

**Multicultural London
English /
Multicultural Paris French
4**

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project

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Le blédard

SAM: moi j'habite à [xxx] .

ENQ: c'est quoi ?

SAM: c'est une autre cité .

YUS: c'est vrai ta mentalité de (..) toi t'habites même <loin> [= rires] .

NIZ: ouais t- toi t'habites pas à [= lieu] toi t'habites au bled mon frère
[= rires] ! (...)

ENQ: pourquoi (.) t'y vas souvent ?

NIZ: c'est un blédard .

SAM: euh non x .

YUS: c'est un blédard .

SAM: c'est non c'est faux ! [= rires] .

ENQ: pourquoi t'es un blédard ?

SAM: je sais pas parce que je parle comme ça c'est, c'est eux, c'est lui
le blédard il parle avec moi

NIZ: ah c'est toi le blédard mais non parce que moi je t'aime bien mais
tu vois toi t'es un vrai *darblé* (.) non mais c'est bien t'inquiète .

Le blédard

- This example is a transcription of a recording made with young people in Paris. SAM, ENG, YUS and NIZ are talking to the researcher (ENQ: enquêteur) about where they live and their attitudes to different parts of their neighbourhood.
- The speech is informal and uses expressions commonly used by teenagers in Paris.
- Note: x is used in the transcript to avoid identifying names and places.

Exploring the text

- In pairs or a small group, read the text. What does it tell us about where SAM lives and his friends' attitude to this?
- What is the meaning of *cit * in this text?
- Multilingual French: this text offers an example of the way in which words and expressions from other languages and cultures have become part of the informal language of teenagers in large cities.
- The last line of the text also includes an example of Verlan*, what does it mean?

* VERLAN

- “French slang used by almost all youngsters especially in urban French areas. It consists in reversing the terms syllable by syllable, or even sometimes letter by letter. For example, the word "SPEED" is said "DEU-SPEE“
- Urban Dictionary
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=verlan>

Carrying out your own research:

- Search online for current meanings of *bled* and *blédard*. What language does the word originally come from?
- What can you find out about Verlan and how it is used by teenagers?

Cross-linguistic comparisons

- There are many different ways of translating a text. Translating informal language and slang is notoriously difficult as the words used can have very different connotations. For example a close equivalent to a commonly used word in one language, may be considered very rude in another. The words **bled** and **blédard** probably do not have direct equivalents in English.
- Brainstorm words that are used in English, usually negatively, to describe where people live or come from.
- Can you think of any examples of a secret language, like Verlan, that is used by English teenagers?

Drama

- In a group discuss some of the different ways in which young people are described in your neighbourhood.
- Are there names for groups of teenagers who live in different postcodes or estates? Are negative terms or insults used that indicate rivalries between groups?
- Devise and record a short drama/dialogue in French using informal language in which young people discuss positive or negative aspects of where they and their classmates live.

Writing

- Write a brief summary of the scenario in French
- Write an entry for an encyclopaedia of teenage slang in standard French, starting *un blédard c'est quelqu'un qui ...*

Contact

- Raymonde Sneddon:
- r.m.sneddon@uel.ac.uk
- raymonde.sneddon@zen.co.uk