

CASES AND VERBS IN PIDGIN FRENCH (TAY BOI) IN VIETNAM*

NGUYEN DANG LIEM

0. INTRODUCTION

John E. Reinecke speaks about the origin of Pidgin French in Vietnam in the following terms:

In 1888 Hugo Schuchardt published a brief paper on 'the Annamite French jargon' that had been spoken for about twenty years at Saigon between French colonials and 'such natives as are in frequent or permanent contact with foreigners - servants, sailors, etc.' (1888:230). The pidgin had gotten its start in the French garrisons in what was then Cochinchina in the 1860s; where the garrisons came from, and whether they had brought with them some sort of military pidgin, as a stimulus or model, is not at present known to me. (1971:47).

His definition of Pidgin French in Vietnam is quoted:

The low esteem in which the pidgin was held is reflected in its nickname, *Tây Bôi*, French as spoken by *boys* (servants). The two nationalities remained decidedly distinct from each other. French was the language of command, and few Frenchmen learned more than the most rudimentary Vietnamese (VN). A very small minority of Vietnamese received formal instruction in standard French (SF). The few who attended secondary schools and colleges learned to speak it well; those who attended only the elementary schools spoke it imperfectly but not in pidginized form. Most soldiers, policemen, and domestics, learning purely by ear from Frenchmen or from their fellows who had been longer in service, acquired only the pidgin. (1971:47).

The Pidgin French (PF) presented here is the one I used to hear in Saigon in the 40s and 50s. It may vary a great deal from one speaker to another, especially when it concerns the vocabulary. For example, the description of a goat may be:¹

* This paper was presented at the Pidgin and Creole Conference in Honolulu in 1975.

Lui il y en a barbe, il y en a cornes, lui faire be-be-be
 luy yang na băt yang na kọt luy fe be-be-be
Him there is beard, there are horns, him makes be-be-be

or something like this by a relatively more sophisticated speaker:

Lui avoir barbe, avoir cornes, lui dire be-be-be
 luy a voa băt a voa kọt luy đia be-be-be

However, there is a common core of grammatical structures that can be described for all PF speakers. This paper aims at presenting that common core.

In terms of scope, this paper will make an attempt to present only a sketch of the phonology of PF, its case relations and case realisations, a classification of its verbs, and its clause types and clause classes. The phonology section aims at supplementing, but not substituting the information given by Reinecke on the matter (Reinecke 1971:48-50) whose article is also referred to when PF lexicon, morphology, and word classes are concerned (Reinecke 1971:50-3).

On the theoretical ground, this paper will be eclectic in that it will make use of both tagmemics (Brend 1970, and 1972, Cook 1969, Longacre 1964, and Pike 1971), and a case grammar model called lexicase (Manley 1972, and Starosta 1973). In that it is tagmemically oriented, it recognises firstly the hierarchical levels in syntax, and secondly the grammatical unit, or tagmeme, as composed of a slot and filler class. The grammatical slot of a tagmeme at the clause level has been pointed out by Young, Becker, and Pike (1970) as having both the overt syntactic relationships (case realisations) and the covert meaning relationships (case relations) with the predicative verb which is considered to be central in the clause by Chafe (1970). In that this paper is also case grammar oriented, it recognises the case relations between various nouns and the predicative verb in the clause (or proposition in Fillmore's terminology (Fillmore 1968). The type of case grammar utilised here introduces both the overt case realisations and the covert case relations into the grammar as syntactic features assigned to nouns by verbs (Starosta 1971).

1. PHONOLOGY

PF phonology is essential VN phonology to which are added a varying number of SF sounds depending on the sophistication of the speaker's knowledge of SF. It results from a transfer of the SF phonological system to the VN system. Such a transfer is done according to some patterns of sound substitutions that will be discussed below.

1.1. CONSONANTS

There are sixteen initial consonants in PF. They can be charted as follows:

CHART I
PF Initial Consonants

| | Bilab. | LabDent. | Dental | Alveol. | Alv.Pal. | Velar | Uvular |
|-------------|--------|----------|--------|---------|----------|-------|--------|
| Stops. Vl. | [p] | | t (t̚) | (c) | | k | |
| Vd. | b ↓ | | d | | | [g] | |
| Fricatives | | f | s | | ʃ | | (h) |
| Vd. | | [v] ↑ | [z] ↑ | | [ʒ] ↑ | g ↓ | |
| Lateral | | | l | | | | |
| Trill | | | | r ← | | [R] | |
| Nasals | m | | n | ɲ | | (ŋ) | |
| Semi-vowels | w | | | | y [ɥ] | | |

The initial consonants that exist in SF but that are missing in PF are listed in square brackets, they are [p, g, v, z, ʒ, R, ɥ] of which [g] stop is replaced by VN (g) fricative, [R] velar vibrant is replaced by VN (r) retroflexed trill. SF voiced consonants are replaced by their voiceless counterparts when they are nonexistent.

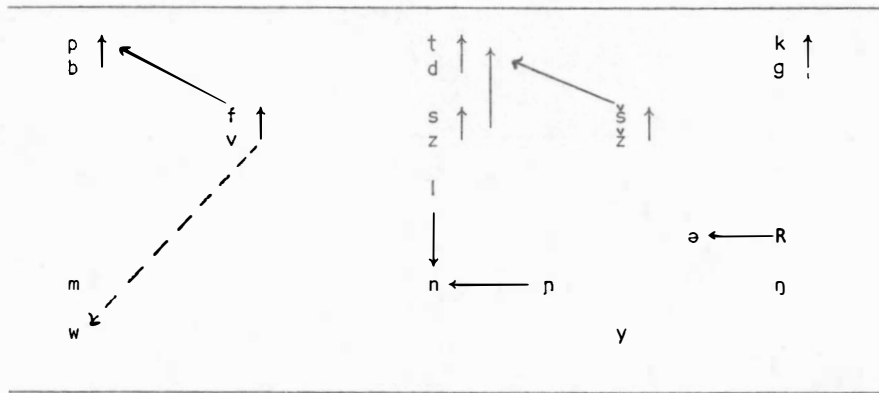
The initial consonants that exist in VN but not in PF are listed in rounded brackets, they are (t̚) retroflexed stop, (c) lamino-alveolar stop, and (h) glottal fricative.²

SF initial consonant clusters are made into syllables having a schwa as vowel. Example: *fréquenter* becomes /fərekaŋte/. Sometimes, they are reduced to one consonant.

Sound substitutions are represented by arrows.

There are only eight final consonants in PF. They are the same as in VN, namely /p t k m n ŋ w y/. Furthermore, like in VN the two pairs /t/ and /k/, and /n/ and /ŋ/ are mutually exclusive: /n/ occurs after front vowels, and /ŋ/ occurs after central and back vowels. Sound substitutions in final positions are represented in Chart II:

CHART II
PF Final Consonants



Continuous arrows show more common final-consonant substitutions, and the discontinuous arrow shows less common substitutions. It is noticed that SF final consonants may be substituted by other consonants in PF, but are never omitted altogether. The patterning of final-consonant substitution follows the following four rules:

- Rule 1: Voiced consonants, except nasals, are replaced by their voiceless counterparts.
- Rule 2: Final fricatives are replaced by final stops that are similar to them in terms of point of articulation.
- Rule 3: Final /l/ is usually replaced by /n/, and sometimes by /w/. Final /R/ is replaced by a schwa.
- Rule 4: Substituting /t/ occurs after front vowels while /k/ after central and back vowels. Likewise, substituting /n/ occurs after front vowels while /ŋ/.

SF final consonants are reduced to single consonants in PF, and then substituted by the PF consonant chosen by one of the four stated rules.

Furthermore, the final consonants of PF play an important role in the tone structure of the language, a matter to be discussed later in this paper.

1.2. VOWELS

Before giving an inventory of PF vowels, it is necessary to present the SF and the VN vowel systems as follows:

SF VOWEL SYSTEM

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|------|
| /i/ | plie | /y/ | pur | | /u/ | doux | |
| /e/ | les | /ø/ | peu | /ə/ | le | /o/ | peau |
| /ɛ/ | même | /œ/ | peur | | | /ɔ/ | note |
| | /a/ | car | | | | /ɑ/ | bas |

The previous SF vowel system is taken from Politzer 1960:70.

The VN vowel system is represented by the standard Vietnamese alphabetical symbols as follows:

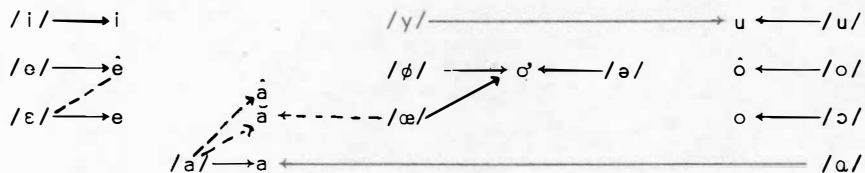
VN VOWEL SYSTEM

| | FRONT | CENTRAL | BACK | |
|------|-------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | | | Unrounded | Rounded |
| HIGH | i | | u̯ | u |
| MID | ê | â | ɔ̯ | ô |
| | e | ã | | o |
| LOW | | a | | |

Of the eleven vowels in VN, PF uses ten and deletes /u̯/. As in VN, PF /â/ and /ã/ occur only when followed by a final stop or nasal. The SF to PF vowel substitutions are as follows, with SF vowels in between lines:

CHART III

PF Vowels



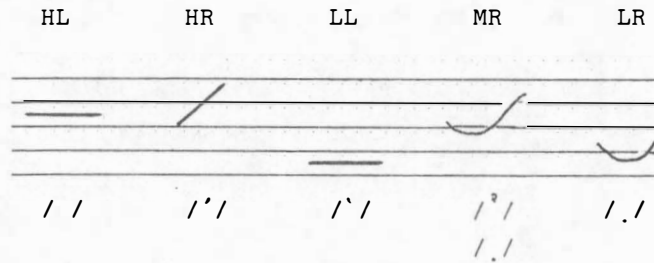
Continuous arrows in the previous chart show unique or more common vowel substitutions, and discontinuous arrows show less common substitutions.

1.3. TONES

Saigon Vietnamese has five tones as follows (Liem 1970a:17):

1. High-level, unmarked in Vietnamese alphabet.
2. High-rising, marked by /' / over vowels.
3. Low-level, marked by /` / over vowels.
4. Mid-rising, marked by /^o / or /~ / over vowels.
5. Low-rising, marked by /./ under vowels.

The basic pitch contours of Saigon Vietnamese tones can be represented as follows:



PF uses all the five VN tones. There is a definite correlation between a syllable and a tone, i.e. given a syllable, a certain tone is attached to it, and this depends upon the shape of the syllable (i.e. initial consonant, vowel, and particularly final consonant). This phenomenon of attaching VN tones to intonation languages by the Vietnamese is found also in English spoken by Vietnamese (Liem 1970b: 174-8). The attachment of VN tones to PF syllables follows one of the following rules:

- Rule 1: PF syllables that are derived from SF syllables ending with -ns and followed by another syllable or other syllables are pronounced with VN mid-rising tone.
- Rule 2: Syllables in PF ending with a voiceless final stop carry a VN low-rising tone if they are derived from SF syllables ending with -rC(onsonant), and carry a VN high-rising tone if they are derived from SF syllables ending with other consonants or consonant clusters than -rC.
- Rule 3: Syllables having a front vowel are usually pronounced with VN high-level tone. Sometimes, they are pronounced with VN low-level tone. More statistical research is needed to determine the difference that makes one

syllable of this type carry a high-level tone while another a low-level tone (for a statistical study of VN syllables, see Liem 1967).

Rule 4: Syllables having a mid-central vowel are pronounced with VN low-level tone. Again, there are exceptions here that should be studied more in depth.

Rule 5: Syllables having a schwa off-glide usually carry a VN mid-rising tone when followed by another syllable or other syllables. They are pronounced with VN high-level instead when they are terminal syllables themselves.

2. CASE RELATIONS AND CASE REALISATIONS

In either VN, SF, or PF, there seem to be twelve case relations whose definitions are taken from Fillmore 1968 whenever necessary:

AGENTIVE (AGT): the AGT actant is the "instigator of the action identified by the verb" (Fillmore 1968:24). It is assumed here that the agent is not necessarily equated with 'intent', for recent research on Tagalog (Ramos 1973) has indicated that certain generalities cannot be captured unless we allow for non-intentional agents as well as intentional non-agents.

OBJECTIVE (OBJ): the OBJ actant is the
 semantically most neutral case, the case of anything representable by a noun whose role in the action or state identified by the verb is identified by the semantic interpretation of the verb itself (Fillmore 1968:25).

In general, it will be that element which is acted upon, or whose state or existence is predicated. This relation subsumes several that have been treated as distinct in other case grammars including Experiencer, and Result/Factitive. These two types are treated as the interpretations given to the neutral Objective case when it appears with psychological and creative verbs respectively.

DATIVE (DAT): the DAT case is that of the "animate being affected by the state or action identified by the verb" (Fillmore 1968:24).

BENEFACTIVE (BEN): the BEN actant receives the benefit of the action in the verbal activity or state described.

COMITATIVE (COM): the COM actant accompanies another actant in the verbal activity or state described.

INSTRUMENTAL (INS): the INS actant is the "case of the inanimate force or object causally involved in the action or state identified by the verb" (Fillmore 1968:24).

LOCATIVE (LOC): the LOC actant indicates the "location or spatial orientation of the state or action identified by the verb" (Fillmore 1968:25).³

DIRECTIONAL (DIR): the DIR actant indicates the orientation of the state or action identified by the verb.

TIME (TIM): the TIM actant indicates the time-setting of the action or state identified by the verb.

SOURCE (SRC): the SRC actant indicates the location or time from which action has begun.

GOAL (GOL): the GOL actant indicates the space or time toward which the action or state identified by the verb has occurred.

EXTENT (EXT): the EXT actant indicates the space or time through which the action or state identified by the verb has occurred.

Out of the twelve case relations, only the AGT, DAT, and OBJ cases are nuclear in the clause, the BEN and INS cases are semi-nuclear in that they can be hosted by only certain verb classes, while the other cases are satellite in that they occur with most verbs except those otherwise marked.

In VN and SF, the twelve covert case relations are pigeon-holed twelve overt case realisations of which some are marked by their positions vis-a-vis the verb, and some are marked by prepositions. These case realisations are:

- NM Nominative position immediately preceding the verb, no preposition in either VN or SF.
- O Objective position immediately following the verb, no preposition in either VN or SF.
- D Dative realisation in VN only, and realised by the preposition or coverb cho 'to give' (for coverbs, see Clark 1978).
- A Agentive position in SF only, and realised by the preposition par 'by'.
- B Benefactive realisation, with preposition giùm 'for' in VN, and pour in SF also meaning 'for'.
- C Comitative realisation, with preposition với 'with' in VN and avec in SF both meaning 'with'.

For further discussion and examples on case relations and case realisations, see Liem 1973.

In SF the twelve covert case relations and the twelve overt case realisations can also be charted in a two-dimensional matrix yielding thirty-seven possibilities or clause-level tagmemic slots as in Chart V:

CHART V
Case Relations and Case Realisations in SF

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | |
|----|-----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| | | NM | O | A | B | C | I | L | Dl | T | Sr | Gl | Ex | Special prepositions |
| 1 | AGT | 1 | | 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | OBJ | 2 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | DAT | 3 | 7 | 11 | | | | 22 | | | | 31 | | |
| 4 | BEN | | 8 | | 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | COM | | | | | 17 | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | INS | 4 | 9 | 12 | | 18 | 19 | 23 | | | | 32 | | |
| 7 | LOC | 5 | | 13 | | | 20 | 24 | | | | | 36 | après, avant, contre, parmi, sous, sur |
| 8 | DIR | | | | 15 | | | 25 | 28 | | | | | envers |
| 9 | TIM | | | | 16 | | 21 | 26 | 29 | 30 | 33 | | | après, avant |
| 10 | SRC | | | | | | | | | | | 34 | | dès, depuis, hors de |
| 11 | GOL | | | | | | | 27 | | | | 35 | | |
| 12 | EXT | | | | | | | | | | | | 37 | durant, pendant |

Besides the thirty-seven combinations of case relations and case realisations in SF, there are also special prepositions that mark case realisations in SF as well. They are listed in Chart V as special prepositions. (For further discussion on case relations and case realisations and other aspects of SF syntax and examples, see Liem forthcoming.)

In sharp contrast with both VN and SF, PF makes use of only four overt case realisations, namely Nominative (NM), Objective (O), Time (T), and Comitative (C). The twelve case relations and the four case realisations in PF can be charted in a two-dimensional matrix yielding sixteen combinations or clause-level tagmemic slots as in Chart VI:

CHART VI

Case Relations and Case Realisations in PF

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----|-----|----|------|----|----|
| | | NM | O | C | T |
| 1 | AGT | 1 | | | |
| 2 | OBJ | 2 | 6 | | |
| 3 | DAT | 3 | 7 | | |
| 4 | BEN | | 8 | | |
| 5 | COM | | | 14 | |
| 6 | INS | 4 | 9 | 15 | |
| 7 | LOC | 5 | 10 | | |
| 8 | DIR | | 11 | | |
| 9 | TIM | | | | 16 |
| 10 | SRC | | (17) | | |
| 11 | GOL | | 12 | | |
| 12 | EXT | | 13 | | |

The seventeenth combination, namely [+0,+SRC] listed in parentheses in the chart may not occur in individual speakers' PF.

It is noted that the correlations of case relations and case realisations in PF are more similar to the ones in VN than the ones in SF. The [+0] case realisation in both VN and PF is the overt realisation of the [+OBJ, +DAT, +BEN, +INS, +LOC, +DIR, +SRC, +GOL, +EXT]. The case realisations in VN that are marked by prepositions (bằng 'of' for I) or coverbs (ở 'at' for L, lại 'toward' and others for DI, từ 'from' for SR, đến 'at' or 'arrive at', and được 'gaining' or 'within' for Ex) are non-existent in PF. Likewise, it can also be said that PF does not have any of the SF case realisations marked by prepositions (I, L, DI, T, Sr, G1).

Following are the examples of the correlations of case realisations and case relations (or clause-level tagmemic slots) in PF:

1. [+NM, +AGT], hosted by transitive agentive verbs:

Moi battre lui.

moà bát luy.

I beat him.

[+NM] [+O]
[+AGT] [+OBJ]

2. [+NM, +OBJ], hosted by stative and intransitive verbs:

2.1. Lui pas bon.

luy ba bông.

He is not good.

[+NM]
[+OBJ]

2.2. Lui aller Saigon.

luy a lê sài gòng.

He went to Saigon.

[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+DIR]

3. [+NM, +DAT], hosted by transitive verbs:

Lui connaître moi long temps déjà.

luy co nét moà long tǎng ðề yà.

He knows me a long time already.

[+NM] [+O] [+T]
[+DAT] [+OBJ] [+TIM]

4. [+NM, +INS], hosted by transitive agentive and intransitive verbs:

4.1. Coûteau coupe(r) viande. 4.2. Autobus aller Saigon.

ku tô kúp(bê) yǎng. ô tô bí a lê sài gòng.

The knife cuts the meat. The bus goes to Saigon.

[+NM] [+O] [+NM] [+O]
[+INS] [+OBJ] [+INS] [+DIR]

5. [+NM, +LOC], hosted by stative verbs:

Chambre froid.

sâm ở roa.

The room is cold.

[+NM]
[+LOC]

6. [+O, +OBJ], hosted by transitive agentive and transitive dative verbs:

6.1. Lui acheter cadeaux.

luy a sở tè ka ðô.

He bought presents.

[+NM] [+O]
[+AGT] [+OBJ]

6.2. Lui connaître moi.

luy co nét moà.

He knows me.

[+NM] [+O]
[+DAT] [+OBJ]

7. [+O, +DAT], hosted by ditransitive dative verbs:

Lui donner madame cadeaux.
 lui² ðo nè ma ðam ka ðô.
He gave you (Madam) presents.

[+NM] [+O] [+O]
 [+AGT] [+DAT] [+OBJ]

8. [+O, +BEN], hosted by ditransitive benefactive verbs:

Battre lui moi. or: Battre moi lui.
 bát lui² moã. bát moã² lui².
Beat him for me. Beat him for me.

[+O] [+O] [+O] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+BEN] [+BEN] [+OBJ]

The two sentences above are ambiguous. Only extralinguistic context helps us determine which [+O] is [+OBJ] and which other [+O] is [+BEN].

9. [+O, +INS], hosted by transitive or intransitive verbs:

- 9.1. Monsieur couper couteau.

Mông xừ cúp bê ku tô.
He (respectful) uses the knife to cut (meat).

[+NM] [+O]
 [+AGT] [+INS]

- 9.2. Madame aller autobus.

ma ðam a lê ô tô bít.
She (respectful) went by bus.

[+NM] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+INS]

10. [+O, +LOC], hosted by intransitive locative verbs:

Monsieur làbas Vinh-Long.
 Mông xừ là bà Vĩnh-Long.
He (respectful) stays in Vinh-Long (a province down south, hence làbas).⁴

[+NM] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+LOC]

11. [+O, +DIR], hosted by intransitive directional verbs:

Monsieur Commissaire aller Nha-Trang.
 Mông xừ còm mít xe a lê Nha-Trang.
The Police Captain went to Nha-Trang.

[+NM] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+DIR]

12. [+O, +GOL], hosted by intransitive [+GOL] verbs:

Lui làbas Vinh-Long hier, lui ici Saïgon matin.
 lui là bà Vinh-Long ye lui i xi Sài gòn ma te.

He was in Vinh-Long yesterday, he was in Saigon this morning.
 Or: *He was in Vinh-Long yesterday, he arrived in Saigon this morning.*

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+O] | [+T] | [+NM] | [+O] | [+T] |
| [+OBJ] | [+LOC] | [+TIM] | [+OBJ] | [+LOC] | [+TIM] |
| | | | | [+GOL] | |

Only the extralinguistic context tells us that Saïgon is [+GOL], and not [+LOC]. If it is a more sophisticated speaker, he might use verbs like arriver (a ri uê) 'to arrive' instead of ici (i xi) 'here' as intransitive [+GOL] verbs.

13. [+O, +EXT], hosted by any verb except those marked otherwise:

Madame partir deux jours.
 Ma đăm bặt ti đơ yua.
She will be gone for two days.

| | |
|--------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+O] |
| [+OBJ] | [+EXT] |

14. [+C, +COM], hosted by any verb except those otherwise marked.

Monsieur aller Saïgon avec moi.
 Mông xừ a lê Sài gòn a uék moả.
He went to Saigon with me.

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+O] | [+C] |
| [+OBJ] | [+DIR] | [+COM] |

Note that [+C] is used to mark coordination when it stands next to the coordinated noun phrase, for example:

Monsieur avec moi aller Saïgon.
 Mông xừ a uék moả a lê Sài gòn.
He and I went to Saigon.

| | |
|--------|-------------|
| [+NM] | [+NM] |
| [+OBJ] | [+OBJ] |
| | coordinated |

15. [+C, +INS], hosted by any verb except those marked otherwise:

Madame battre Monsieur avec balai.
 Ma đăm băt Mông xừ a uék ba le.
She beat him with a broom.

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+O] | [+C] |
| [+AGT] | [+OBJ] | [+INS] |

16. [+T, +TIM], hosted by any verb.

Demain lui partir Long-Hai.
 Đờ me luy² bậ² ti Long-Hải.
Tomorrow he will leave for Long-Hai.

[+T] [+NM] [+O]
 [+TIM] [+OBJ] [+GOL]

17. [+O, +SRC], hosted by all verbs except those marked otherwise:

Monsieur partir Saigon aller Nha-Trang.
 Mông xừ bậ² ti Sài gòn² a lê Nha-Trang.
He went from Saigon to Nha-Trang.

[+NM] [+O] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+SRC] [+DIR]

This correlation does not occur in everybody's speech. If it is absent, other ways of conveying the source will be used. One of these ways is to have the source at the beginning of the clause, for example:

Saigon Monsieur aller Nha-Trang.
 Sài gòn² Mông xừ a lê Nha-Trang.
From Saigon he went to Nha-Trang.

[+O] [+NM] [+O]
 [+SRC] [+OBJ] [+DIR]

I am not sure if Saigon in the above sentence should be marked [+O, +SRC] since the definition of [+O] is that it immediately follows the verb, which is not the case here.

18. [+MANNER]. It seems to me that MANNER expressions have case relationships with the verb that hosts them. Hence, they should be marked as such. In PF, MANNER is expressed by adjectives like in Vietnamese:

Monsieur aller lent.
 Mông xừ a lê lăng.
He went slowly.

[+NM] [+O] (with a question mark here).
 [+OBJ] [+MANNER]

19. [+PURPOSE]. It seems to me also that PURPOSE expressions have case relationships with the verb that hosts them. Hence, they should also be marked as such. In PF, PURPOSE is expressed by a verb phrase:

Monsieur aller Saigon acheter cadeaux.
 Mông xừ a lè Sài gòn á sớ tè ca đò.
 He went to Saigon to buy presents.

[+NM] [+O] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+DIR] [+OBJ]

acheter cadeaux.

[+O] with a question mark here.
 [+PURPOSE]

20. Word Order

When the verb and all the case realisations occur in a clause the usual word order is: Time + Nominative + Verb + Objective + Comitative. While in VN, future time expressions are at the beginning of clauses, and past time expressions at the end, such a rule does not seem to exist in PF. Instead, these expressions can invariably be at the beginning or the end of clauses in PF regardless of their being future or past expressions.

3. VERB CLASSIFICATION

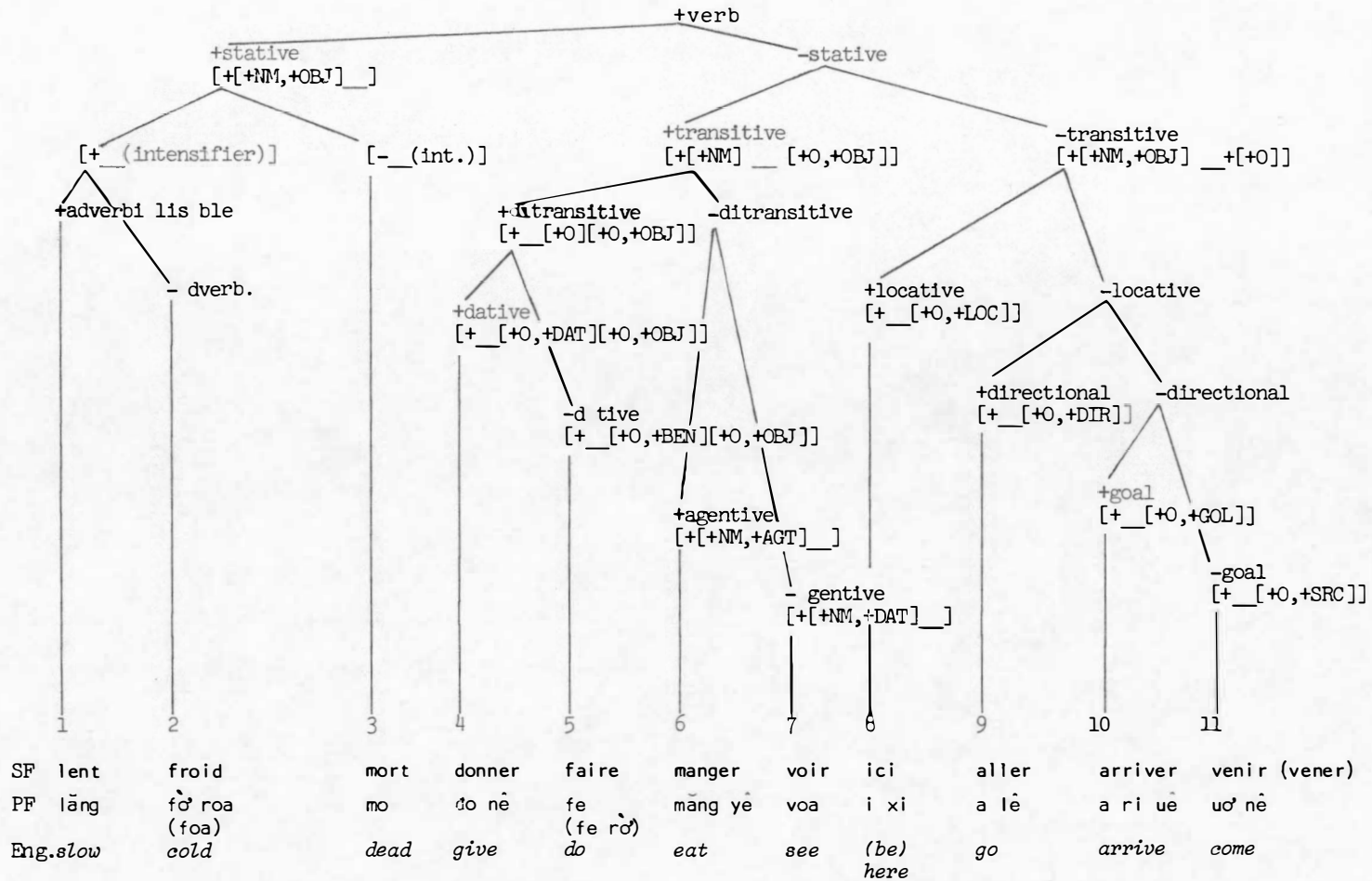
A PF verb is a word or phrase that accepts noun phrases in some case relations. PF verbs usually derive from SF verbs, but they may also derive from prepositions or even some other word classes. While the extent of vocabulary may vary from one PF speaker to another, and hence some verbs may exist in one idiolect but not in another, PF verbs can be classified into eleven groups as indicated in Chart VII according to their hospitality to case-marked slots. The eleven representative verbs will be listed below with their hospitable case-marked slots.

3.1. lent (lǎng) 'slow'. Its syntactic features are:

lent
 [+v]
 [+ [+NM, +OBJ]]
 [+ (intensifier)]
 [+adverbialisable]

1.1. Monsieur beaucoup lent.
 Mông xừ bô cu lǎng.
 He is very slow.
 [+NM] (intensifier) [+v]
 [+OBJ] [+ [+NM, +OBJ]]
 [+ (intensifier)]

CHART VII
Classification of Verbs in PF



1.2. Madame aller lent.

Ma ðam a lê lăng.

She goes slowly.

| | |
|--------|------------------|
| [+NM] | [+v] |
| [+OBJ] | [+adverbialised] |

2. froid (f^o roa or foa) 'cold'. Its syntactic features are:

froid

| |
|--------------------|
| [+v] |
| [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] |
| [+__(intensifier)] |
| [-adverbialisable] |

Lui pas beaucoup froid.

lu⁷ ba b^o cu f^o roa.*He isn't very cold.*

| | | |
|--------|---------------|--------------------|
| [+NM] | (intensifier) | [+v] |
| [+OBJ] | | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] |
| | | [+(intensifier)__] |

3. mort (mo) 'dead'. Its syntactic features are:

mort

| |
|--------------------|
| [+v] |
| [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] |
| [-__(intensifier)] |

chat mort hier.

sa mo ye.

The cat died (was dead) yesterday.

| | | |
|--------|------------------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+T] |
| [+OBJ] | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] | [+TIM] |
| | [-(intensifier)] | |

4. donner (do nê) 'give'.

donner

| |
|---------------------------|
| [+v] |
| [+[+NM]__ [+O,+OBJ]] |
| [+[+NM,+AGT]__ [+O,+OBJ]] |
| [+__ [+O][+O,+OBJ]] |
| [+__ [+O,+DAT][+O,+OBJ]] |

Monsieur donner moi cent piastres.

Mông x^u ðo nê mo² xăng biăt.*He gave me one hundred piastres.*

| | | | |
|--------|-----------------|--------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+O] |
| [+AGT] | [+[+NM,+AGT]__] | [+DAT] | [+OBJ] |
| | [+__ [+O,+DAT]] | | |
| | [+__ [+O,+OBJ]] | | |

5. faire (fe or fe rờ) 'do'. Its syntactic features are:

faire

[+v]
 [+ [+NM] ___ [+O, +OBJ]]
 [+ [+NM, +AGT] ___ [+O, +OBJ]]
 [+ ___ [+O] [+O, +OBJ]]
 [+ ___ [+O, +BEN] [+O, +OBJ]]

| | | | | |
|--------|----------------------|--------|---------------|-----------|
| Moi | faire | ça | Monsieur | demain. |
| Moà | fe | xà | Mông xừ | đờ me. |
| I | will do | it | for you (Mr.) | tomorrow. |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+O] | [+T] |
| [+AGT] | [+ [+NM, +AGT] ___] | [+OBJ] | [+BEN] | [+TIM] |
| | [+ ___ [+O, +OBJ]] | | | |
| | [+ ___ [+O, +BEN]] | | | |

6. manger (mǎng yê) 'eat'. Its syntactic features are:

manger

[+v]
 [+ [+NM] ___ [+O, +OBJ]]
 [+ [+NM, +AGT] ___]

| | | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Chien | manger | tout | hier. |
| si eng | mǎng yê | tú | ye. |
| The dog | ate | everything | yesterday. |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+T] |
| [+AGT] | [+ [+NM, +AGT] ___] | [+OBJ] | [+TIM] |
| | [+ ___ [+O, +OBJ]] | | |

7. voir (voa) 'see'. Its syntactic features are:

voir

[+v]
 [+ ___ [+O, +OBJ]]
 [+ [+NM] ___]
 [+ [+NM, +DAT] ___]

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------|---------|------------|
| Moi | voir | chien | hier. |
| Moà | voa | si eng | ye. |
| I | saw | the dog | yesterday. |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+T] |
| [+DAT] | [+ [NM, +DAT] ___] | [+OBJ] | [+TIM] |
| | [+ ___ [+O, +OBJ]] | | |

8. ici (i xi) 'here, be here'. Its syntactic features are:

ici

[+v]
 [+ [+NM, +OBJ] ___ [+O]]
 [+ ___ [+O, +LOC]]

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------|-------|------|--------|
| Moi | ici | Saigon | trois | mois | déjà. |
| Moà | i xi | Sài gòn | troa | moà | đề yà. |
| <i>I have been here in Saigon three months already.</i> | | | | | |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+O] | [+O] | [+EXT] |
| | [+[+NM,+OBJ] | [+LOC] | | | |
| | [+__ [+O,+LOC]] | | | | |

9. aller (a lê) 'go'. Its syntactic features are:

aller

[+v]
 [+ [+NM,+OBJ]__][+O]]
 [+__ [+O,+DIR]]

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|----------|---------|
| Police | aller | campagne | demain. |
| Bố lít | a lê | cam banh | đờ me. |
| <i>The police will go to the countryside tomorrow.</i> | | | |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+T] |
| [+OBJ] | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] | [+DIR] | [+TIM] |
| | [+__ [+O,+DIR]] | | |

10. arriver (a ri uè) 'arrive'. Its syntactic features are:

arriver

[+v]
 [+NM,+OBJ]__ [+O]]
 [+__ [+O,+GOL]]

| | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Madame arriver | Saigon | hier. |
| Ma đăm a ri uè | Sài gòn | ye. |
| <i>She arrived in Saigon yesterday.</i> | | |
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] [+T] |
| [+OBJ] | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] | [+GOL] [+TIM] |
| | [+__ [+O,+GOL]] | |

11. venir (vener, uơ nê) 'come'. Its syntactic features are:

venir

[+V]
 [+ [+NM,+OBJ]__ [+O]]
 [+__ [+O,+SRC]]

| | | | |
|---|---------|-------|------------|
| Monsieur venir | Saigon | aller | Nha-Trang. |
| Mông xừ uơ nê | Sài gòn | a lê | Nha-Trang. |
| <i>He went to Nha-Trang from Saigon.</i> | | | |
| <i>(He came from Saigon and went to Nha-Trang.)</i> | | | |

| | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| [+NM] | [+v] | [+O] | [+v] | [+O] |
| [+OBJ] | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] | [+SRC] | [+[+NM,+OBJ]__] | [+DIR] |

4. CLAUSE TYPES AND CLAUSE CLASSES

4.1. CLAUSE TYPES

Depending on the hospitality of their verbs to case relations and case realisations, PF clauses are classified into three types:

4.1.1. Stative Clauses

Stative clauses have [+NM,+OBJ] and do not have [+O]:

Monsieur froid.
 Mông xừ fờ roa.
He is cold.
 [+NM]
 [+OBJ]

4.1.2. Transitive Clauses

Transitive clauses have [+NM] and [+O,+OBJ]:

Monsieur acheter cadeaux.
 Mông xừ a sớ tê ca đô.
He bought presents.
 [+NM] [+O]
 [+AGT] [+OBJ]

4.1.3. Intransitive Clauses

Intransitive clauses have [+NM,+OBJ] and [+O]:

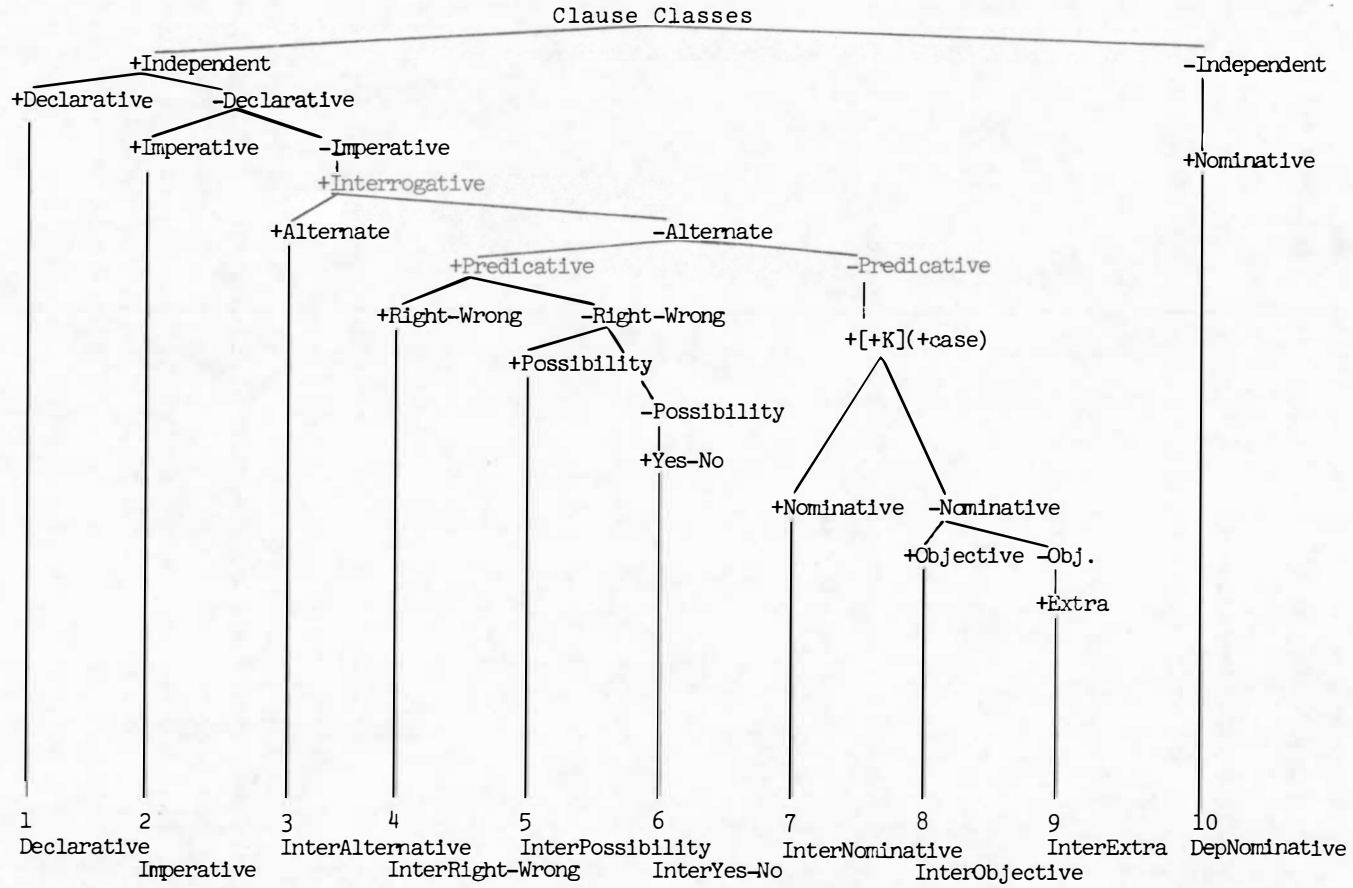
Monsieur aller Nha-Trang.
 Mông xừ a lê Nha-Trang.
He went to Nha-Trang.
 [+NM] [+O]
 [+OBJ] [+DIR]

4.2. CLAUSE CLASSES

There are ten clause classes in PF. They differ from one another by their internal structures or by their distribution in larger grammatical structures. Chart VIII shows the clause classes in PF.

It is noted that the independent clause classes in PF are very similar to those in VN, and quite dissimilar from those in SF. While both VN and SF have four dependent clause classes, PF has only one (Liem 1969:60-72 and forthcoming).

CHART VIII
Clause Classes in PF



4.2.1. Declarative Clause

The class of three declarative clause types is the kernel from which all the other nine classes can be derived when appropriate transform rules are applied (Longacre 1964). It was presented in 4.1.

4.2.2. Imperative Clause

The clauses of the imperative class are identified by their imperative ending phrases such as *si vous voulez* (xi wu wũ lê) 'if you like' in SF and something like 'would you please' in PF. Sometimes these frozen imperative phrases are not used at all, instead imperativeness is indicated by intonation (falling-rising) and gestures.

Monsieur donner moi cadeaux si vous voulez.
 Mông xữ' đơ nê moả ca đơ xi wu wũ lê.
Sir, give me presents would you please?
 [IMPERATIVE PHRASE]

4.2.3. Alternative Interrogative Clause

An alternative interrogative clause has one of its tagmemes alternating with another tagmeme of the same grammatical function. There may or may not be an alternative introducer *ou* (u) 'or' in between the two alternated tagmemes.

Monsieur donner lui cadeaux (ou) piastres?
 Mông xữ' đơ nê luỹ ca đơ (u) biát.
Did he give him presents or money?
 [+O] ALTERNATIVE [+O]
 [+OBJ] INTRODUCER [+OBJ]

Monsieur (ou) Madame donner lui cadeaux?
 Mông xữ' (u) Ma đơ đơ nê luỹ ca đơ?
Did he or did she give him presents?
 [+NM] ALTERNAT. [+NM]
 [+AGT] INTROD. [+AGT]

4.2.4. Right-Wrong Interrogative Clause

A right-wrong interrogative clause contains a right-wrong interrogative phrase at the end. Right-wrong interrogative phrases are, among others, *n'est-ce pas* (ne xơ ba) 'isn't it', and *oui* (uy) 'yes'.

Monsieur donner lui cadeaux oui?
 Mông xữ' đơ nê luỹ ca đơ uy?
He gave him presents didn't he?
 [INTERR-W PHRASE]

Sometimes the right-wrong interrogative phrase does not occur. Interrogation is, then, marked merely by interrogative intonation (rising).

4.2.5. Possibility Interrogative Clause

A possibility interrogative clause contains a possibility interrogative phrase at the end. A common possibility interrogative phrase is *bon* (bông) 'O.K.', which means 'is it possible?'.
Can you give me that, Sir?

Monsieur donner moi ça bon?
 Mông xừ đó nê moả xà bông?
Can you give me that, Sir?
 [INTERPOSSIB]

4.2.6. Yes-No Interrogative Clause

A yes-no interrogative clause contains a negative interrogative phrase *non* (nông) 'no' at the end. Like in VN, there is no negative yes-no interrogative clause in PF. In other words, a negative question like 'Didn't he beat you?' cannot be said in PF. Instead, the same question must be worded as a right-wrong question 'He didn't beat you, did he?'.
Are you pleased, Sir?

Monsieur content non?
 Mông xừ công tãng nông?
Are you pleased, Sir?
 [YES-NO-INTER]

4.2.7. Nominative Interrogative Clause

A nominative interrogative clause has its Nominative slot filled by a question word such as *qui* (ki) 'who' and *quoi* (koa) 'what'.
Who gave him presents?

Qui donner lui cadeaux?
 ki đó nê luỷ ca đô?
Who gave him presents?
 [+NM]
 [INTER] [+AGT]

4.2.8. Objective Interrogative Clause

An objective interrogative clause has its Objective slot filled by a question word such as *qui* (ki) 'who' and *quoi* (koa) 'what'.
Who gave him presents?

Monsieur dire quoi?
 Mông xự dia koa.
What did you say, Sir?
 [+O]
 [+OBJ]
 [INTER]

4.2.9. Extra Interrogative Clause

An extra interrogative clause contains an interrogative satellite tagmeme. In PF, the satellite tagmeme can only be Comitative or Time.

Monsieur aller avec qui?
 Mông xự a lè a uék ki.
Who are you going with, Sir?
 [+C]
 [+COM]
 [INTER]

Monsieur aller quand?
 Mông xự a lè cãng.
When is he (or: are you) going?
 [+T]
 [+TIM]
 [INTER]

4.2.10. Dependent Nominative Clause

A dependent nominative clause has its Nominative slot omitted. Its Nominative is, then, found in the embedding clause.

Lui faire moi aller.
 Luỵ fe(rò) moa a lè.
He makes me go.
 [+NM] [+O]
 [+AGT] [+OBJ]
 [+NM]
 [+OBJ]

4.3. CLAUSE TYPES AND CLAUSE CLASSES

The three clause types and the ten clause classes in PF can be charted in a two-dimensional matrix as in Chart IX which yields thirty possible clause type and clause class correlations (or clause units) of which twenty-six are used in the language.

CHART IX
Clause Types and Clause Classes

| | | Declarat. | Imperative | InterAlter | InterR-W. | InterPoss. | InterY-No | InterNM | InterO | InterExtra | DepNM |
|--------------|---|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|--------|------------|-------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Stative | 1 | + | | + | + | | + | + | | + | + |
| Transitive | 2 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Intransitive | 3 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | | + | + |

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In comparing PF to SF and VN, one can make the following generalisations:

- (1) PF phonology is VN phonology minus the VN sounds that do not have SF counterparts.
- (2) PF syntax is, again, very close to VN syntax. However, it does not include three VN dependent clause classes (Object Dependent, Relative Dependent, and Extra Dependent) (Liem 1969:64-72). Relationships of causality, time, etc. between clauses are conveyed by clause ordering in PF. For example, a succession of time events like '*When he left, I left too*' cannot be conveyed in PF except by juxtaposition:

Lui partir moi partir aussi.
 lui² bặt ti(a) moi² bặt ti(a) ô xi.
He left I left too.

Hence, PF speech is a succession of independent clauses whose relationships are left for the listener to guess.

- (3) PF vocabulary is derived from SF vocabulary. Its size varies from one speaker to another.

N O T E S

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1. Examples will be given in SF orthography, Vietnamese spelling for their pronunciation, and English translations when necessary.
2. The glottal fricative (h) occurs only in some frozen expressions like *haut les mains*, *hò lê me* 'hands up'.
3. Marybeth Clark, in her Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii (see Bibliography p.244), proposes the LOCATIVE case as the only case indicating orientation in space. It is realised by the L subcase-forms Location, Source, Goal, and Terminus, which are inherent features of prepositions.
4. Words such as *monsieur*, *madame*, etc. when used as personal pronouns can be either first, second, or third person.

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