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The use of the relational function of address pronouns in L2 French before and after study abroad: do interaction and exposure to media make a difference?

Emmanuella Annan, Catherine Collin and Cyrille Granget

Introduction

Study abroad is considered as an opportunity for exposure to new sociolinguistic variants of a language and participation in a wider variety of situations, allowing for the enrichment and reorganization of the linguistic repertoire of the second language learner. In French, many studies have thus shown that during study abroad, learners acquire informal variants of negation or subject pronouns *on* instead of *nous* (1st person plural) and *i* instead of *il* (3rd person singular) without necessarily mastering the sociolinguistic function of the (in)formal variants (Regan, 1996; Thomas, 2004; Sax, 2003; Dewaele & Regan, 2002; Gautier, 2016; Lemée, 2002; Dewaele, 2002; Terry, 2016). The expansion of the repertoire is usually explained by the exposure to so-called informal variants in everyday conversational varieties that are generally not used in the classroom. The use of address pronouns could be considered as a part of sociolinguistic competence. As Regan (1996: 178) notes, the variable use of *tu* as opposed to *vous* often co-occurs with other sociolinguistically sensitive variables such as negation with *ne* retention, which is “a powerful indicator of formality, issues of power, solidarity, style and register”. Roberts’ (2012) corpus study of L1 French confirms this by showing that the pronoun *vous* co-occurs with the formal inflectional future. However, as DuFon (2010) points out, labels such as formal and informal may be ambiguous. Address pronouns are actually different from other pronouns because they are not universally used across languages or settings but create and maintain social

identities and social relationships in different settings (Van Compernelle et al., 2011). Because of the polysemic nature and fundamental ambiguity of the address pronouns, their acquisition has instead been examined from a socio-pragmatic perspective in which social deixis plays a central role (Belz & Kinginger, 2002; Lyster & Rebuffot, 2002; Dewaele, 2004; Kinginger, 2008; Van Compernelle et al., 2011; Edmonds & Guesles-Coquelet, 2015; Hassal, 2013; Barron, 2006). In Morford's (1997) dual indexicality model, address pronouns are defined as indexical elements whose function is threefold: to express the social identity of the speaker, to give details on the setting in which the interaction takes place and to reflect the relationship of the participants in the interaction, which we refer to as "the relational function". To the best of our knowledge, the only study investigating what effect staying abroad and interacting with the target community has on the learners' use of the French address pronouns points to a positive effect of interaction on the acquisition of the relational function of *tu* and *vous* due to the increasing amount of interaction in a variety of settings (Kinging & Farrel 2004; Kinginger, 2008). However, individual variation in the use of pronouns is important, hence the need to further investigate the quality of individual study abroad experiences in order to understand individual use.

Our goal is to contribute to this research by analysing individual language practices outside the classroom and the use of address pronouns in L2 French simulated requests among 24 Ghanaian learners who have completed the 3rd year of their Bachelors degree in French at a university in Ghana, half of them had also spent 9 months studying in France. We examine the acquisition of two basic relational functions of the address pronouns: *tu* for solidarity with friends and *vous* for deference with an unknown person or a known person with higher social status. Our analysis first compares the use of pronouns in relation to the degree of intimacy with or deference to the interlocutor among L1 French speakers and L2 French learners and then among the two groups of learners (before and after study abroad). Finally, we relate individual variation in productive use of the pronouns to individual language practices by means of a Multiple Correspondence Analysis based on interaction in French with L1 French and L2 speakers, listening to the radio and watching films and TV series in French.

The French address pronouns *tu* and *vous*

The second person pronouns in French consist of two pronouns: *tu* and *vous*. They have the same meaning in English (*you*) but have very distinct uses. In simple terms, *tu* is considered to be the pronoun used when addressing friends and *vous* as the one used when addressing strangers and also seen as the polite form. However, studies on *tu* and *vous* reveal that there is more to this very basic definition, the use of the address pronouns can be very complex.

From an anthropological perspective, Morford (1997: 29) proposed a unified analysis of these pronouns and other indexical elements in French, considering them to be very complex. According to this author, the use of the address pronouns can change depending first on the interactional setting and its degree of formality. The relationship between the speaker and the addressee and the degree of deference or intimacy, together with the social identity of the speaker which is made up of a set of beliefs (refinement, social status, political orientation) also play a role. The first and second meanings of the address pronouns are referred to as first level indexicality

whereas the third meaning is referred to as second level indexicality. According to this model, the terms “formal” and “informal” used to describe the pronouns *nous* and *on* (we), *il*, *ils* and *i* (he) point to the first level of indexicality and more precisely to the type of setting the speaker finds him/herself in. But the formal/informal labels prevalent in the sociolinguistic approach can be misleading in suggesting that all these variants function in a similar way. The variation between the informal *tu* and the formal *vous* indicates a multilevel change of setting, relationship and social identity. In the light of this model, it is clear that the use of the pronominal variants *tu/vous* does not solely reflect linguistic knowledge but also sociological and anthropological knowledge.

With this complexity in mind, we can recognize that some situations are less complex than others. Using questionnaires and interviews, Gardner-Chloros (1991: 153) conducted a sociolinguistic study in Alsace (France) on the use of address pronouns by French native speakers. Despite a very complex use of address pronouns, Gardner-Chloros states that some of the situations represent “strict cases” (*cas extrêmes* in French). According to Gardner-Chloros (2019) and others (Havu, 2009; Edmonds & Guesles-Coquelet, 2015), speakers usually use *tu* when addressing a close or intimate friend and *vous* when addressing an unknown older person he/she meets for the first time. In Canadian French, Lyster (1996) shows that in role-play situations, Quebecois adolescent speakers only use *tu* when addressing their peers in most situations such as asking for help or directions. When speaking to an unknown adult, the use of *tu* does not disappear completely but it is rare. Since address pronouns can reflect a desired relationship (DuFon 2010: 310), it is very difficult to predict the use of one variant based on socio- biographical criteria. It would be more appropriate to consider cases where sociologically homogenous speakers addressing an individual have strong preferences for one variant of address pronouns.

Effect of staying in a target language community

This section presents the effect of staying in a target language community on the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation in L2 French.

The acquisition of sociolinguistic variation

Studies on the effect of staying in a French language community have shown that learners use new variants and tend to use them more frequently than they previously did in the language classroom (Howard, Lemée & Regan, 2006). Some studies demonstrate that after staying abroad, learners gain increased use of the inclusive collective pronoun *on* (Sax, 2003; Lemée, 2002; Dewaele, 2002; Howard, 2012) and the informal variant *i* of the 3rd person pronoun (Howard, 2012; Terry, 2016) they also significantly increase their use of the single post-verbal negator *pas* (Regan, 1996; Sax, 2003; Thomas, 2004). These new variants constitute a reduced form of the old ones they previously used. For instance, the informal variants of the 3rd person pronouns are a phonologically elided form, /i/, without the final consonant /l/ for formal variants of the pronoun /il/. The informal variant of the inclusive collective pronoun *on* is not just a lexical variant but also a grammatical variant of the formal variant *nous* because *on* is followed by a singular verbal form which is shorter than the verb form used with *nous*

(for example /pø/vs/puvõ/ for the third person singular and first person plural forms of the verb *pouvoir* [can].

The use of these variants is considered as part of sociolinguistic competence, which is defined as the speaker's ability to make socially appropriate use of linguistic variants. The informal variants have underlying social meanings and are mainly used in spoken French in contexts of low normative pressure as exemplified by Ashby (2001) with the short negation used at a rate of 82 % in his corpus of colloquial conversations in French. Söll (1980) also remarks that since the 1970s, there is an almost exclusive use of the pronoun *on* in standard spoken French. Armstrong (1996) also shows that the deletion rates of /l/ before a consonant is almost systematic for /il/ in L1 French corpora.

However, Dewaele & Regan's (2002) have shown that the use of spoken variants by L2 French learners does not imply appropriate use. Their study of 992 negations produced by 27 Dutch-speaking learners during spoken discussions shows that the informal variant of negation is equally used in informal discussions on topics such as leisure as in formal discussions on topics such as educational studies. In a study of the use of the pronouns *nous* and *on* in spoken and written L2 French by 32 Dutch learners, Dewaele (2002) shows that the rate of use of *on* in their written French is similar to that of spoken French. The above mentioned studies on the effect of study abroad attest to the ability of the learner to acquire informal variants used in the new learning environment and to distinguish them from those used in the classroom without necessarily demonstrating knowledge of the systematic principles of their distribution in native speaker discourse.

The acquisition of the French address pronouns

From a sociological and linguistic perspective, it would be tempting to think that the 2nd person pronouns *tu* and *vous* behave in the same way as other sociolinguistic variants like *on* for the following three reasons. First, both variants of address pronouns occur in distinct social situations. Second, the informal variant *tu* behaves like the informal variant *on*: it is a grammatically singular pronoun that is employed with a shorter verb form than that used with *vous*. Third, Dewaele (2004), Belz & Kinginger (2002) and Kinginger (2008) provide evidence of absence or inappropriate distributional principles of both variants just as is observed with other sociolinguistic variants. In the case of second person pronouns, it means alternation between *tu* and *vous* to address the same interlocutor in the same situation and the overuse of a variant across situations. In the situation addressing a peer with an expected use of *tu*, almost half of the learners alternate between the *tu* and *vous* variants in Dewaele's sociolinguistic study and 25 % of them use only *vous*. However, the comparison of address pronouns with other sociolinguistic variants has a major limitation as well, relating to the much more complex sociological distribution of the address pronouns, that we have already mentioned in the first subsection. Whereas formal variants are usually observed in the discourse of learners studying French in a classroom setting and informal variants in the speech of learners after a stay in the target community, the distribution of address pronouns is not so clear-cut. Many studies carried out in an institutional setting show that both *tu* and *vous* are used by learners whether they have stayed in a French-speaking community or not (Dewaele, 2002, 2004; Kinginger 2008; Van Compernelle et al., 2011). In a corpus made up of face-to-face conversations, Dewaele's (2004) analysis of the use of *tu* and *vous* among 53 L2 French learners enrolled in a French program in a

British university shows that both variants are used by the learners (Dewaele, 2004). In a corpus of computer-mediated conversations between 81 first, second and third-semester French students in the United States, Van Compernelle et al. (2011) also note that *tu* represents 52% of the 1182 tokens of address pronouns. The same observation is made by Belz & Kinginger (2002) in their study of the use of address pronouns by Jennifer, a student who was exposed to French four years in high-school, one year in college and only two weeks in France. They found out that she addresses her French-speaking interlocutor in France with *vous* 12 times and with *tu* 42 times. Several studies conducted in immersion classes in Canada show an overuse of the informal variant among such classroom learners (Lyster & Rebuffot, 2002; Lyster, 1994; Harley, Cummins, Swain & Allen, 1990). All these studies clearly illustrate that the so-called informal variant *tu* is not an emergent sociolinguistic feature after study abroad but a very frequent variant in the so-called formal classroom setting.

In this perspective, study abroad is not an opportunity to learn a new variant but to learn the complex distributional principles of address pronouns. As DuFon (2010: 318) notes “second language classrooms are limited in the types of contexts in which learners can be socialized with respect to address term and appropriate use”. This explains why study abroad or even the collaborative mode of interaction with a French-speaking addressee may have a positive role on the use of address pronouns, for instance on the stabilization of the solidarity function of the pronoun *tu* (Belz & Kinginger, 2002). Based on Morford (1997), Kinginger (2008) also argues from a sociopragmatic perspective that engagement in social interaction is necessary since address pronouns may “point to characteristics of formal or informal settings”, to “the nature of the relationship within power hierarchies of respect, deference or solidarity” and to “the desired social identity of the speaker” at the same time. The use of address pronouns in varied social contexts of interaction in the target community has real social consequences whereas an inappropriate use in the classroom context does not modify the interpersonal relation between students and teachers (Belz & Kinginger, 2002; Dewaele, 2004; Van Compernelle et al., 2011).

There are few studies on the acquisition of address pronouns: Barron (2006) for L2 German, Hassal (2013) for L2 Indonesian and Kinginger (2008) for L2 French. The current assumptions in those studies are that the use of the 2nd person pronouns depends on the setting and the characteristics of the addressee. In fact, the analysis shows that some situations are more problematic than others. In a comprehensive study of the use of the pronouns *tu* and *vous* among 24 American students from different levels of French, aged between 19 and 24, who had spent 4 to 12 years studying French at the time of the study, Kinginger (2008) shows that in a situation such as addressing the mother of a child one babysits (expected use of *vous*), learners consensually reported before and after staying abroad that they would use *vous*. However, in situations such as addressing a French student (expected use of *tu*), almost half of the learners (10 out of 23) declare *vous* as appropriate if it takes place in a canteen and 5 out of 23 if it takes place at a party. In the post-test, none of the learners make this choice in the party situation and only 2 in the canteen situation. In role-play productions, the use of *vous* in addressing an unknown interlocutor and the use of *tu* when addressing a friend are significantly higher in the post-test than in the pre-test. The author therefore argues that the stay in France “served to disambiguate the meaning of the *tu* form as a marker of age-peer solidarity” (Kinger 2008: 42).

Nevertheless, the above-mentioned results also show individual differences before and after a stay abroad. A closer examination may reveal that learners use pronouns for other functions than native speakers would do. Kinginger & Farrell (2004) indicate that learners may re-analyse address pronouns during study abroad to express a desired social identity. They present the case of Benjamin maintaining a motivated distinguished use of *vous* after study abroad. The same result was observed by Barron (2006) in the acquisition of the *du* and *Sie* pronouns in L2 German. This is consistent with Kinginger's suggestion to further investigate individual variation in relation to "the qualities of study-abroad experience as a complement to assessment data" (Kinging 2008: 48).

The role of interaction and exposure to media on the L2 acquisition of sociolinguistic variation

Studies on the use of sociolinguistic variants have developed a variety of tools in order to account for the learner's exposure to the target language outside the classroom, i.e. for the quantity and quality of input. Time spent in a French-speaking environment, length of a stay with a francophone family, frequency of use or of contact with French natives, exposure to TV and radio in French are common factors whose levels are often elicited in questionnaires and interviews in order to investigate the amount and type of French input outside the classroom and the role of social factors on the use of (in)formal sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic variants (Rehner & Mougeon, 1999; Lemée, 2002; Dewaele, 2004). The Language Contact Profile (LCP) is for instance a closed survey developed by Freed, Dewey, Segalowitz & Halter (2004) which aims to precisely document the language practices of learners before and after a stay abroad. The frequency (before) and amount (after) of interaction with native and non-native speakers of the target-language and of other productive and receptive practices like reading newspapers, listening to radio, songs, writing emails are documented in this questionnaire.

Indeed interaction with natives has mostly been cited as a catalyst for the acquisition of sociolinguistic variants. In Dewaele & Regan's (2002) study of 27 Flemish learners of French interviewed in informal and formal situations before and after a stay in France, participation in authentic interaction with native speakers is shown to stimulate the omission of 'ne' more than the intensity and duration of formal instruction. The same conclusion is drawn in Dewaele and Regan's (2001) study of Irish French learners interviewed before and after a stay in France; contact with native speakers of French outside the classroom clearly has a positive influence on the use of the informal variant of negation. More recently, Gautier & Chevrot (2015) have shown that learners engaging in both Anglophone and francophone social networks are more sensitive to sociolinguistic variation and after a stay abroad use formal negation less often than learners having only Anglophone networks. According to Belz & Kinginger (2002) even electronic interaction with natives allow the learners to interact and negotiate social meaning. They found that increased opportunities for telecollaborative interaction led to the disambiguation of the numerous socio-pragmatic meanings of the address pronouns and helped learners to develop a wider range of registers.

Speaking in a broad array of social interactive settings also appears to play an important role in the acquisition of the functions of sociolinguistic variants, for

instance disambiguating the function of address pronouns, understanding the social consequences of mixed or inappropriate use and pushing learners to adjust their own use (Kinginger 2008).

Studies have further reported that media such as radio, television, and films in the target language have a positive effect on the acquisition of sociolinguistic variants (Mougeon et al., (2001; Dewaele, 2002). In his study of Flemish learners of French, Dewaele (2002) emphasizes that these learners had little opportunity to use a vernacular speech style in authentic communication because of the monolingual context offered by the university in which they were enrolled in Belgium. However, they were exposed to different degrees of vernacular French through French songs, comics or film clips during their university studies. Data analysis showed that the amount of exposure to the target language was significantly related to the choice of the vernacular pronoun *on*.

Nevertheless, interaction with native speakers, the variety of interaction settings and frequency of exposure to media are not always the panacea to learning the target language. Magnan & Back (2007) have shown for instance that learners improve in an oral performance test after studying abroad despite having little contact with French speakers. Their improvement in French-speaking ability does not relate either to speaking French with native French speakers, reading French newspapers, watching French films/videos or eavesdropping on other people's conversations in French. The only significant result is that learners using French with classmates have lower performances than those who do not speak French with their classmates. As reported by Briggs (2015), the literature suggests more generally that SA learners experience less interactive out-of-class contact with native speakers than they might have expected. In her study, she also shows that none of the out-of-class factors she identified (watching TV, listening to the radio, watching films and videos) significantly predict vocabulary gain. According to these two studies, study abroad is a theoretical opportunity but not necessarily a practical reality nor a *sine qua non* condition to engage in contact with native speakers of the target community. In very rare cases, interaction with native speakers could also occur in the 'at home' context. For a better understanding of the variation of the quality and quantity of input during the stay abroad and the role thereof on language use, further investigations are needed.

Research questions and hypothesis

Our study seeks to find out whether and how Ghanaian L2 French learners use the two basic relational functions of *tu* and *vous* in Ghana and in France after a stay abroad: the use of *tu* to express a relationship of solidarity to a friend and the use of *vous* to express a relationship of deference to an unknown older person or a known person of higher social status. We formulate the following research questions and hypotheses:

1. Do L2 French learners already using two or more languages without a double second person pronoun prefer the pronoun *tu* for addressing friends and *vous* for addressing an unknown interlocutor or a known interlocutor of a higher social status, regardless of the formality of the setting? We make two assumptions. Firstly, based on previous studies (Dewaele 2004, Kinginger 2008, Van Compernelle et al. 2011), we make the assumption that learners in the Ghana group would overuse the variant *vous* and alternation of pronouns in situations addressing friends. Secondly, we assume that

there will be more learners using the pronouns in an appropriate way among those who spent 9 months in France.

2. How do individual differences relate to intensity of interaction with L1 and L2 French speakers and exposure to a variety of media, i.e. listening to French radio and watching films and TV series in French? We hypothesize that the more learners engage in interaction, listen to the radio and watch films and TV series in French, the better they will master the relational function of the pronouns *tu* and *vous*.

Methodology

This section presents details of our research participants, the task used in data collection as well as the analysis of the data.

Participants

This cross-sectional study involves 24 Ghanaian learners of French and 8 French native speakers as a control group. The 24 Ghanaian learners are made up of 2 groups comprising of 12 learners each. The Ghanaian participants are multilingual speakers having acquired a variety of languages in their family setting. Twi, Fante, Ga and Ewe are the frequent first languages spoken by the participants as shown in table 1. In addition to these languages, our participants speak English which is a language mainly learnt and used at school and sometimes in families. None of the languages that the Ghanaian learners learnt prior to French has a double address pronoun. Twi, Fante, Ga, and Ewe have a single second person pronoun (respectively; *wo*, *ɔwo*, *bo*, *wo*) that is morphologically invariable regardless of grammatical and socio-pragmatic categories: number, case, age, setting, relationship and social status of the interlocutor.

The first group of 12 learners, which we call the Ghana group, had completed 3 years of studying French as part of their bachelor's degree at a university in Ghana. Instruction was in French and English and the classroom was made up of Ghanaian students only. Their average age was 21.1 years and they had spent between 6-16 years learning French. Some participants attended private primary schools where French was taught whereas others only started learning French at junior or senior high school. At the time of data collection in September 2016, 10 of the learners were in Ghana preparing to go to France for a 9 months study abroad and 2 of them had just arrived in France. None of them had been to France prior to that. However, 8 of them had visited some francophone African countries ranging from 3 to 60 days. Among the 12 learners, 10 were placed in a B1 level group and 2 in a B2 level group following a non-standardised placement test conducted at the beginning of their semester in France.

The second group (France group) of 12 learners also consists of students of French at a university in Ghana enrolled in the same program as the Ghana group and who had just completed a 9-month stay in France, studying French at a French University. They had been learning French for between 3 and 16 years learning French. 7 out of the 12 learners in the France group had studied French for 3 or 4 years. Nevertheless we have reasons to expect that there is some bias since 3 years of French learning at senior high school is required to study French at the university in Ghana. The minimal duration of learning French should therefore be at least 6 years. The reason why learners report less than the reality may be that they overlook the pre-university years of studying

French that are usually considered by Ghanaian learners as not efficient. While in France, they took French language courses at the university for 18 to 20 hours per week. Just like the Ghana group, they were also placed in different language level groups based on a test conducted at the beginning of their semester in France. At the time of data collection, 9 of them were in B2 and 3 of them were in B1. Instruction was in French and the classrooms were composed of students with different first languages. None of them had ever been to France before their arrival but 3 of them had visited francophone African countries. Their average age at the time of recording in May 2016 was 22.4 years.

		Ghana Group n=12	France Group n=12
Age		M=22.1, range 20-23	M=22.4, range 21-24
Years of learning French		M=11.75, range 6-16	M= 6.83, range 3-16
Level		BA, 3 rd year B1 (10) B2 (2)	BA, 4 th year B1 (10), A2 (2)
Languages			
	Twi, English	3	4
	Fante, Twi, English	4	2
	Ga, Twi, English	2	3
	Ewe, Twi, English	1	2
	Bono, Twi, English	0	1
	Kasem, Twi, English	1	0
	Hausa, Twi, English	1	0
Stay in a French-speaking African country		8/12	3/12
Length of stay (days)		3-60	28-42

TABLE 1. L2 French Learners

The two groups of learners are comparable due to the fact that they both followed the same university program in Ghana. Due to a possible bias in the self reported number of years of studying French, we decided to focus on the level the learners were assigned to after their placement test in the university in France. This assessment is not a standardized but a local placement test, which is used every year to place the new students into different levels following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The test consists of three parts: an oral comprehension, a written comprehension and an interview with an examiner.

The control group (L1 French) is made up of 8 L1 French students (7 females and 1 male) aged between 20-21 years and completing a bachelor's degree at the French university where the study was conducted. They are all English language learners and speak at least another foreign language that they learnt at school from age 12.

Task

The corpus used in this study is made up of oral responses to a closed role-play elicitation task, sometimes called Oral Discourse Completion Task, consisting of 2 sets of 4 situations each. The first set required the learner to address a friend (a recent or long time friend) in various request situations. The second set required the learner to address an unknown person or a known person of a higher social status (vice-chancellor, secretary, cashier, passer-by) in a variety of request situations. The detailed description of the situations was written in French on cards. The instructions for the task were given in English to ensure maximum comprehension of the procedure. The learner's task was to pick the cards, read the situation and role-play it in French. Due to the fact that the cards were shuffled each time, the order of responses to the task was different for each learner. The answers were recorded and orthographically transcribed with Exmaralda (Schmidt & Wörner, 2009).

Situations	Relationship	Setting	Social identity = student
S1	Close friend	phone	in distress
S2	Recent friend	phone	inviting
S3	Old friend	phone	in need of a book
S4	Childhood friend	phone	organising a party
S5	Vice-chancellor, known and high social rank	student party	in need of information
S6	Service encounter, unknown	station	client
S7	Secretary, known and higher social rank	phone	in need of information
S8	Passer-by, unknown	in a street	in need of help

TABLE 2. Description of the role-play situations in terms of relationship between speaker and interlocutor, setting and social identity.

Questionnaire

A shorter version of the Language Contact Profile (Freed, Dewey, Segalowitz & Halter, 2004) was used to examine how much the learners are exposed to French outside the classroom in Ghana and in France. We maintained only 4 background questions and reduced the questions on interaction and exposure to media to 6 questions. For the purpose of this study, we focused on 4 individual variables:

- (1) Interaction in French with L1 French speakers

- (2) Interaction in French with L2 French speaker
- (3) Listening to radio in French
- (4) Watching films and TV series in French

As mentioned in previous studies, interaction in the second language are opportunities to use address pronouns, while listening to radio (potentially interviews) or watching films and series are opportunities to hear the use of address pronouns in a variety of situations.

In all the situations, the learners were asked if they engaged in such activities and if so, at what rate per day based on a fixed scale: not at all (0), less than one hour per day (1), between 1 and 3 hours per day (2), between 3 and 6 hours per day (3), more than 6 hours per day (4). They were also asked to mention the type of radio they listen to and the films/series they watch.

Analysis

In the analysis of the oral productions, we observed whether the participant uses either only *tu* or only *vous*, or alternates between *tu* and *vous* for each request. Our dependent variable (address pronoun) has 4 different levels, only *tu* as in the case of example (1), only *vous* as in (2), *tu* and *vous* as in (3) and none as in (4).

- (1) G9, Ghana Group, Situation 4, to a friend

Je t'inviter et je veux t'inviter pour venir avec moi pour venir avec moi
I invite you and I want to invite you to come with me to come with me

- (2) G12, Ghana Group, situation 6, to the cashier

Salut madame s'il vous plaît **vous** avez me donner le /bilat/ pour Accra Sunyani
mais (..) donc em pouvez-**vous** me changer pour **vous** changer pour moi
Hi Madam, please you gave me a ticket for Accra-Sunyani but (..) so em can you
change for me change for you change for me

- (3) G11, Ghana Group, situation 3, to a friend

Bonjour erm j'ai besoin de **ton** livre de culture français (...) est-ce que **vous** pouvez
me **vous** pouvez me prêter
Good morning, I need your French culture book (...) can you can you lend it to me?

- (4) G1, Ghana Group, situation 1, to a friend

...et maintenant je voudrais je voudrais /murie/ donc on y va à promener à la mall
oui
...and now I would I would like to die so let's go for a walk at the mall yes

The formulae *s'il vous plaît* and *s'il te plaît* (please) were not counted as a productive use of the pronouns since it is assumed that they are learnt as non-compositional units (Holtinen, 2017).

The analysis of address pronouns is based on 64 responses from our L1 French respondents and 190 responses from our L2 French respondents. With each learner responding to all 8 situations, the total number of responses is supposed to be 192. However, 2 of the learners responded to only 7 situations.

In order to analyse the questionnaires and establish learner profiles based on their productive and receptive practices of using French outside the classroom, we conducted a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) using FactominR (Josse & Husson 2008). We chose this data-mining tool because it looks for the variability between individuals in a multidimensional way. The MCA aims to show the similarities and differences between individuals, and thus identify profiles or groups of individuals behaving in the same way given qualitative variables and their modalities. Also, the

MCA gives a visual representation of the relevant variables (represented by crosses) and individuals (represented by small spheres). The advantage of the MCA is that, first, it is based on a factor analysis using more than two qualitative variables. Second, the spatial distribution of individuals on a map gives the reader an immediate and also complex image of the way individuals oppose and connect with each other.

Results

We seek to find out whether the formality of the setting of interaction has an effect on the use of the French address pronouns by the L2 French learners, half of whom have spent 9 months in France. We postulated that there will be more learners using the pronouns in an appropriate way in the France group than in the Ghana group, minimising overuse of the *vous* variant and alternation of the pronouns in situations addressing friends. We also assume that the more learners are engaged in TL interaction, listening to the radio and watching films and TV series in French, the better they will approximate the relational function of the pronouns *tu* and *vous*.

The use of *tu* and *vous* in L2 French

In the L2 French data, *tu* is used by the L2 learners in most of the situations (66 out of 95, cf. Table 3). We observe pronoun alternation in 18 of the situations. *Vous* is used exclusively in 8 situations, and lastly, no pronoun is used in 3 of the situations.

		Address pronouns			
		tu	vous	tu + vous	none
L2		66	8	18	3
n=95					
	Ghana	29	5	11	3
	n=48				
	France	37	3	7	0
	n=47				
Control (L1)		31	0	1	0
n=32					

TABLE 3. Number of occurrences of *tu*, *vous*, *tu + vous* and no pronoun in situations addressing a friend in L1 and L2, in the Ghana and France groups.

When addressing a friend, the L1 French speakers employ the pronoun *tu* in 31 out of 32 of the situations. It is only in one situation that the speaker alternates between *tu* and *vous* in the same utterance. He starts by using *tu* (*si j'pouvais t'emprunter un livre/* if i could borrow you a book) and surprisingly switches to *vous* (*ben si vous m'le prêtez/* hm if you lend it me) and then, to *tu* again (*ben j'te l'rendrai/* hm I will return it to you). A Fisher exact test shows that in the situations addressing friends, the distribution of the

types of pronouns is dependent on the group, L1 vs L2, in a significant way ($p = 0.0176$). Thus, the use of the address pronouns is significantly different between the L1 and L2 speakers.

In situations addressing an unknown interlocutor, *vous* is exclusively used in 27 out of 32 situations in L1 French (see Table 4). No address pronoun is used in the remaining 5 situations. In L2 French, a similar tendency is observed: *vous* is used exclusively in the majority of situations (60 out of 95), followed by no address pronoun in 17 situations. Also, *tu* is exclusively used in 12 situations and lastly, *tu* and *vous* are alternated in 6 situations.

		Address pronouns			
		tu	vous	tu + vous	none
L2		12	60	6	17
n=95					
	Ghana	3	31	5	8
	n=47				
	France	9	29	1	9
	n=48				
L1		0	27	0	5
n=32					

TABLE 4. Number of use of *tu*, *vous*, *tu + vous* and no pronoun in situations addressing an unknown interlocutor in L1 and L2, in the Ghana and France groups.

The comparison of use in the L1 and L2 using Fisher's exact test shows that in addressing an unknown interlocutor the distribution of pronouns depends significantly on the L1/L2 status of the speaker ($p = 0.04524$). To sum up, even though L2 French learners seem to use *tu* and *vous* in a similar way as L1 speakers when addressing a friend or an unknown interlocutor, there are significant differences between L1 and L2 use.

The use of *tu* and *vous* in the Ghana and France L2 groups

In the 'friend' situations, learners in the France group use the pronoun *tu* in 37 situations out of 47 whereas the learners in the Ghana group use *tu* in only 29 out of the 48 situations (Table 3). The use of no pronoun is exclusive to the Ghana group. However, Fisher's exact test of the global distribution of address pronoun types in all situations shows that the distribution of address pronouns is independent of the group (p -value = 0.1695).

In the situations addressing an unknown interlocutor, the France group uses *vous* a little less than the Ghana group (29 situations out of 48, against 31 out of 47). *Tu* is, however, used more in 9 situations against 3 (see table 4). In other words, when faced with an unknown interlocutor, the learners who had just completed a stay in France

generally use less *vous* and consequently, more *tu* than the learners in the Ghana group. However, Fisher's exact test shows that despite this tendency, the distribution of pronouns in these situations is independent of the group, Ghana vs France ($p = 0.1318$). Whether the learner is addressing a friend or an unknown interlocutor, the comparative analysis of the address pronouns, based on the two groups shows that the use of the address pronouns is not significantly different from one group to the other. This result could suggest that staying abroad does not significantly influence the use of address pronouns.

However, the group results hide important individual differences in the use of pronouns that can be observed in table 5. In the Ghana group for instance, Learners G8 and G9 systematically use *tu* when addressing a friend and *vous* or no pronoun when addressing an unknown interlocutor whereas G5 or G6, often alternate between *tu* and *vous* in the same situation and also use *vous* in addressing friends and *tu* in addressing unknown interlocutors. Based on previous studies, such individual differences may depend on individual language practices such as the volume of interaction in French (with L1 French and L2 French speakers) outside the classroom and the volume of passive exposure to radio, films and TV series in French.

Addressing...								
		a friend				an unknown interlocutor		
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
G1	none	vous	tu + vous	tu + vous	vous	tu	vous	vous
G2	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	tu + vous	vous
G3	tu	none	tu	tu	vous	none	vous	none
G4	vous	tu + vous	tu	tu + vous	vous	tu	vous	vous
G5	tu	tu + vous	tu + vous	tu + vous	vous	tu + vous	vous	tu
G6	tu	tu	tu + vous	vous	tu + vous	tu + vous	none	vous
G7	tu	tu	none	tu	vous	none	vous	none
G8	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	vous
G9	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	vous
G10	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	none

G11	vous	tu + vous	tu + vous	vous	vous	none	tu + vous	none
G12	tu + vous	tu	tu	tu	NA	vous	vous	vous
F13	vous	tu + vous	tu	tu + vous	vous	none	none	vous
F14	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	tu + vous	tu	tu
F15	tu	tu	tu	tu + vous	vous	tu	none	tu
F16	NA	tu + vous	tu + vous	tu	vous	vous	none	vous
F17	tu	tu	tu	tu + vous	vous	vous	vous	vous
F18	tu	tu	tu	tu	tu	tu	none	tu
F19	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	vous
F20	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	vous
F21	tu	tu	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	tu
F22	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	none	none	tu
F23	vous	vous	tu + vous	tu	none	vous	none	vous
F24	tu	tu	tu	tu	vous	vous	vous	vous

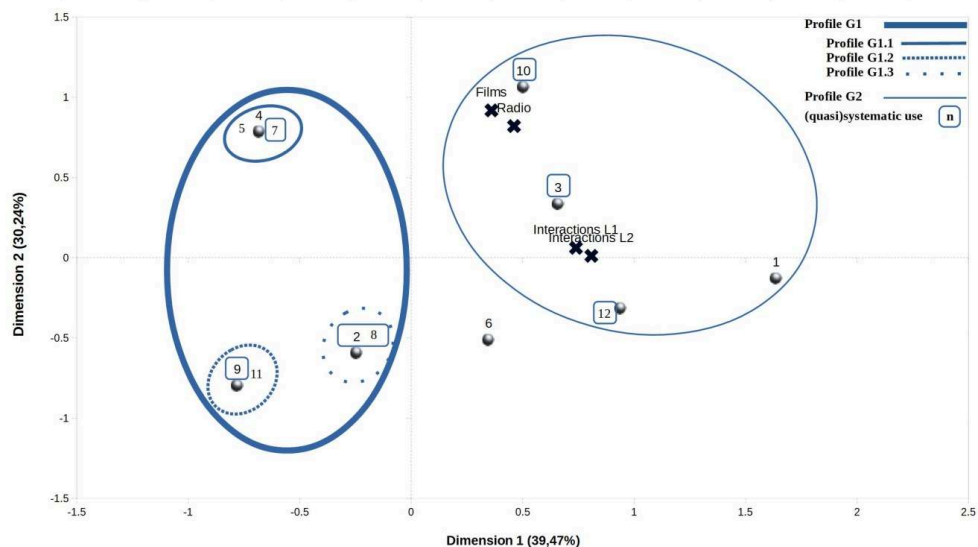
TABLE 5. Individual use of address pronouns in each situation (S) by learners of the Ghana (G) and France (F) groups.

The effect of individual variables on the use of address pronouns in L2 French

On the individual maps (see graph 1 and 2), we used ellipses to create profiles but in fact there are no frontiers between the individuals. In answering our question on volume of interaction, the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) allows us to identify learners who have the same or different amounts of interaction in French and passive exposure to French. Then we verify if the profiles of practices overlap with profiles of use of address pronouns. This is an exploratory method to answer the question of whether there is a relation between use of address pronouns and language practices.

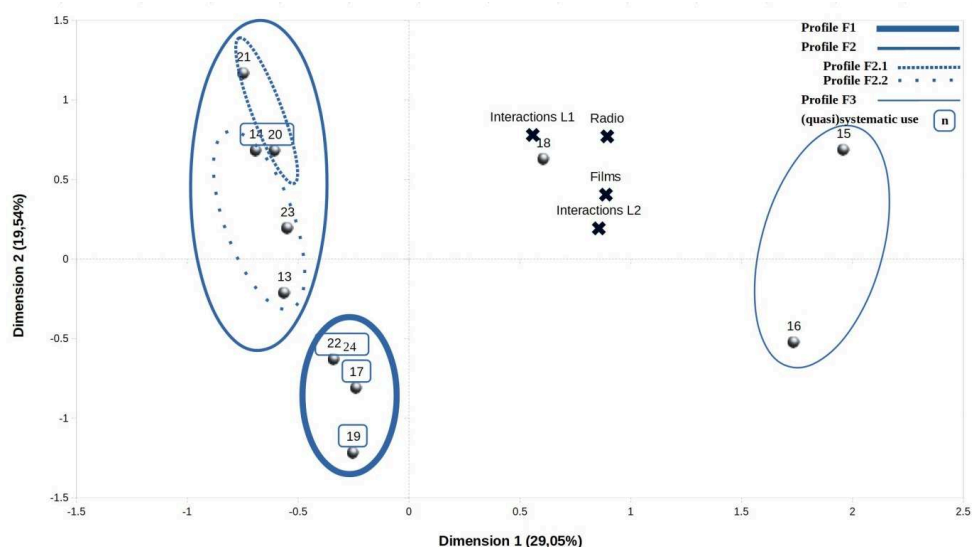
We used 4 variables to build profiles of French practices: L1 interaction (daily volume of interaction in French with L1 speakers), L2 interaction (daily volume of interaction in

French with L2 speakers), radio (daily listening to French radio), films (daily watching of French films and TV series). Since the MCA shows differences in the language practices in the two groups, the learner profiles in the Ghana and France groups are presented separately. The two dimensions explain 69.7 % of the total variability in the Ghana group and 48.6 % in the France group. The dimensions are the central axis organizing the map of individuals who are distributed on both sides. A dimension is an axis on which variables and modalities are projected. Each dimension represents a part of the variation between individuals. The higher the part of variation the dimension explains, the higher the reliability of the MCA. This means that the distribution of learners is more reliable on Graph 1 than on Graph 2. On each individual map, individuals having the same amount of receptive and interactive practices are represented with ellipsis and individuals having a (quasi) systematic use of pronouns are represented with a square. (Quasi) systematic use means the use of *tu* for friends and *vous* or no pronoun for an unknown person or a known person with a higher social status in at least 3 out of 4 situation types (friend vs. unknown adult).



GRAPH 1. Ghana group: Multiple Correspondence Analysis of L1 interaction, L2 interaction, exposition to Radio and Films.

In the Ghana group, almost all learners report having less than one hour of interaction in French. Interaction is with L2 speakers in the first subgroup whereas in the second subgroup, it is with L1 French speakers (less than one hour per day). Only one learner reports having no interaction in French outside the language class. With regard to listening to radio, watching films and TV series in French, there are diverse profiles. For instance, some report engaging in such activities for less than an hour per day while others report not engaging in any of these receptive practices. One major observation is that the (quasi)-systematic appropriate use of address pronouns is not clearly linked to productive and receptive French practices. 3 out of 4 learners who report neither listening to the radio in French nor watching films and TV series in French have (quasi)-systematic use of the address pronouns. On the contrary, the single individual who reports listening to the radio in French between 1 and 3 hours per day, which is comparatively an intensive exposure, does not demonstrate appropriate use of the address pronouns.



GRAPH 2. France group: Multiple Correspondence Analysis of L1 interaction, L2 interaction, exposition to Radio and Films

In the France group, the minimum value and magnitude of exposure to French is higher, for both interaction and receptive practices. All students, unlike those in the Ghana group, report interacting daily in French with L1 and L2 speakers. However, the language practices of the group are more heterogeneous. There are three subgroups of individuals, depending on the amount of interaction in the L1 and L2. In terms of listening to radio and watching movies and TV series, the practices are more heterogeneous as well. For instance, three individuals (15,16,18) belong to the same profile because they interact a lot with L1 and L2 French speakers and two of them (15,16) report intensive listening to radio (at least between three and six hours a day). Based on the four criteria of the MCA, the three individuals in this subgroup represent learners with the highest degree of exposure to French. Nevertheless the learners who use the address pronouns appropriately, be they in the Ghana or the France group are not necessarily the most exposed to French. For example, the three individuals 15, 16, 18 in the France group do not have an appropriate use of the address pronouns. On the other hand, the four individuals 17,19, 22, 24 who belong to a subgroup with much less contact with French have a (quasi) systematic use of the address pronouns.

Discussion

The aim of this cross-sectional study was to gain insight into the possible impact of studying abroad on the acquisition of the two basic relational functions of the French address pronouns, *tu* for solidarity with friends and *vous* for deference with an unknown person or a known person with higher social status (Morford, 1997).

We first examined if L2 French multilingual learners already using two or more languages without a double second person pronoun prefer the pronoun *tu* for addressing friends and *vous* for addressing an unknown interlocutor or a known interlocutor of a higher social status, regardless of the formality of the setting. Based on previous studies (Dewaele 2004, Kinginger 2008, Van Compernelle et al. 2011), we made the assumption that learners in the Ghana group would overuse the variant *vous* and alternate between both pronouns in situations addressing friends. We also

postulated that there would be more learners using the pronouns in an appropriate way among those who spent 9 months in France.

The results confirm the hypothesis that the acquisition of the relational value of address pronouns is not yet acquired since the use of the pronouns by the Ghanaian L2 French learners is significantly different from that of the control group (L1 French). Although the pronoun *tu* is mainly used to address a friend and the pronoun *vous* to address an unknown interlocutor or a known one of a different social rank, several cases of alternation of pronouns, the use of the *tu* in place of *vous* and vice-versa were observed among some learners just as in previous studies (Dewaele, 2004; Belz & Kinginger, 2002; Lyster & Rebuffot, 2002; Kinginger, 2008; Van Compernelle et al., 2011). A small part of the alternation of pronouns may be due to the role-play task since alternation of pronouns was also observed in the L1 French data. One L1 French speaker switches from *tu* to *vous* in the same sentence in a request to a friend. This may be because the role-play exercise is a cognitively demanding task not only for L2 speakers (Kinginger 2008) but also for L1 speakers as Lyster (2006) remarked. Moreover, the choice of the appropriate address pronoun relies in part on the physical characteristics of the interlocutor and presupposes a real communicative and social challenge (Dewaele 2004, Kinginger 2008, Van Compernelle et al. 2011). These two conditions are only partially met in the role-play task. There are some cases of using 'no pronoun' to address an unknown interlocutor as L1 French speakers do, but also to a friend, which was not identified in the L1 French data. The lack of pronoun when addressing a friend therefore appears to deviate from native use. On the other hand, we observe that the use of *vous* and pronominal alternation is more frequent in addressing friends than the use of *tu* and pronominal alternation in addressing an unknown interlocutor. This seems to indicate an acquisitional difficulty concerning the relational function of the pronoun *tu*, as other studies have shown (Dewaele 2004, Kinginger 2008, Van Compernelle et al. 2011). Among other reasons, a phonological influence of English may favor the use of *vous* as a default address pronoun. This may be due to the multilingual lexicon of the Ghanaian learners since the spoken form of this variant /vu/ ends in the same vowel /u/ as the single English address pronoun you /ju/.

The contrastive analysis of address pronouns used in the "friend" and "unknown adult" situations among the 24 speakers of L2 French, those who studied French at university for three years and those who, in addition, had spent 9 months of study in France, does not support the hypothesis that more learners in the group who spent 9 months in France would have an appropriate use of the address pronouns and have acquired their basic relational function. The comparison of the distributions indicates that *tu* is more frequently used to address a friend in the France group (in 37 out of 48 situations) than in the Ghana group (29 situation out of 47) while *vous* is used in a similar proportion in the two groups (respectively 29/48 for France group and 31/47 for Ghana group).

Several explanations are possible. Firstly, the two variants of the pronouns are used by both groups of learners, in particular by learners preparing to study abroad. The role-play scenarios in the present study probed knowledge of the basic first-taught principles for choice of *tu* or *vous*. Secondly, despite overall differences with the L1 French speakers, several learners of this group have acquired the basic relational function of the address pronouns. Thirdly, some learners in the Ghana group report having contact in French with L1 speakers outside the classroom. Lastly, for the Ghanaian learners, staying in France is not an opportunity to acquire new variants but

an opportunity to engage in a variety of contact situations and confirm the relational values of the address pronouns.

From this point of view, it is not surprising that the use of pronouns is similar between the two groups of learners. This hypothesis would have been especially plausible if the conditions of learning French in Ghana and in France were the same. Although in theory, the stay in France is an opportunity for the learners to be exposed to a wide use of address pronouns in a variety of situations, in reality, the impact of study abroad on language skills is determined by social and language practices learners engage in and the overall quality of experience abroad (Kinginger 2008, Howard 2012). Conversely, the quality of learning French in the 'at home' context may account for the differences or similarities between the two groups (see Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey 2004). Therefore, we looked at 4 conditions in Ghana and France, making it possible to compare the two groups and overcome the cross-sectional gap of this study. According to our second hypothesis, which is inspired by the studies of Belz and Kinginger (2002), Kinginger (2008) and Van Compernelle et al. (2011), the more a learner is engaged in interaction with peers and native speakers in French, listens to the radio, watches films and TV series in French, the better the relational function of the pronouns *tu* and *vous* is mastered. Due to the fact that learners' use of address pronouns is not significantly different in the two groups, we assume that contact with French may be similar in both groups and that, individual differences would account for different receptive and productive practices in French.

However, the results of the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) show that the language exposure practices of the learners in both groups are different. The profiling in terms of interaction, radio and films show that on average, the learners in the France group engage in more interaction, listen more to radio and watch more movies and TV series than the learners in the Ghana group. However, the comparison of the use of address pronouns across different learner profiles confirms the absence of any relationship between the volume of interaction in French (with L1 or L2 speakers), contact with French through the media and the acquisition of the relational function of the address pronouns in the situations examined. This comparison confirms that the average difference in the volume of interaction in French has no impact on the use of address pronouns by the L2 French learners.

Conclusion

This study does not support the hypothesis that the more learners are exposed to French, the more they master sociolinguistic variants. No significant difference was found between the Ghana and the France learners who are exposed either actively to the use of *tu* and *vous* through varied interaction in French and/or passively through listening to dialogues on radio, in films and TV series. The individual differences in the use of the address pronouns, unlike those observed in the use of other informal sociolinguistic variants, are not due to the differences in exposure and practices in the target language. Other measures of the quality and quantity of input may lead to different results. The number of years studying French proved to be a less relevant measure because of a self-reporting bias but it would be interesting to make a quantitative and qualitative analysis of both variants *tu* and *vous* (singular and plural) in the classroom and in the textbooks in Ghana and France in the way Nadasdi,

Mougeon and Rehner (2003) did in their study of the use of future-time variants by Anglophone L2 French learners. Lyster (1994) explained the exclusive use of *tu* by Canadian immersion learners as reflecting the dominant use of this variant in the classroom. In the Ghana and France classroom, we may expect that the use of singular *vous* is more frequent but it still depends on individual teachers' attitudes toward learners, considering their relation as solidarity or deference. Hence the importance of Morford's (1997) model which allows the comparison of sociolinguistic variants based on their level of indexicality, i.e. whether they express the (in)formality of the setting, the degree of deference and/or intimacy of the relationship between the speaker and the addressee, and the speaker's social identity. While the pronouns *nous* or *il* only have a setting function (they are used in the language class or in a formal setting), the address pronoun has a triple function, which explains its complex and perilous use (Dewaele & Planchenault 2006), both in L2 and in L1 French. Its complexity explains why prolonged immersion in the L2 community does not necessarily lead to appropriate use. The results are in line with Briggs' (2005) study on vocabulary acquisition and Magnan and Back's (2007) study on oral proficiency but may have different explanations. Magnan & Back (2007) show that in general, the improvement of their Anglophone learner's French-speaking ability is not a result of speaking French with native French speakers. Speaking French with classmates even had a significant negative effect on their oral performance. Our analysis is not so clear-cut. The MCA in our study did not indicate that systematic and quasi-systematic use of address pronouns relates to one input profile in the Ghana group. In the France group however, the two learners who report having a lot of daily interaction with L2 speakers, and being exposed to a high amount of media (radio, films) surprisingly do not use the address pronouns in an appropriate way. But the overall situation is very complex since "good" address pronoun users are distributed in different profile categories. The only profile category containing only proficient pronoun users is the category of those who are exposed to radio and films less than three hours a week and also, speaking French with L1 speakers for one to three hours a day and less than three hours a day with L2 speakers.

The study of address pronouns in L2 French reminds us of the need to consider the learner's use of the social deixis in relation to his or her experience as a social being (Belz and Kinginger 2002, Kinginger 2008, Edmonds & Guesles-Coquelet 2015). Future studies should investigate the use of the address pronouns in relation to the attitudes of the learners toward the sociopragmatic norm and to the socialization in the new language community.

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APPENDIXES

Annexe

Addressing ...	Situation	Content of role-play cards
a friend		
	1	Imagine que tu as eu une mauvaise journée. Appelle un de tes amis et informe le que tu as passé une mauvaise journée et profite pour lui demander s'il/elle veut faire une promenade dans un parc avec toi.
	2	Appelle un ami que tu as rencontré il y a un mois. Vous avez passé un peu de temps ensemble, tu connais alors son plat préféré. Suggère lui d'aller au restaurant pour manger son plat préféré. Fixe aussi l'heure du rendez-vous.

	3	Tu as besoin d'un livre pour ton projet et un très bon ami à toi, que tu connais depuis 4 ans, le possède. Appelle le et informe le que tu as besoin qu'il te prête ce livre. Informe le du nombre de jours dont tu as besoin. S'il est d'accord pour te le prêter, donne lui le jour et l'heure à laquelle tu lui rendras le livre.
	4	Appelle ton amie de jeunesse. Aujourd'hui, elle a 20 ans et tu veux l'inviter à une fête chez toi. Donne lui toutes les indications pour qu'elle vienne facilement chez toi.
an unknown person		
	5	Tu rencontres le vice chancelier de ton université pour la première fois à une fête organisée pour souhaiter la bienvenue aux nouveaux étudiants. Tu te mets à parler avec lui et tu lui demandes le processus pour faire une demande de bourse et les jours où il est disponible
	6	Tu es à la gare avec l'intention de voyager de Paris à Nantes. La caissière fait une erreur. Elle te donne un billet de Paris à Lyon. Dis lui qu'elle a fait une erreur et demande lui l'heure exacte du départ du train.
	7	Tu appelles la secrétaire qui gère le logement des étudiants. Elle a 50 ans. Demande lui le prix d'une chambre pour un semestre ainsi que les documents à fournir pour la demande. Tu lui demandes aussi quand tu pourras passer à son bureau.
	8	Tu rencontres quelqu'un pour la première fois dans la rue. Tu cherches une boulangerie. Demande à cette personne où se trouve la boulangerie.

Table 6. Content of role-play cards

NOTES

1. In the mental lexicon of a multilingual speaker, lexical access is not language selective and morphemes such as address pronouns may be connected on the basis of shared phonological properties. As De Bot (2004:24) notes 'shared forms at the phonological level tend to co-activate elements from different languages'. Therefore, the use of *vous* /vu/ in French could be favoured due to the non inhibition of English /yu/.

ABSTRACTS

This study focuses on the acquisition of the two basic relational functions of the French address pronouns: *tu* for solidarity with friends and *vous* for deference with an unknown person or a

known person with higher social status. Previous research (e.g. Kinginger & Farrell, 2004; Kinginger, 2008) has found that L2 learners of French become more target-like in their choice between *tu* and *vous* when they spend time in a French community. This is due to the fact that study-abroad offers L2 learners exposure to naturalistic interaction involving native speakers of the target language. Our study reports findings from a cross-sectional study of language practices outside the classroom and the productive use of the pronouns in a role-play task by 24 Ghanaian L2 French learners. Half of them had learnt L2 French in Ghana while the other half had spent 9 additional months in France. The findings show that the distribution of address pronouns in L2 French is significantly different from the distribution of address pronouns in L1 French. But there are no significant differences between the two groups of learners. The analysis of reported language practices, interaction with native and non-native speakers and exposure to radio and films in both contexts show that appropriate use of address pronouns is not related to the amount of interaction outside the classroom or exposure to media, be they in the 'at home' context or during study abroad context. This study suggests that factors other than exposure are at play in the acquisition of the relational function of address pronouns.

Cette étude porte sur l'acquisition des deux fonctions relationnelles élémentaires des pronoms d'adresse en français: la fonction de solidarité du pronom *tu* dans l'adresse à un ami et la fonction de déférence de *vous* dans l'adresse à une personne inconnue ou connue et de rang social plus élevé (Morford, 1997). Des recherches ont montré que les apprenants de L2 emploient les pronoms *tu* et *vous* de façon plus appropriée après avoir séjourné dans une communauté francophone (voir, entre autres, Kinginger & Farrell, 2004; Kinginger, 2008). Ces résultats rejoignent un présupposé fréquent selon lequel le séjour immersif permet d'une part une exposition à des interactions authentiques qui impliquent des locuteurs natifs de la langue cible et d'autre part des occasions de participer à de telles interactions. Notre étude analyse l'usage des pronoms et les pratiques langagières hors de la classe de 24 apprenants ghanéens de français L2. La moitié d'entre eux a étudié le français pendant au moins trois ans à l'université tandis que l'autre moitié a, en plus, passé 9 mois en France. Les résultats montrent que la distribution des pronoms d'adresse en français L2 est, quel que soit le destinataire, significativement différente de celle observée en français L1. Quant aux usages des deux groupes, avec et sans séjour en France, ils ne sont pas significativement différents. L'analyse des pratiques langagières hors de la classe (interactions avec les locuteurs natifs et non natifs et exposition à la radio et à des films en français) montre que l'usage approprié des pronoms d'adresse ne dépend pas du volume d'interactions en dehors de la classe ni du volume d'exposition audiovisuelle au français, que ce soit dans le groupe vivant au Ghana ou dans celui ayant séjourné 9 mois en France. Cette étude suggère ainsi que d'autres facteurs sont en jeu dans l'acquisition de la fonction relationnelle élémentaire des pronoms d'adresse en français L2.

INDEX

Mots-clés: pronoms d'adresse, fonction relationnelle, français L2, apprenants ghanéens, séjour immersif, interactions, exposition audiovisuelle.

Keywords: address pronouns, relational function, L2 French, Ghanaian learners, study-abroad, interaction, exposure to media

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