

# LEARN FRENCH BY PODCAST



AUDIO PODCASTS  
FOR LEARNERS  
OF FRENCH  
AS A FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE

## Lesson 35

“Have you seen Léa recently? She’s put on weight!...”

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## Lesson 35: Thursday, December 7th, 2006

### Level: intermediate. "Have you seen Léa recently? She's put on weight!..."

- "Dis" / "Dites" – l'impérative: ["Tell me! [the imperative]]
- T'as / tu as vu...? : ["Have you seen...?"]
- croiser quelqu'un : [to run into / to bump into]
- Qu'est-ce que ...! : [conveying surprise, shock, etc.]
- être enceinte : [to be pregnant]
- croire : je croyais : [to think, to believe: I thought that]
- être à deux doigts de [+ infinitif] : [to be on the verge of]

# Dialogue

Hello and welcome back to Learn French by Podcast. My name is Hugh Nagle and here with me is Amélie Verdier. Bonjour, Amélie!

Bonjour!

In this lesson, lesson 35, even though it's something we'd often prefer not to think about, we're going to talk about putting on weight.

Let's first hear a very short dialogue ...

Salut Marie!

Salut Jean!

Dis, t'as vu Léa récemment ?

Oui, pourquoi ?

Parce que je l'ai croisée hier. Qu'est-ce qu'elle a grossi! Tu ne trouves pas ?

Oui, mais bon, il faut voir toutes les cochonneries qu'elle avale à longueur de journée!

Ah bon!? Moi, je croyais qu'elle était enceinte!

Tu ne l'as quand même pas félicitée pour l'heureux événement!?

Non, mais j'étais à deux doigts de le faire!

Let's hear that once again ...

Salut Marie!

Salut Jean!

Dis, t'as vu Léa récemment ?

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### Note: the imperative

► Dis... T'as vu...?

[= Tell (me). Have you seen...?]

Here's the **imperative form** of the verb **dire**. That is the form of the verb which allows us to order someone to do something.

Three parts of the verb conjugation are used for the imperative: the 2nd person singular and 1st and 2nd person plural forms:

dire (to tell, to say)	
au présent de l'indicatif	à l'impératif
je dis	
tu dis	<b>Dis !<sup>1</sup></b>
il / elle / on dit	
nous disons	<b>Disons !<sup>2</sup></b>
vous dites*	<b>Dites !<sup>3</sup></b>
ils / elles disent	

So, when do we use each of these three imperative forms?

- 1 We'll use this form when telling **someone we know well** – a family member, a child, etc – to do something
- 2 This form will be used when one is telling **a group (which includes oneself)** to do something
- 3 This form is used when telling **a group – or one person whom we don't know well** – to do something. (In this case, a group would *not* include the person speaking.)

\*Watch the 2nd person plural form of the verb « dire » ! It does not have the typical "–ez" ending we have come to expect on the "vous" part of the verb in the Present Tense. You remember the other common verb we have met which has a similar exceptional ending, don't you?... It's "faire": vous faites...

### Note: agreement with "avoir"

► Je l'ai croisée hier.

[= I ran into her yesterday.]

Here is an example of **le passé composé**. As we have seen in previous lessons, this tense consists of two parts: (1) the auxiliary verb "avoir", followed by (2) a **past participle** ("croisée", in this case). We often find that, in cases where the auxiliary verb "avoir" is used, there is no agreement of the past participle, as would be the case if the auxiliary verb "être" was used. (In the case of "être", we would usually have agreement with the subject of the sentence.) So, why is there agreement in the example above? It is because of the **preceding direct object** – "l'" – which refers to Léa ("Have you seen **her**?").

In cases where a preceding direct object is present in the sentence, the past participle must agree in number and gender with that object. The extra "e" in our example above is necessary because we're talking about Léa, whom Jean met yesterday. Consider also:

► J'ai croisé Léa. [I ran into Léa.]

No agreement is necessary in this case. Léa – the direct object of the sentence – follows the verb. The kind of agreement discussed above applies *only* to preceding direct objects.

### Note...

► ... récemment.

[= recently]

Listen carefully to the pronunciation! Despite the spelling, we hear an "ah" in the pronunciation.

We'll find a similar pronunciation in the words:

- fréquemment... [frequently]
- évidemment... [obviously]

Where you see this symbol...



... it's your turn to repeat what you've heard. Then we'll repeat once more.



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# Dialogue

First, let's see how the conversation was initiated. Jean said to Marie:

Dis, t'as vu Léa récemment ... ? ●●●●  
Dis, t'as vu Léa récemment ... ?

"Dis ..." – that's the imperative form of the verb "dire" – "to say" or "to tell". Jean knows Marie well so we have the informal "tu" form. If he was addressing 2 or 3 people, while sitting around a table, for example, he would say ...

Dites ... ●●●●  
Dites ...

To ask if Marie had seen Léa, the question was:

T'as vu Léa ? ●●●●  
T'as vu Léa ?

Of course, that is "Tu as vu ? ...", "Tu as vu ? ...", but we can hear, once again, the truncated form of the pronoun "tu" ...

Now, Jean said he had "bumped into" Léa, that he had "run into" her in the street. The key verb is "croiser quelqu'un". Let's hear the specific part of the dialogue ...

Je l'ai croisée hier ... ●●●●  
Je l'ai croisée hier ...

Jean was quite shocked at Léa's appearance. She had put on weight. Jean exclaimed ...

Qu'est-ce qu'elle a grossi! ... ●●●●  
Qu'est-ce qu'elle a grossi! ...

So, the verb "to put on weight" is "grossir". We'll also hear expressions like: "J'ai grossi de quatre kilos depuis Noël ...", "Jean a grossi ...", and so on.

Now, there was a reason for Léa's having put on weight:

Oui. C'est les cochonneries qu'elle avale à longueur de journée ...

"Les cochonneries" – that's the word we'll use to refer to "junk food" – it could be chocolate bars, sweets – or candy – it could be potato crisps, and so on.

Let's hear this noun in context once again ...

Il faut voir toutes les cochonneries qu'elle avale ... ●●●●

Il faut voir toutes les cochonneries qu'elle avale ...

"... toutes les cochonneries –" ... all the junk ..." Jean wasn't aware that this was the cause of Léa's weight: he thought, in fact, that Léa was pregnant! He said ...

Je croyais qu'elle était enceinte.

Dis / Dites ...

T'as / Tu as vu?

croiser quelqu'un

Qu'est-ce que ...!

être enceinte

**Note...**

▶ **Qu'est-ce qu'elle a grossi !**  
[= **Wow, but** she's put on weight !]

Qu'est-ce que ... ? is an essential and common interrogative form:

▶ **Qu'est-ce qui se passe?** [What's happening?]  
▶ **Qu'est-ce qu'il t'a dit?** [What did he say to you?]  
▶ **Qu'est-ce qu'elle fait?** [What's she doing?]

In the example from our dialogue, however, "Qu'est-ce que ... ?" is not an interrogative form but, rather, **adds surprise or shock to the context**: "Wow, but ... !"  
(In Lesson 26 – "Could you do me a favour?" – we heard a similar use of this expression: "Qu'est-ce que tu es bête parfois!" [Hey, but you can be silly sometimes!])

**Note...**

▶ **les cochonneries**  
We might also hear ...  
▶ **Il ne vend que des cochonneries.**  
▶ **C'est de la cochonnerie.**

**Note...**

▶ **... les cochonneries qu'elle avale ...**

**avaler (to swallow)**

j'avale  
tu avales  
il / elle / on avale  
nous avalons  
vous avalez  
ils / elles avalent

past participle: **avalé**

C'est une pilule amère à avaler.

**Note...**

▶ **... à longueur de journée**  
[= throughout the day / all day long]

Where you see this symbol... ●●●● ... it's your turn to repeat what you've heard. Then we'll repeat once more.



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# Dialogue

Let's break that down: "I thought that ..." is:

Je croyais que ... ●●●●  
Je croyais que ...

... and "she was pregnant":

... elle était enceinte ●●●●  
... elle était enceinte

"Je croyais" – that's the verb "croire" in the Imperfect tense. Then we have "elle était enceinte". We're using the Imperfect here, of course, because it's a **description of someone in the past**.

Marie hoped that Jean hadn't make a gaffe and congratulated Léa. Thankfully, Jean hadn't done so, but he was very close to it: let's hear just how close he was. He said ...

J'étais à deux doigts de le faire ... ●●●●  
J'étais à deux doigts de le faire. ▀

Let's remember that expression: "être à deux doigts de faire quelque chose".

Now that we've looked more closely at this conversation, let's hear it again once through in its entirety ...

Salut Marie!  
Salut Jean!  
Dis, t'as vu Léa récemment?  
Oui, pourquoi?  
Parce que je l'ai croisée hier. Qu'est-ce qu'elle a grossi! Tu ne trouves pas?  
Oui, mais bon, il faut voir toutes les cochonneries qu'elle avale à longueur de journée!  
Ah bon!? Moi, je croyais qu'elle était enceinte!  
Tu ne l'as quand même pas félicitée pour l'heureux événement!?  
Non, mais j'étais à deux doigts de le faire!

Ok, Amélie. That's it for this lesson. Until next time!

A la prochaine.

"croire", à l'imparfait

être à deux doigts de [+ infin.]

#### ●●●● Note...

- ▶ ... être à deux doigts de faire quelque chose
- Literally, "to be two fingers away from doing something", this expression means "to be on the verge of doing something".

#### ●●●● Note...

- ▶ Tu ne l'as pas quand même félicitée ...
- [= You didn't congratulate her, (did you?)]
- Why is that extra "e" necessary on the past participle? If you studied page 2 of this Lesson Guide carefully, you'll know why. Can you explain it... without looking back?!...

Where you see this symbol...



... it's your turn to repeat what you've heard. Then we'll repeat once more.



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# Dialogue

**If you understood our lesson, then you should be able to translate...**

Now it's your turn...

1. Have you seen Paul today?
2. Have you seen them today? \* [Assume that the pronoun "them" refers to Jim and Joe.]
3. Tell me... have you seen that film? [Assume you're talking to your friend, Jacques.]
4. I ran into Michael and Caroline in town this afternoon.
5. Wow... but he's put on weight since the New Year! [... le Nouvel An]
6. I thought he was there.
7. I have news! Melissa is pregnant.
8. She's on the verge of buying it.
9. We're on the verge of another catastrophe.

\* Watch it! Your sentence will include a preceding direct object. See pages 2 and 4 for examples.]

See how you have fared in the exercise above by clicking on the graphic.  
 (Note that we wait a few days after a lesson has been released before posting the answers to exercises on our website.)

**Vocab extra!**

- amer, amère [adj].... bitter
- avaler ..... to swallow
- bête [adj] ..... silly, foolish
- cochonneries (f pl)... junk, rubbish
- croire ..... to believe, to think
- croiser ..... to run into
- doigt (m) ..... finger
- enceinte [adj] ..... pregnant
- événement (m) ..... event, occurrence
- faut, il ~ ..... you must, it is necessary
- féliciter ..... to congratulate
- grossir ..... to put on weight
- heureux [adj] ..... happy
- hier ..... yesterday
- journée (f) ..... day
- longueur (f) ..... length
- mais ..... but
- même, quand ~ ..... all the same, in any case
- parfois ..... sometimes
- passer, se ~ ..... to happen
- pillule (f) ..... pill
- pourquoi? ..... why?
- quelqu'un ..... someone
- récemment [adv] ..... recently
- tout, toute ..... all
- trouver ..... to find
- vendre ..... to sell
- voir ..... to see
- vu ..... seen