Description Grammaticale
du Parler de l'Ile-aux-Coudres, Quebec

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Seutin has succeeded in condensing his 600-page dissertation into a useful grammatical description of the French spoken on the Ile-aux-Coudres (IAC) in the St Lawrence. Structuralist and rigidly descriptive, it lists forms, frequencies of occurrence, and variants, with few and isolated explanatory comments. Despite a discussion in the introduction to the second part of the need for a different approach to syntax, the second like the first part--consists of a straight presentation of data in a structuralist framework The only harm in this is that Seutin seems to be trying to do something different. There is no need. the data gathered are significant in themselves and are presented in such a way as to be useful to

researchers in dialect study, historical and comparative lin-
guistics, sociolinguistics and other subdisciplines.

Seutin not only describes the morphology and syntax of IAC·
but he compares the usage in the island with that of standard
French as described in *Français Fondamental* (FF)   He recog-
nizes and accounts for the differences between each corpus and
avoids making generalizations when the two cannot be reasonably
compared. He does, however, seem to forget from time to time
that FF is not as "colloquial" as his corpus, ·even though he
mentions more than once the need ·for a current description of
"familiar" French.

The work is a good example of the use of the computer for
recording and storing grammatical and lexical data and, more
interesting, for searching and analyzing the corpus and com-
paring data from other sources. Little description is given of
the program but the results indicate that Seutin and his col-
leagues were able to handle a very large corpus and extract
from it the data in which they were interested. It would ap-
pear that most of the syntactic analysis was done by hand, but
once forms were encoded, the program could find all examples of
each structure being studied and print them out in a usable
format. Since, as in most concordances, forms are (can be)
printed out in context, including an indicator of the speaker,
the same data could and should be used in the future for many
different kinds of studies.

One finds discussion of a number of particular but unrelated phenomena, with some excellent insights, but no general summary of projects that might be undertaken in consideration of these phenomena   On pages 372-3, S. speaks of the relatively high frequency of occurrence of *propositions nominales* in IAC, but does not pursue the matter further, possibly because the traditional framework does not encourage any generalizations.   In the lengthy list of words in the beginning of the second part, many specific comments would be of great interest to semanticians and sociolinguists.   For those interested in de-acquisition, the list of losses or significant decreases ir use of certain verb forms on page 305, as well as many other statements on disappearing forms, would be of much use.   This is a model description: more studies, of various French dialects, following the same basic pattern, should be undertaken.

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