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A Comparison of Flute Performance and Spoken French

More so than other nationalities there seems to be a connection between the French and the flute. As Leonardo de Lorenzo said in his book *My Complete Story of the Flute*, "It seems to have been developed more by the Germans than any other people; but it was the French who produced the first great performers." I've seen these connections in a few of my own observations; many of the best flutists in history are French and many more studied with french performers (e.g. Marcel Moyse) or at the Paris Conservatory. Every flutist knows about "the French school" style of playing and, of course, Paul Taffanel and Phillipe Gaubert's *17 Grands Exercices Journaliers de Mekanisme*. The goal of this paper is to show there's a connection specifically between flute playing and the French language. The paper will start off with comparing the musical structure of standard flute repertoire with *oïl* French. *Oïl* is a more "urban non-southern French of France" and "lines up quite closely with an intuitive perception of 'French'." Secondly, it will take a deeper look at the physiological aspects and mechanics of each by identifying the muscles and muscle actions to speak French, using phonetics as a base, and to play the flute. In conclusion, this paper aims to show one aspect of the connection between French and flute through the comparison of language and music.