

THE MORPHO-SYNTAX OF LATIN AND OLD FRENCH:  
THE LOSS OF A CASE SYSTEM

By

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Kristin Priscilla Hodge

To my mother, who has always been there for me

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First and foremost, I thank my parents for always being so supportive in my studies. I thank Marie Virginia Fisher for inspiring me to both learn and further my studies of the French language. I would like to especially thank Dr. Mario Aldana for inspiring me to teach the language.

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
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THE MORPHO-SYNTAX OF LATIN AND OLD FRENCH: THE LOSS OF A CASE  
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This research deals with the morpho-syntactic features of both Latin and Old French. An examination of the noun and adjective case systems for both languages is given. First, a historical background shows why Latin is related to French. Then, a grammatical examination of the declension systems of both Latin and Old French is provided. Finally, a comparison of the two languages is given.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

When one studies a language, it is important that all aspects of the language are examined. Culture, grammar, phonetics, and vocabulary are but a few of the most common aspects of language that one generally thinks about studying, but one can also go much deeper into the linguistic aspects of the language. One area of these linguistic aspects is the history of the language's development. Historical linguistics centers on the changes that occur throughout the life of a language. Studying the origin and the way that a language once worked is one way to better understand the way that it works in its modern form. Understanding why specific words are spelled one way as opposed to another or why the subject is always placed in a specific place can help make the language clearer and more interesting to the one studying it.

Languages do not appear overnight. French, like any language, took centuries to develop. Instead of instantly appearing, it went through many stages of transformation. The French language, along with all of the Romance Languages, comes from Latin origins. From its Latin roots, it was influenced by Germanic tribes and formed into what is known as Old French. From there, it transformed even more. The 17<sup>th</sup> century brought about the Classical Age of the French language, which was followed by the modern French that is spoken today in France.

When studying a language in detail, it is important to understand from where it comes. Just as the history of a country or a continent is important to the historian or the politician, the history of a language is essential to the linguist. Otherwise, it is nearly impossible to understand why one says something the way one does today. It is important to those who study the modern language of French in detail to understand why an 'e' is used to make the feminine in most adjectives or why an 's' is used to mark the plural. Likewise, it would help the French linguist to study Latin, since French developed out of Latin. Understanding how much larger of a case

system Latin has and how it gradually became reduced in size can help one who studies Old French better understand why the case system of Old French is so truncated in comparison.

The fact that Latin's six cases are reduced to two in Old French and then to none in modern French is a phenomenon that one who studies French should understand, because without this knowledge one could mistakenly think that the French language begins with Old French. Knowing the language's origin and understanding its language of origin helps the Old French scholar better understand as a whole the entire evolution of the French language. The fact that Latin evolved in a similar way, using fewer and fewer of its cases, is also important. The fact that Old French reduced the case system to two cases can help explain why later on it was reduced to none.

This thesis will deal first with the historical background behind Old French. Why it comes from Latin and why Latin was spoken in Gaul in the first place are but two of the topics addressed in the historical background. Variations in the dialects spoken throughout Gaul are also examined. The grammar section takes an in-depth look at the Latin case system of nouns and adjectives. It also looks at the case system of nouns and adjectives of Old French. Finally, the grammar segment makes a comparison of the Latin and Old French case systems.

## CHAPTER 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Latin and French have a relationship which has lasted more than a millennium. French finds its roots with the Latin language, even despite its many changes through the centuries. In order to examine these changes, it is necessary to begin with a study of Old French because it is the version of French through all of the centuries that is closest to Latin. There are many phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical changes from Latin to Old French. This study will examine the morpho-syntactical differences between the language of origin, Latin, and the new language, Old French. In other words, one will study the eventual loss of the case system in Old French. In order to fully understand the grammatical changes of the morpho-syntax from Latin to Old French, one must understand first and foremost why Latin is pertinent to Old French and why one spoke Latin in the region of Gaul before one spoke French. The question of non-roman influences on the origin of Old French is also important.

Before the Romans entered Gaul, *Galois* (Gaulish) was spoken in the region that is now France. Gaulish was a Celtic language. When the Gauls entered the region of Gaul, there were other populations living there already, mainly the Ligurians, the Iberians, and the Aquitainians. The languages that these peoples spoke were not of Indo-European origin. It is difficult to determine where the languages of the Ligurians and the Iberians came from, since they no longer exist. The language of the Aquitains is known only through the Basque language which exists today and has its origins in the language of the Aquitains. As to the language of the Gauls themselves, modern linguists know little about it since there are few written records of the language. The Druids refused to write any of their beliefs, so the traditional transmission of writing through the clergy is non-existent for this society. The Gaulish records that do exist are

items such as calendars, which do not tell modern linguists much about the structure of the language itself.

While Gaulish did not have a large influence on Old French, it did still have some influence. In modern French, there are a total of around 200 words of Gaulish origin. Most of these terms, such as valet, vassal, and cheval, deal with the rural aspects of life. Since these words still exist today, one can logically deduce that Gaulish had some influence.

Perhaps the most likely influence Gaulish had on Old French is its nasality. Both French and Portuguese were influenced by Celtic Languages, and both languages gained more nasal sounds as a result. In Middle French, vowels which were followed by a nasal consonant became nasalized. This particular nasalization is still in place today in modern French; however, the loss of the final nasal consonant took place well after the time frame of Old French.

So why was Latin spoken in Gaul? “Née dans l’Ile de France, région dont le ‘patois’ n’a jamais été que la variante populaire du français, notre langue est avant tout l’héritière directe du latin importé en Gaule par les conquérants romains” (Allières, 1982, p. 5). One can easily say that Latin entered into Gaul because of Julius Cesar. Perhaps the best-known and the most powerful leader of the Roman Republic, he reunited all of Gaul under Roman power. In the first century B.C., the Roman Republic contained a large portion of Europe as well as several other Mediterranean territories. Figure 2-1 shows the extensiveness Rome’s power throughout Europe, both as the Roman Republic and as the Roman Empire.

When this new government appeared in Gaul, it brought with it its language. As the language of civilization and the language of government, Latin easily found its place in Gaul:

Les Romains n’ont eu recours à aucun moyen tyrannique pour imposer leur langue. Mais le latin était la langue officielle du gouvernement et il représentait la civilisation. C’était deux raisons qui lui assuraient une supériorité écrasante. (Wartburg, 1962, p. 22)

Another reason that Latin took such a large hold in the civilization of Gaul was due to its schools. At the beginning of the Roman civilization, the education of the children was the responsibility of the parents. The sons went with their fathers to the fields, and the daughters stayed with their mothers in the home. Little by little, they adopted the education system of the Greeks. When Cesar took his soldiers into Gaul and conquered it, he also took with him the Roman culture and the education system which was popular at the time. Because the Gauls did not have a school system, they sent their sons to the new Roman schools in order to educate them:

Les Gaulois n'avaient aucune institution de ce genre. Celui qui aspirait, pour lui ou pour ses enfants, à un degré de civilisation plus avancé se voyait dans la nécessité de recourir à l'instruction que l'on donnait dans les écoles romaines. . . . c'est surtout par l'école que le Gaulois est devenu Romain. (Wartburg, 1962, pp. 22-23)

These young boys learned Latin in school, and little by little this language became even more important than Gaulish, the indigenous language of Gaul. It is because Latin was the language of Rome, which was synonymous with culture and political power, that there was a need in the homes of the elite families of Gaul to learn Latin.

It is obvious then that Latin held an important seat in Gaul at that time, but it is also important to note that there was a situation of diglossia in Gaul when it was under Rome's rule, probably due to the distance between Rome and Gaul. Lodge (1997) says

Plus loin de Rome, certaines communautés comme celles de la Gaule connurent longtemps une situation de diglossie, le latin jouant le rôle de langue officielle tandis que les nombreux vernaculaires locaux subsistaient pour les besoins des populations du cru. (p. 52)

Even though the school had an important role in the spread of Latin in Gaul, it was probably the case that the diffusion of Latin was the result of the spoken language and not the

written language. The Latin that was spoken in Gaul at that time is traditionally called Vulgar Latin. This title comes from the Latin noun *vulgus* which means “the people.” Vulgar Latin therefore means “the Latin of the people,” and not the so-called Classical Latin of the traditional Latin literature of authors such as Cesar, Cicero, and Virgil. Wartburg (1962) cites Meillet, saying

Le latin vulgaire est devenu quelque chose que les hommes les plus variés et les moins cultivés pouvaient manier, un outil commode, bon pour toutes mains. (p. 35)

Before passing straight from Latin to Old French, there was a period of dialectization of *le gallo-roman* in Gaul. In the fifth century A.D., there were many Germanic invasions which menaced and in effect diminished the power of the Romans in Gaul. There was therefore at this time a refragmentation of Gaul. The centrality that the Roman Empire had brought to Gaul disappeared, and the spoken language became different in different regions. In the north, there was what was called *la langue d’oïl* (today, French) and in the south what was called *la langue d’oc* (today, Occitan). The principal difference between these two gallo-romance dialects is “le résultat de l’adoption des formes linguistiques nouvelles à des rythmes différents” (Lodge, 1997, p. 81). In the north, there was a tendency to adopt new forms, while in the south there was a tendency to conserve the old forms.

The fragmentation of the Roman Empire was one of the causes of the dialectization of Vulgar Latin. Cerquiglini (1993) says

Rome et sa langue perdent du prestige, au profit des variétés régionales et provinciales, au travers desquelles une appartenance nouvelle se fait jour. Et la disparition des écoles publiques, au plus tard à la fin du Ve siècle, contribua sans aucun doute à la perte de prestige dont souffrit rapidement le latin et la culture romaine. (p. 30)

The schools which had disseminated the Latin language disappeared. Since the civilization that was thought of as the best civilization in the world was no longer present, its prestige would also no longer be present.

It is therefore evident that Latin had a large influence on the origins of French, but Latin also had influence on the origins of many European languages. But these other languages are much closer in linguistic terms to Latin than is French. If Gaul was closer to Italy than Spain, for example, why then is French so much further linguistically from Latin?

There are two relatively simple answers to this question. First of all, there is the time period when France became a Roman province. Rome had already gained the Iberian Peninsula as a province. They were looking for a sort of bridge between Italy and Spain that their merchants and their soldiers could use to travel between the two regions. Because Gaul found itself to be situated between these two regions, it rapidly became this terrestrial bridge. Because the Romans did not come to Gaul until a period much later than they came to other areas of Europe, Latin was not present in Gaul when it was already in use in these other regions. Latin evolved as all human languages do, and the Latin that the Romans introduced into Spain was more like Classical Latin. The Latin that they introduced into Gaul was more evolved and had different characteristics. The Latin language that was introduced there was therefore further evolved when it first appeared in Gaul.

Another reason that French is different from the other Romance Languages is the fact that there were many barbaric invasions in Gaul. These invasions contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire. The term barbaric itself means foreign. These barbaric invasions did not begin and end quickly. Instead, they were prolonged over a time span of many years. These

migrations helped contribute to the fall of the last emperor in the Orient in 476. These Germanic invaders were not well organized, and so the Romans often used one group against another.

When the Empire began to distinguish itself, the Vulgar Latin spoken in each province of the Empire evolved in different ways because of the different influences in each location. The process of this disintegration was slow, but the results were the many different Romance Languages, several of which still exist today. After the fall of Rome, these regions were isolated.

Cerquiglini (1993) says

Ce qui distingue le français des autres langues romanes, et qui a sans doute distingué très tôt le latin dont il est issu, est le contact avec le celte d'une part, avec la langue germanique d'autre part. (p. 31-32)

It was during this era that the proto-language *d'oïl* and the proto-language *d'oc* appeared. There was therefore a unique situation in the region which is today France which produced these dialects that later became French.

These barbaric invasions of the Germanic peoples started in the fourth century, but it was not until the fall of Rome that they had a great influence on the language spoken in Gaul. The invasions continued for centuries.

The three principal groups who established themselves in Gaul were the Franks, the Visigoths, and the Burgundians. All of these three peoples were Germanic, but they all spoke different Germanic dialects. There were also other non-Germanic groups who had important influences on the French language. The main non-Germanic influence came from the Bretons during this time period. Because all of these different groups of people spoke different languages and had different customs, it is necessary to study them region by region.

The region that is located in the north of Gaul was the region affected the most by the invasions. The main invasion in this area was that of the Franks. It is easy to see even today that

the Franks had a large influence on the French language, just by looking at the modern-day name of the region of Gaul: France. When they invaded, the Franks were looking for neither political nor military power. They were farmers above all else. In reality, they did not even truly invade Gaul; they simply began migrating toward the south of Gaul. The Franks were divided into many smaller groups which were not very well organized until the unification of Clovis. The Franks did not force their language on the Gauls:

Comme les Gaulois avant eux, les Francs ressentirent la culture latine comme à bien des égards supérieure à la leur. Mais dans les domaines de la vie où cela ne leur paraissent pas être le cas, ils introduisirent un grand nombre de mots empruntés au francique. (Lodge, 1997, p. 93)

Lodge shows in this citation that the Franks adopted the language of the people who were already present in Gaul; but the language became more decentralized once they arrived into Gaul.

In terms of vocabulary, the Franks contributed many military terms to Old French. They also gave French some political terminology such as *baron*. There are also a large number of names of plants that are of Frankish origin. Some examples include *le houx* and *le cresson*. Clothing articles were also among the vocabulary terms contributed by the Franks: *le gant* and *la poche* for example. In total, the Franks gave the French language over 200 terms. The Franks also used to decline their proper names, which is one reason why the tradition of declining proper names continued into Old French. Many suffixes in French are also of Frankish origin: -ard and -aud for example.

The Visigoths used their military superiority in order to establish a kingdom which was semi-independent and which had its capital in Toulouse. This kingdom was allied with Rome. The more heavily populated concentrations of the Visigoths were noticeably around Toulouse. The Visigoths, like the Franks, had an influence of decentralization on the language, but “la

contribution directe des Wisigoths à l'évolution linguistique de l'Aquitaine semble avoir été pratiquement nulle" (Lodge, 1997, p. 95). Because this region had a sort of independence from the kingdom of the Franks, it was isolated to a greater degree from the rest of Gaul. The Latin language had therefore evolved at a slower rate in this area than in the north. The Visigoths also did not impose their language on the people of this region. The fact that the region remained relatively stable and continued its traditional social structures left Latin to be the main language here for much longer than in other regions of what is today France. Overall, this Visigoths had little influence on the Old French language.

The region between le Jura and the Mediterranean Sea was located much closer to the Germanic world. It was filled with invasions even before the fall of Rome because of its location. This region kept its customs and habits for nearly three centuries after the fall of Rome. It is because of this fact that the Latin that was spoken in this region was not very different from the Latin spoken in what is today Italy.

The Burgundians invaded the region between Lyon and Geneva. This Germanic people stayed allied with the Romans throughout the entire duration of the Roman Empire. They adopted the legal system of Rome; however, in the end the Franks annexed the region in 536. During the time of the Burgundians, the region retained many of its traditional habits. The Burgundians themselves adapted to the Roman culture that was present in the region. Lodge (1997) says that a bilingualism of Burgundian and Latin was present in the region among the elite population of both Burgundian and Latin origin. Eventually, the Burgundians adapted completely to the Roman culture that was present, and their language intermingled with it as well.

The Bretons came from Great Britain in the fifth century, but as a result of the invasion of their own territory by the Saxons. This people had a large influence on the spoken language in the region which is today Brittany. The Bretons spoke a Celtic language which was similar to the Gaulish that was spoken in Gaul before the influence of the Roman Empire. The region of Brittany contained four dialects: “le cornouaillais”, “le léonais”, “le trégorrois”, and “le vannetais”. Their languages remained important for a long time yet did not strongly influence the development of French. They spoke their own language for many years and did not adapt to the French language for many years. Their language can still be found in Brittany today; however, it has never greatly influenced the French language in any significant way.

Eventually, the Franks gained more and more power and became the most important of all of these barbaric groups. Several linguists, like Lodge (1997) and Wartburg (1962), say that the Franks exercised the determining influence on the Latin that was spoken in their region to the north of the Loire Valley.

Along with all of this defragmentation of Gaul, there were also many different dialects. This study has already noted two languages, la langue d’oïl and la langue d’oc, but within these two languages of Old French and Old Occitan there were also many dialects at the local level. Little by little, the Franks won over more power in Gaul under their most well-known king, Charlemagne. After his death, the Carolingian Empire was divided into three sections, one section for each of Charlemagne’s three sons: Charles, Louis, and Lothaire. *Les Serments de Strasbourg* was the first document that has survived which had any part of it written in French. Until this point, Latin was the only written language. The document itself was a contract between two of the sons, Charles and Louis. These two brothers joined with each other against the other brother, Lothaire. There is only a small section of the *Serments de Strasbourg* which is

written in French. The rest of the document is written in Latin. Louis and Charles both read the contract aloud in the language of the other brother so that the soldiers of the other brother were able to understand it. It is at this moment, in the year 842, that one can definitively say for the first time that there was a French language. One theory holds that this text was in the French of the Ile de France which became the principal dialect because of the region's strong relationship with the king. Another theory states that the oaths were written in a koine, which incorporated features from several regions.

One must also look at how the language became an institution. Since there were so many dialects in Gaul, there was much confusion when laws and ordinances needed to be made. When this occurred, administrators had to either translate the legislation into each dialect or run the risk of not having everyone understand.

The rulers believed that if the country spoke one language, then the country would be more unified and would have more of a national identity. In the effort to unify the country through a common language, several ordinances were passed. In 1490, the Ordinance of Moulins suggested that all legal interrogations and verbal proceedings be in French or in the maternal language. The purpose of this ordinance was to help eliminate Latin as the official language.

Another ordinance passed to help rectify this situation was declared by François I in 1539, the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts. Before this date, it was common for official documents to be written in Latin or the local dialect of French or Occitan. Many times, there were situations where the language of the ordinance was not understood by some. One can see by the date of the Ordinance that this situation of miscomprehension existed for some time in Gaul. This edict stated that all official documents had to be in French:

Et pour ce que telles choses sont souvent advenues sur l'intelligence des mots latins contenus esdits arrests, nous voulons d'oresnavant que tous arrests,

ensemble toutes autres procédures, soient de nos cours souveraines et autres subalternes et inférieures, soient de registres, enquestes, contrats, commissions, sentences, testaments, et autres quelconques, actes et exploits de justice, ou qui en dépendent, soient prononcés, enregistrés et délivrés aux parties en langage maternel françois et non autrement. (François I, Article 111)

There is a proverb that the speakers of many languages have adapted to their own culture. In French, one says “Paris ne s’est pas fait en un jour,” but each language tends to use a different important city. In English and in Italian, the city of Rome is used in this phrase, “Rome was not built in a day.” This proverb represents quite well the birth of French. French, like Rome, was not created in a day. A language, like a city, is not something which can simply appear overnight. It takes many centuries of evolution for it to develop.

All French linguists say that French descended from Latin. But if a language does come from another language, when can it be said that the first language is finished and the second language has begun? This question is as relevant to French as much as it is to all of the Romance Languages. There are linguists who say that Latin is still spoken today, that the modern Romance Languages are but dialects of Latin. We will see in the next chapter that French is a language separate from Latin. Its morpho-syntax became so different through its evolution that a speaker of French could not easily understand a speaker of Latin.

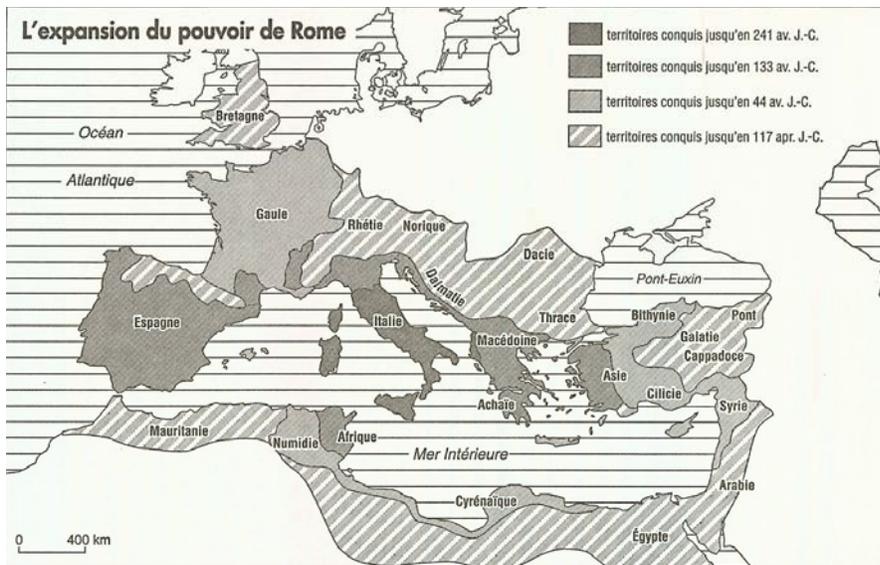


Figure 2-1. Map of the expansion of Roman power in Europe (Lodge, 1997, p. 50)

## CHAPTER 3 GRAMMATICAL EXPLANATION

Because Old French evolved first into Middle French, then into Classic French, and finally into modern French, much time has gone by since it was spoken. Therefore, there are no native speakers of Old French that can tell linguists how the language was pronounced. The technology linguists use today to record native speakers was not anywhere near development in the age of Old French, so recordings are also not an option. For this reason, this paper centers mostly on the written aspects of the language, since those are the ones for which linguists know the patterns of morphology and syntax. It is much easier to study the pronunciation of Classical Latin since there were Classical Latin scholars who wrote about the language itself from a linguistic standpoint, however, it would be much more difficult to study the pronunciation of the Vulgar Latin that spread into Gaul in the first place, since the scholars who studied those aspects of the language were most likely residing in Rome.

### **Morpho-Syntax**

Now that the historical background has been explained, one can move on to the more technical grammatical comparison of the language. The case systems of Latin and Old French is just one aspect of the grammars of these two languages. There are other areas, such as phonetics and semantics that can also be explored. The examination of the case systems dealt with in this paper pertains to one of the morpho-syntactical aspects of the language. First the morpho-syntax of Latin will be dealt with, then the morpho-syntax of Old French. Finally, a comparison will be made between the two languages and their morpho-syntax.

### **Latin Case System**

The term *case system* can be defined as a system of declensions. A declension is an alternation in a noun or adjective that indicates its grammatical role in the sentence. Janson

(2004) says that in Latin “each noun consists of a stem and an ending, and the ending shows the role of the word in the sentence” (p. 183). Each noun belongs to what is known as a declension. In Latin there are five different declensions to which a noun can belong. Each declension contains six different cases which have both singular and plural endings. So, in total a noun can have as many as twelve endings. The ending, or case, that is used is determined by the purpose of the noun in the sentence; for example, a noun can be the subject or the object of a verb.

The nominative case is used when the noun is the subject of a verb. For example, in the sentence *the man’s wife walks the dog in the park for her daughter*, the wife (*uxor*) is the subject of the verb to walk. *Uxor* would then be in the nominative case. The accusative case is used when the noun is the object of a verb; for example, in the sentence *the man’s wife walks the dog in the park for her daughter*, the dog (*canis*) is the object of the verb to walk, and *canis* would be in the accusative case. The ablative case is often used if the noun is the object of the preposition from, by, or in. For example, in our example sentence, the park (*hortus*) would be in the ablative case because it is the object of the preposition in. The dative case is often used to indicate the indirect object of the sentence. If we take the sentence *the man’s wife walks the dog in the park for her daughter* as a sample sentence, her daughter (*filia*) is the indirect object and would therefore be in the dative case in Latin. The genitive case is used to indicate possession. In our example sentence, man (*vir*) would be in the genitive case to show that it is his wife that is doing the action. The final case is the vocative case. This case is used when speaking directly to someone. For example, if our example sentence was addressed to someone named Cesar (*Cesar*), the sentence would become *the man’s wife walks the dog in the park for her daughter, Cesar*. Cesar would then be in the vocative case. *The man’s wife walk the dog in the park for her daughter, Cesar* can now be translated into Latin since all of the parts and cases have been

explained. Combining the Latin words in parentheses stated above and the verb to walk (*ambulāre*), one can form the Latin sentence *uxor viri canem filiae horto ambulat*.

There are five different declensions within the Latin case system, referred to as the first through the fifth declensions. The easiest way to discover which declension a noun belongs to is to look at the genitive singular ending of the noun. For this reason, many Latin dictionaries give both the nominative and genitive singular forms for each noun entry, for example *femina, -ae*.

The first declension contains nouns that end in –a in their nominative singular form, such as *fēmina, -ae* (woman); *puella, -ae* (girl); and *via, -ae* (road). Most of the nouns in the first declension are feminine; however, there are a few masculine nouns found within it as well, such as *poēta, -ae* (poet) and *agricola, -ae* (farmer).

The second declension contains nouns that end in –us in their nominative singular form. All of the nouns in this declension that end in –us are masculine and include nouns such as *servus, -ī* (slave) and *hortus, -ī* (garden). There are also a few nouns in this declension which end in –er or –r in the nominative singular form, which are masculine. Two examples of these second declension nouns are *puer, -ī* (boy) and *ager, agrī* (field). There are also a few neuter nouns in this declension which end in –um, such as the noun *bellum, -um* (war).

The third declension contains masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. This is the largest declension of nouns, and it can be broken up into two main groups. The first group contains nouns whose stems end in a consonant in the nominative singular form, such as *cōnsul, -is* (consul); *mīles, mīlitis* (soldier); and *flūmen, -inis* (river). The other group contains nouns whose stems end in –i. This group contains nouns such as *cīvis, -is* (citizen); *mare, -is* (sea); and *animal, -is* (animal). The stems of these nouns would then be *cīvi-*, *mari-*, and *animali-*.

The fourth declension contains nouns that end in –us in the nominative singular form. It should be noted that the nominative singular forms of both second and fourth declension nouns end in –us; however, ones belonging to the fourth declension decline differently than the second declension –us nouns. Some nouns included in this declension are exercitus, -ūs (army) and cāsus, -ūs (chance). There also exist a few fourth declension nouns which end in –u. These words are all neuter and include nouns such as genū, -ūs (knee).

The fifth and final declension contains only a few nouns, all of which end in –ēs in the nominative singular case. Most of them are feminine, such as rēs, rēi (thing); however, this declension also contains several masculine nouns such as diēs, diēi (day) and meridiēs, meridiēi (midday).

The nouns of each of these declensions decline in a different fashion. First declension nouns, such as *femina*, -ae, have the following endings:

Table 3-1. First declension noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-a	-ae
Genitive	-ae	-ārum
Dative	-ae	-īs
Accusative	-am	-ās
Ablative	-ā	-īs
Vocative	-a	-ae

The noun *femina*, -ae would then decline as follows:

Table 3-2. First declension noun *femina*, -ae

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	femina	feminae
Genitive	feminae	feminārum
Dative	feminae	feminīs
Accusative	feminam	feminās
Ablative	feminā	feminīs
Vocative	femina	feminae

The second declension nouns have the following case endings:

Table 3-3. Second declension noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-us	-ī
Genitive	-ī	-ōrum
Dative	-ō	-īs
Accusative	-um	-ōs
Ablative	-ō	-īs
Vocative	-e	-ī

The second declension noun *amicus*, - ī would then decline as follows:

Table 3-4. Second declension noun *amicus*, -ī

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	amicus	amicī
Genitive	amicī	amicōrum
Dative	amicō	amicīs
Accusative	amicum	amicōs
Ablative	amicō	amicīs
Vocative	amice	amicī

Second declension neuter nouns decline in a different manner:

Table 3-5. Second declension neuter noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-um	-a
Genitive	-ī	- ōrum
Dative	-ō	-īs
Accusative	-um	-a
Ablative	- ō	-īs
Vocative	-um	-a

An example of such a noun is the word *templum*, -ī:

Table 3-6. Second declension neuter noun *templum*, -ī declination

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	templum	templa
Genitive	templī	templōrum
Dative	templō	templīs
Accusative	templum	templa
Ablative	templō	templīs
Vocative	templum	templa

The third declension nouns decline in different ways depending on the gender, just as with the second declension nouns. The first type of third declension noun, such as *urbs*, *urbis* declines in the following manner:

Table 3-7. Third declension noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-∅	-ēs
Genitive	-is	-um
Dative	-ī	-ibus
Accusative	-em	-ēs
Ablative	-e	-ibus
Vocative	-∅	-ēs

I-stem nouns of the third declension, such as *mare*, *-is* decline with the following endings:

Table 3-8. Third declension –i stem noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-∅	-a
Genitive	-is	-um
Dative	-ī	-ibus
Accusative	-∅	-a
Ablative	-e	-ibus
Vocative	-∅	-a

The third declension nouns *urbs*, *urbis* and *mare*, *-is* then decline as follows:

Table 3-9. Third declension noun *urbs*, *urbīs*

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	urbs	urbēs
Genitive	urbīs	urbum
Dative	urbī	urbibus
Accusative	urbem	urbēs
Ablative	urbe	urbibus
Vocative	urbs	urbēs

Table 3-10. Third declension neuter noun *mare*, *-is*

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	mare	maria
Genitive	maris	marium
Dative	marī	maribus
Accusative	mare	maria
Ablative	marī	maribus
Vocative	mare	maria

The fourth declension also contains more than one group of endings. The endings are as follows:

Table 3-11. Fourth declension noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-us	-ūs
Genitive	-ūs	-uum
Dative	-uī	-ibus
Accusative	-um	-ūs
Ablative	-ū	-ibus
Vocative	-us	-ūs

Table 3-12. Fourth declension neuter noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ū	-ua
Genitive	-ūs	-uum
Dative	-ū	-ibus
Accusative	-ū	-ua
Ablative	-ū	-ibus
Vocative	-ū	-ua

Two examples of fourth declension nouns are *fructus, -us* and *cornū, -us*:

Table 3-13. Fourth declension noun *fructus, -us*

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	fructus	fructūs
Genitive	fructūs	fructuum
Dative	fructuī	fructibus
Accusative	fructum	fructūs
Ablative	fructū	fructibus
Vocative	fructus	fructūs

Table 3-14. Fourth declension neuter noun *cornū, -ūs*

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	cornū	cornua
Genitive	cornūs	cornuum
Dative	cornū	cornibus
Accusative	cornū	cornua
Ablative	cornū	cornibus
Vocative	cornū	cornua

The fifth declension contains only one group of nouns, which is a relatively small group of nouns. The noun endings as well as the declination of an example noun, *dies, diei* follow.

Table 3-15. Fifth declension noun endings

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ēs	-ēs
Genitive	-eī	-ērum
Dative	-eī	-ēbus
Accusative	-em	-ēs
Ablative	-ē	-ēbus
Vocative	-ēs	-ēs

Table 3-16. Fifth declension noun *diēs, dieī*

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	diēs	diēs
Genitive	dieī	diērum
Dative	dieī	diēbus
Accusative	diem	diēs
Ablative	diē	diēbus
Vocative	diēs	diēs

Adjectives decline in a way similar to the declination of nouns. The adjective must agree with the noun it modifies in three ways: gender, number, and case. So if one had the genitive feminine singular noun *feminae* (woman) and one wanted to modify it with the adjective *clarus* (famous), the adjective would have to be changed so that it is also in the genitive feminine singular form: *clarae*; therefore we would have the phrase *feminae clarae* (of the famous woman).

First and second declension adjectives decline almost exactly like first and second declension nouns. Table 3-17 shows the case endings for first and second declension adjectives in the feminine, masculine, and neuter forms. Table 3-18 shows the declination of the adjective *clarus, clara, clarum* in all three genders.

The fact that a specific word order is not mandatory in Latin allows much freedom in the language's syntax. Many of the famous authors of Classical Latin used this variable syntax to better express themselves. It also created a sort of game for the reader to figure out what role each word holds and which adjectives belong with which nouns. The example below is from the work *De Amicitia* by Cicero (44 BC). It shows the flexibility of syntax that is possible in Latin:

Table 3-17. First and second declension adjective endings

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative Singular	-us	-a	-um
Genitive Singular	-i	-ae	-i
Dative Singular	-o	-ae	-o
Accusative Singular	-um	-am	-um
Ablative Singular	-o	-a	-o
Vocative Singular	-us	-a	-um
Nominative Plural	-i	-ae	-a
Genitive Plural	-orum	-arum	-orum
Dative Plural	-is	-is	-is
Accusative Plural	-os	-as	-a
Ablative Plural	-is	-is	-is
Vocative Plural	-i	-ae	-a

Table 3-18. First/second declension adjective *clarus, clara, clarum*

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative Singular	clarus	clara	clarum
Genitive Singular	clari	clarae	clari
Dative Singular	claro	clarae	claro
Accusative Singular	clarum	claram	clarum
Ablative Singular	claro	clara	claro
Vocative Singular	clarus	clara	clarum
Nominative Plural	clari	clarae	clara
Genitive Plural	clarorum	clararum	clarorum
Dative Plural	claris	claris	claris
Accusative Plural	claros	claras	clara
Ablative Plural	claris	claris	claris
Vocative Plural	clari	clarae	clara

Q. Mucius augur multa narrare de C. Laelio socero suo memoriter et iucunde solebat nec dubitare illum in omni sermone appellare sapientem; ego autem a patre ita eram deductus ad Scaevolam sumpta virili toga, ut, quoad possem et liceret, a senis latere numquam discederem; itaque multa ab eo prudenter disputata, multa etiam breviter et commode dicta memoriae mandabam fierique studebam eius prudentia doctior. Quo mortuo me ad pontificem Scaevolam contuli, quem unum nostrae civitatis et ingenio et iustitia praestantissimum audeo dicere. Sed de hoc alias; nunc redeo ad augurem. (Chapter 1, paragraph 1)

This paragraph would be translated to English as

Quintus Mucius Scaevola, the Augur, used to relate many a tale about Gaius Laelius, his father-in-law, with perfect memory and in a pleasant style, nor did he hesitate whenever he spoke to call him Wise. Now I, on assuming the dress of manhood, had been introduced to Scaevola by my father with the idea that, so far

as I could and it was permitted me, I should never quit the old man's side. And so I used to commit to memory many able arguments, and many terse and pointed sayings of his, and I was all on fire to become, by his skill, more learned in the law. And when he died, I betook myself to Scaevola the Pontifex, who I venture to say was beyond doubt the man in our state most distinguished for ability and justice. But I will speak of him another time; I now resume my remarks about the Augur. (Cicero, 44 BC, Chapter 1, paragraph 1)

The works of Cicero are well known today by anyone who studies Latin as somewhat difficult to read. One can see from this translation, that the word order in Latin is nothing like that of modern-day English or French. The mere length of his sentences makes it difficult for modern-day Romance Language speakers to comprehend, since sentences are not usually this long in the modern Romance Languages. This difficulty also stems from the fact that Cicero used the full extent of Latin's syntax to better express himself and to say more within each sentence.

### **Old French Case System**

The Old French that appeared in Gaul is not the French that one can find in modern-day France. It is also far from the Latin that was once spoken in the region. Old French conserves parts of the case system of Latin, but not the entire system. It also only uses its case system in certain situations.

There are two main word orders found in Old French non-interrogative sentences: subject-verb-object and object-verb-subject. The only two cases that exist in Old French are the "cas sujet" (nominative case) and the "cas régime" (accusative case). Instead of the six cases of Latin, Old French only has two types of nouns. More often than not, feminine nouns do not have any differences in the cas sujet and in the cas régime. Masculine nouns, on the other hand, do have changes between the two cases. An example of a Type One masculine noun is *murs* and an example of a Type Two masculine noun is *ber* (Table 3-19). In the feminine, it is clear that there

is often no difference between cas sujet and cas régime, especially in Type One feminine nouns. Type Two feminine nouns often do show changes (Table 3-20).

Table 3-19. Type 1 and type 2 Old French masculine nouns, cas sujet and cas régime

	Singular		Plural	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
cas sujet	(li) murs	ber	(li) mur	baron
cas régime	(le) mur	baron	(les) murs	barons

Table 3-20. Type 1 and type 2 Old French feminine nouns, cas sujet and cas régime

	Singular		Plural	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
cas sujet	(la) dame	suer	(les) dames	(les) serors
cas régime	dame	seror	dames	serors

Whether or not all of these declinations were respected often depended on the copyist, since most of the documents in Old French that exist today are copies, and not the originals. These copies were hand-written, so variations occur from one copy to another.

These Old French noun types can be related to their corresponding Latin noun declensions. The feminine Old French type one nouns come almost exclusively from first declension Latin nouns. The Old French type one masculine nouns come mostly from the group of Latin second declension nouns; however, there are many which come from the third declension of Latin nouns. The type two Old French feminine nouns also often come from the third declension of Latin nouns. The Old French type two masculine nouns which have alternating radicals often come from a variety of Latin declensions, but especially from the Latin third declension; however, formal names in this type are often from a Germanic source (Gui, Guion; Hugues, Hugon; Athes, Athon).

Whereas in Latin, each case has one specific use, the cas sujet and the cas régime of Old French each have several different uses. The cas sujet most often served as the case for the

subject of the verb in the personal modes: for example, *Li rois avoit oï consonner que messires Gauvains en avoit ocis pluseurs* (Moignet, 1984, p. 88). The subject of the verb in the impersonal modes can be in cas sujet or cas régime. The cas sujet is almost exclusively used for the noun following the verb *être*. The cas sujet is equally used after the phrase *il vient*. The cas sujet is also used for all nouns referring to the grammatical subject: for example, *Jofrois de Vilhardoin li mareschus de Campaigne moustra la parole* (Moignet, 1984, p. 89).

The cas régime contains many different grammatical functions of the noun, as it corresponds to four of the Latin cases (genitive, accusative, dative, and ablative). The cas régime is used for objects of transitive verbs and for the objects of locutions which present things, such as *voï ci, vez ci, ez, ez vos*, etc. The cas régime is also used for nouns referring to the object: for example, *et après I envoia un suen chardonai, maistre Perron de Chappes, coisé* (Moignet, 1984, p. 91). Cas régime is also used for determinative complements of the substantive, in the sense of belonging: for example, *et neporquant as paroles que la reïne i aprist conut ele veraïement qu'il estoit filz Lancelot et qu'il avoit esté engendrez en la fille le roi Pellés* (Moignet, 1984, p. 92). The cas régime can also be found as the complement of time: for example, *Erec dormi po cele nuit* (Moignet, 1984, p. 95). Complements of manner, attitude, measure, accompaniment, topic, and simultaneous circumstance are often found in cas régime along with a participle, an adjective, or another type of determinant: *Mout tost se rest mis a la voie, le col baissié, que nus nel voie* (Moignet, 1984, p. 97). The cas régime is also used for the predicate nominative of the verb as well as for some subjects when they are after the verb or not close to the verb in the sentence: *et fu pris un parlement l'endemain* (Moignet, 1984, p. 98). Finally, the cas régime is also used as for the object of a preposition.

When it comes to adjectives, these too decline with different forms, depending on the case, gender, and number of the noun they modify. There are two kinds of adjectives in Old French. The first kind includes masculine adjectives which decline in the same way as the noun *murs*. An example of this type of adjective is *buens*, which would decline as follows:

Table 3-21. Old French masculine adjective *buens*

	Singular	Plural
cas sujet	buens	buen
cas régime	buen	buens

This group also includes feminine adjectives which end in –e. These feminine adjectives do not decline. The feminine equivalent of the example *buens* would be *buene*, which would not vary from cas sujet to cas régime. This adjective would, however, have a marked plural, *buenes*:

Table 3-22. Old French feminine adjective *buene*

	Singular	Plural
cas sujet	buene	buenes
cas régime	buene	buenes

The adjective endings for this group would then be as follows:

Table 3-23. Case endings of Old French type 1 adjectives

	Singular	Plural
masculine cas sujet	-s	-∅
masculine cas régime	-∅	-s
feminine cas sujet	-e	-es
feminine cas régime	-e	-es

The second group contains adjectives which do not have marked gender. An example of this type of adjective is *grans*. This lack of gender marking is most notably seen by the fact that the feminine forms do not have the –e ending to mark their gender. These adjectives do not reflect gender because they represent an extension of certain Latin adjectives, such as *grandis*, that also do not reflect gender. The masculine form of *grans* would decline as in Table 3-24. The

feminine form of this adjective keeps the masculine characteristics, but there is more variety in the singular cas sujet form (Table 3-25).

Table 3-24. Old French masculine adjective *grans*

	Singular	Plural
cas sujet	grans	grant
cas régime	grant	grans

Table 3-25. Old French feminine adjective *grans*

	Singular	Plural
cas sujet	grans OR grant	grans
cas régime	grant	

The endings for the masculine and feminine type two adjective then are as follows:

Table 3-26. Case endings of Old French type 2 adjectives

	Singular	Plural
masculine cas sujet	-s	-ø
masculine cas régime	-ø	-s
feminine cas sujet	-s OR -ø	-s
feminine cas régime	-ø	

In comparison to the case system of Latin, it is easy to see that Old French only keeps a small portion of the extensive Latin system. It is important to note that the formal Latin case system became simplified over time in the spoken Latin of day-to-day activities. This simplification could then be one reason why Old French conserves only two of the original six Latin cases. Lodge (1997) says that the system became so simplified in spoken Latin that the nominative (cas sujet in Old French) and accusative (cas régime in Old French) cases were the only two cases that were absolute necessities to carry out day-to-day conversations in Rome. Instead of using cases such as the dative and genitive, prepositions followed by the accusative were often inserted into the sentence. For example, instead of using the genitive *amicī*, one might say *de amico* (of my friend); instead of *amicō*, one might say *ad amicum* (to my friend).

Toward the later Middle Ages in France, the case system of Old French and its case system became more and more rare. Instead of the noun ending telling the listener or reader which noun was the subject and which noun was the object, the word order became increasingly important. The noun preceding the verb became the subject (Old French *cas sujet*), and the noun following the verb became the object (Old French *cas régime*). One might say that this pre-determined word order left little need for the case system, as its presence would have simply been repetitive in the syntax of the new type of sentences. Because there was no need for case endings, the 's' that would have normally marked the difference between *cas sujet* and *cas régime* became a marker of plurality. Both the word order and the plural 's' of the French of the Middle Ages have stayed constant through modern-day French. One could also say that the lack of pronunciation of the noun endings led to the loss of the case system and therefore to the importance of the word order. There is no real way to know which occurred first, because there are no native speakers of Old French left today. It may have even been the case that the two processes occurred at the same time. Linguists can only speculate at issues such as this one, since there is no living proof to definitively prove one theory over the other.

An interesting point on the conservation of cases involves people's first names. In the case of most nouns, the *cas régime* was retained as the language evolved, while the *cas sujet* slowly disappeared. This evolutionary format was not, however, the case for first names. In many cases, the *cas sujet* was kept. This preservation is most likely because of the fact that things are not done to names; however, in the cases where both the *cas sujet* and the *cas régime* still exist, it is a result of the fact that names often are the ones performing the action. It is for this reason that today one can find two similar forms of a name. For example, the names Alice and Alison

are the evolved cas sujet and the cas régime forms (respectively) of the same name. Hugues and Huon have evolved similarly from the cas sujet and cas régime forms of the same name.

Old French syntax could contain a great amount of flexibility. While the majority of the written texts in Old French that survive use either subject-verb-object or object-verb-subject as their word order, several other possibilities existed. In total, there were six possible word orders: subject-verb-object, subject-object-verb, verb-object-subject, verb-subject-object, object-verb-subject, and object-subject-verb. Subject-verb-object and object-verb-subject became the most common word orders because of the Germanic influences on the language.

The Germanic Languages most likely had a large influence in the loss of the case system in Old French. The stress pattern of the Germanic Languages is the primary reason for this influence. It is most likely that this influence caused the noun endings to no longer be pronounced. This pronunciation difference could be one reason for the drastic reduction of the case system from Latin to Old French; however, it could have also contributed to the loss of the case system within Old French, especially in the spoken language. If the endings were no longer pronounced, they were no longer detected by those who only spoke the language, which would have been the majority of the population who spoke it. Further influence of the Germanic Languages could have led to the complete loss of the case system over time.

Another influence of the Germanic Languages was the word ordering. As stated above, Old French had six different possibilities for its word order; however, only two of these word orders became dominant, subject-verb-object and object-verb-subject. These two options have one thing in common: the verb is always at the center. The centrality of the verb is common in Germanic Languages. Even in modern German, the verb must always be at the center, between the subject and the object; however, it does not matter whether the subject or the object comes

first. Because these Germanic word orders are so similar to the dominant ones of Old French, it is clear that the Germanic Languages had an influence on the syntax of Old French.

### **Comparison of the Two Case Systems**

Even from a quick glance, it is easy to see that the Latin case system is much more in-depth than that of Old French. Every noun and every adjective have to have an ending which indicates the role of the word in the sentence at hand. By the time that Latin is no longer common in Gaul and Old French is the most common language in the area, two-thirds of this system has been reduced and is no longer present. It is natural that a language evolves, and it is not uncommon that new languages spring out of other languages. Whenever languages come into contact and a new language emerges, certain aspects of each language are retained. In general, some vocabulary and very basic grammatical structures are kept. Then, the language recomplexifies in its own manner.

The fact that the Latin spoken in Gaul just before the birth of French was so different from the classical Latin that was once spoken in Rome shows an evolutionary trend in language. It is only natural, then, that Old French have such great differences from Latin, because it not only has a different pronunciation from Latin, but also because it has a different syntactical system.

Since Old French came from Latin and lost such a great part of the case system in its birth, it is not surprising that as the French language evolved further it lost even more of the small case system that Old French conserved from Latin.

While Old French did have much possible variety in its syntax, it usually did find itself restrained to two possible word orders. Latin, on the other hand, did not restrain itself as much. While there is a more extensive richness of syntax in Latin than in Old French, it should also be noted that Old French also had a much richer syntax than modern French has today. Modern French finds itself restricted almost exclusively to a subject-verb-object word order.

While Latin and Old French did have a more flexible syntax, this fact does not make them any better of a language. French has taken a natural course in its evolution. Most Indo-European Languages tend to move from the synthetic to the analytic. In a truly synthetic language, such as Finnish, Korean, or Japanese, the language evolves from a synthetic form to an even more synthetic form. In these languages, more and more grammatical information becomes included within each word. In the case of the evolution of French, the language moves from the more synthetic to the more analytic. When it comes to the evolution of French, Latin is the strongest synthetic language. Old French loses some of the synthetic aspects, but it still retains a large amount (its limited case system). As the language evolves further, it loses even more of its synthetic qualities. In the evolution of Old French, one could then say that a loss in synthetic qualities occurred at the same time that the case system became reduced in size. While modern French is not completely analytic, it is much less synthetic than it has ever been. An example of this synthetic to analytic evolution can be seen with the Latin verb *cantāre*. If one wanted to say “I will sing” in Classical Latin, one would say *cantābō*. As the Latin language evolved, one would say *habeo cantāre*. This second form is less synthetic, and therefore more analytic, in form. In French, it became *chanterai*. Then the same evolution has occurred. Traditionally, “I will sing” is said as *je chanterai* in French; however, it is becoming more and more common to hear *je vais chanter*. This change is just as the Latin change, in that it moves from a more synthetic form to a more analytic form. Both languages show a move from the more complex form to an infinitive with an auxiliary.

There are, however, examples of the move from the analytic to the synthetic in modern French. One example is that of the current usage of clitic pronouns in the spoken language. A clitic pronoun is a pronoun that is closely related in pronunciation or form to a preceding or

following word that can usually not stand alone. Along with the closely related word with which it functions, the two words form a single accentual unit. The use of clitic pronouns in modern French is becoming more and more common, almost becoming common place, if not required in the spoken French of some groups. Instead of just hearing *je* to start a sentence, one will often hear *moi, je*.

Today, Latin is no longer spoken except by the Catholic Church and by scholars. This is one of the reasons that many people call Latin a dead language. Because it is no longer spoken or written by the public, it has stopped evolving. When a language stops evolving and remains stagnant, it is no longer alive. This fact is another reason why Latin is often referred to as a dead language. French, on the other hand, is alive and thriving. It continues to evolve, as is exemplified by the example of the movement from the more traditional synthetic form of the futur simple (*je chanterai*) to more analytical form of the futur proche (*je vais chanter*). French has already seen a change similar to this one with its past tenses. Instead of commonly using the passé simple (*je chantai*), the passé composé (*j'ai chanté*) is commonly used today to talk about actions completed in the past. The passé simple is still in use, but mainly only in newspapers and literature. It is rarely ever spoken by the people themselves. Because the language is alive, it is only natural that it continue to evolve from its more synthetic forms to the more analytical ones already present in the language.

## CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is easy to see that French has its roots in the Latin Language. Old French still carries many of the grammatical aspects that Latin has, such as the case system. Once that case system disappeared during the Middle Ages, it is much more difficult to see the grammatical roots that French has in Latin. Because word order is so important to modern French, it is often difficult to understand why a language such as Latin has a case system which is relevant to the study of French. Knowing the history of the French language and understanding why French originally had a case system and how that case system worked is essential when coming to logical conclusions in this subject area. Without this knowledge, the study of historical French linguistics is nearly impossible to understand. This knowledge is even more important when it comes to a detailed analysis of the Old French grammatical system and the evolution of Old French as a language.

This type of study can further all types of French linguistic study. Sociolinguistics can be furthered by the fact that language evolves differently in different places. Knowing where French comes from and at what stage it was introduced to new areas ties into the study of sociolinguistics. It helps to explain the reasons behind the current language practices in those more newly introduced areas. Studying the case system of Old French and its loss as French evolved can help form a better comprehension of the modern morphology and syntax of French. The orthography of Old French helps the phonetician understand how the language used to be pronounced and why the spelling of modern French often does not match up with modern pronunciation.

As one can see, historical linguistics is important to all aspects of linguistics. This study has examined one aspect of the morpho-syntax of Old French, but the morphology and syntax of

the French of the Middle Ages and the French up to modern French is also important to study. If one only studies these aspects of Old French and of modern French, then there will be a gap in one's knowledge. It is important to understand the entire history of the language, not just certain sections of it. In addition, studying the phonetics and semantics of all of these periods is also important. Studying the phonology of Old French helps one to understand the modern orthography of French. All of these areas of study are also important in achieving a more complete comprehension of French linguistics.

Yet another topic of interest, and perhaps the most closely related to this study would be the study of the verb conjugation systems of Latin and Old French. When a verb is conjugated in Latin, the verb itself tells the listener or reader who the subject is because of its personal ending. Subject pronouns were rarely used in Latin. Seeing that French often has the same personal endings for different subject pronouns (for example, the *je* and *il* forms of regular *-er* verbs), the subject pronouns are always necessary in the absence of a noun subject. It is interesting and relevant to the study of historical linguistics to understand when these subject pronouns became a required element to the French sentence. Countless other possibilities exist in the study of the similarities of Latin and Old French and in the evolution of the language from Old French to the French spoken today. This study has examined but one of these endless topics.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kristin Hodge began her studies of French at the age of eleven at St. Johns Country Day School. She continued studying French every year through her graduation at St. Johns Country Day School in 2000. Upon entering Stetson University, she began studying French and soon declared it her major. She minored in Communications. It is at this point, she decided she wanted to teach French. In her senior year at Stetson University, she did a senior research project on the representation of Jeanne d'Arc in both American and French cinema. She obtained her B.A. in French language and literature at Stetson University in May of 2004. Soon afterwards, she began her M.A. studies in French linguistics at the University of Florida. She has taught seven beginning French courses at the University of Florida. This thesis is the mark of completion of her M.A. degree at the University of Florida.