Acadiana is still predominantly "French country" and the majority of the people have a native capability to speak and understand the French language.

An 18-parish preliminary survey by the Council For The Development of French In Louisiana (CODOFIL) shows that there are about 868,000 out of slightly over two million South Louisianians who fall into this category. The survey was limited to "speak and understand" French and did not endeavor to ascertain ability to read and write the language.

Evangeline Highest

The CODOFIL survey, published in the current edition of Acadiana Profile Magazine, shows Evangeline with 99 per cent, Avoyelles with 98 per cent, and Vermilion with 95 per cent to be the "most French" of Louisiana's parishes. At the lower end of the 18-parish scale were Orleans and Jefferson with a ratio of 20 per cent able to natively speak and understand French.

St. Martin recorded a 90 per cent ratio and the study showed Acadia, Iberville and LaFourche with 80 per cent. Tied with 70 per cent were Ascension, Assumption and West Baton Rouge.

65 Per Cent

Lafayette has 65 per cent of its population capable of speaking and understanding French, while St. Mary, Terrebonne and Pointe Coupee reflect 60 per cent ratios. Iberia Parish boasts of half of its population able to speak and understand French, and the Calcasieu figure is 40 per cent.

The COD OFIL report estimates that approximately one and one half million Louisianians still natively speak and understand French.