu peux aller sur le web, *you know*, go online! Roy Motors dot com. Et tu faire [sic] <tout> [//] avoir toutes sortes d'informations dans l'éventaire de tout ça sur le website.
'And there, you can go on the web, you know, go online! Roy Motors dot com. And you make <all> [//] have all sorts of information on their stocks and all that on the website.'

However, the more noteworthy switches found in the data are different from the previously observed alternations that mark the switching of the language for up to several constituents. These noteworthy cases, which all coincidentally also serve their regular DM functions, occur where the speaker

is switching language of use in general. This phenomenon can be observed in the examples below involving *of course* and *but*:

(26) Host 1: Ça peut arriver qu'il y ait quelques maux de têtes après tous les célébrations qui avaient pris place hier.
'It is very possible that there are some hangovers after all the celebrations that took place yesterday'
Host 2: [laughter].
Host 1: Et puis uh, uh, *of course*, as we mentioned in the beginning of the French News, the front page of the Morning Advocate had the story (.) and the pictures (.) of the Mamou Mardi Gras. 'And then, uh, uh, of course,…'

(27) Host 1b : C'était pour les heures venantes, *but*, I tell you what, they not only turn around, but they would drape the mirrors.
'It was for the visitation hours'

These examples nicely illustrate the use of a DM right at the border of a language switch. In example (26), the host is responding to a comment in CF and then, after a bit of hesitation, utters *of course* and then switches to English. The use of English DMs to switch to English after hesitation or long pauses were also found in alternation examples (e.g. Dajko & Carmichael, 2014, p. 169; Dubois *et al*., 2006, p. 213). In (27) a similar switch is done, though there is no hesitation in this case.

Other examples of these language switches occurring in cases without hesitation were also found. These examples show other characteristics that have not been found in previous studies. Example (28) shows another one of these switches. In this case, however, instead of the DM matching the

language being switched to, which has traditionally been observed to be the case with alternations, the DM actually matches the language being switched away from. Here *you know* marks the border between English and CF. This was unexpected and, to my knowledge, such phenomena have not been addressed in other studies.

(28) Host 1: Alright let's talk about Roy Motors; your Chevrolet Dealer in Opelousas for over eighty years. *You know*, sont fiers de garder notre coutume, notre langage en français toujours vivant! Et sont fiers d'être un sponsor sur le programme La Tasse de Café.
'(they) are proud to keep our customs, our French language (still) alive ! And (they) are proud to be a sponsor of the program La Tasse de Café.'

Some similar examples where found with the DM *na*. Here *na* is also showing similar signs as the others when it comes to being used at the border of language switches as (29) and (30) demonstrate:

(29) Host 1: Alright, around <March> [//] <March 20th> [//] March 20th and 21st usually is <the> [//] and, of course, ****, don't they have a certain hour?
Host 2: Yep.
Host 1: Like 2:30 am or something like *na* ça prend du monde plus smart que mon, ****, pour figurer à quelle heure, quelle minute que le printemps va commencer.
'now it takes smarter people than me, ****, to figure out at what hour, what minute that springtime will begin.'

(30) Host 1: Ok, qui d'autre *na*, nobody on the line right now?
'Ok, who else now,'
Host 2: No sir!

As with the example with *you know* in (28) *na* can be used just before language switches both from English to French, like in example (29), and from French to English, like in example (30). Also similar to the *you know* example in (28) and example (27) with *but*, *na* is used where the speaker is not displaying any signs of hesitation or problems in producing the speech in CF.

Though these DMs functioning at the border of switching languages mostly came from one participant, the fact that they share such similarities with alternations indicate that this might be a phenomenon that was overlooked in previous studies since most studies involving Cajun bilinguals thus far have concentrated primarily on CF or Cajun English and not on data that was inherently bilingual. These language switching examples demonstrate the need of a model of bilingual/multilingual speech that acknowledges and allows for the occurrences of DMs that are either not part of the regular DM system being switched to or not clearly identifiable as belonging one language or the other. The DCxG approach provides such an explanation because it allows for both the use of DMs from English in CF and CF DMs in English. Furthermore, it also offers an explanation for the usage of mixed code DMs in both languages.

6 Discussion and conclusions

The results of this paper demonstrate the importance of including features of dialogical language like DMs in constructional studies. Furthermore, it further supports previous assertions that DMs can be analyzed from a CxG perspective (c.f. Fried & Östman, 2004). This paper has analyzed bilingual CF and English DM usage from a DCxG framework and has argued that these Cajun bilingual speakers from Evangeline Parish conventionalize diasystematic relations between the DM systems of CF and English. Furthermore, this has led to the simplification of the common system that, in turn, has resulted in a more complex combined DM network. This has not only lead to steps toward the congruence of the CF and English DM systems as they are separately, but it has also led to the development of mixed code DMs as well. For example, the radio program data shows that English DMs such as *of course*, *you see*, *well*, and *you know* can operate in CF dialogue in a variety of functions just like they would in English. Furthermore, *you know* and *of course* and to a lesser extent *but* also have been shown to occur at the border of switching languages. *You know* even occurred at the switch from English to CF. This is something, to my knowledge, that has not yet been discussed in the literature on multilingual DM usage. One would expect *you know* to occur when a speaker switches to English, not away from it. This points to these DMs becoming a regular part of the combined network of Cajun bilingual speakers. The usage of mixed code DMs gives even further

evidence of a combined bilingual network. One example of these mixed code DMs is *na.* As has been discussed above, due to the varying functions in the attested examples, it is difficult to pinpoint what its historical origin is. Whatever its origin, however, *na* displays characteristics of being a mixed code DM because it has the broad distribution in being used in English and CF speech, as well as functioning at the border of the switching of languages in both directions. Other examples, though even more rare, include the use of the *mais yeah* and *yeah mais.* These constitute literal two-word mixed code DM constructions that are usable in either CF or English. These mixed code examples, along with the examples of English DMs being used in CF, demonstrate the establishment of diasystematic links between CF and English for these radio show participants.

Considering the parallels that have been drawn between the situations with these Cajun bilinguals and the American-German dialect speaking populations, another question that must be addressed is whether CF is following the same trajectory as the American-German dialects. Namely, will the DM repertoire of CF eventually be supplanted, or at least nearly so, by English DMs? Goss & Salmons (2000, p. 482) pointed out, through the analysis of diachronic data, that German-American dialect speakers first acquired English and then progressively brought English DMs into their German system. These doubled DMs then co-existed for a time until they progressively took over the German DM system. Though Boas & Weilbacher

(2006, 2007) demonstrate that such a take-over of English DMs has not occurred in their Texas German data, the usage of certain English DMs is still noted to be particularly high, such as the case where *you know* appears to be used vastly more often than *du/weisst(e)*. Could the data in this study be indicating that Cajun bilinguals are entering or are in this middle stage of what is being observed in the American-German dialect studies? It is tempting to hypothesize that this is the case especially since, like the American-German dialect cases, CF is increasingly a language of the older generations with less and less of a percentage of the younger generations speaking it. Furthermore, it has already been noted that in this data that there are a few cases where English DMs are preferred over their CF equivalents. This is the case with *well*, *you see*, and to a lesser extent *of course* where they appear to be used more in CF than their native counterparts *(eh) ben, tu vois* and *bien sûr*. However, there are a few factors that differentiate the Louisiana situation from the American-German dialects. Namely, evidence from this paper shows that there are signs of mixed code DMs being used by these bilinguals. This points towards an increased congruence of the two DM systems rather than the progressive supplanting of one over the other. Furthermore, as explained in section 2, CF in the Acadiana region has official recognition from the Louisiana government and has benefitted since the later 20th century from various cultural and language preservation movements, something lacking, at least at the state government level and at the same intensity, for the American-German dialect speakers. Whether or not this makes a

difference is not clear, especially since the percentage of CF speakers in the region continues to decline. Continued research in Evangeline Parish as well as the other parts of Acadiana with a sizable CF speaking population is needed in order to monitor the situation in the years to come.

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