Sociolinguistic Agency in the Learning and Teaching of Regional Variation:
Revisiting Pedagogical Norms

June Ruivivar

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By: June Ruivivar

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Signed by the final examining committee:

_____ Chair
Teresa Hernandez-Gonzalez

_____ External Examiner
Suzie Beaulieu

_____ External to Program
Denis Liakin

_____ Examiner
Walcir Cardoso

_____ Examiner
Sara Kennedy

_____ Thesis Supervisor (s)
Laura Collins

Approved by

_____ Chair of Department
Sara Kennedy

_____ Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Pascale Sicotte

September 11, 2020

Date of Defence

ABSTRACT

Sociolinguistic Agency in the Learning and Teaching of Regional Variation:
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June Ruivivar, Ph.D. (ABD)

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Pedagogical norms aim to guide the selection of language features to be taught in second language (L2) classrooms. In the case of regional language varieties, recommendations include teaching features that are widely used and valued by the language community, and that support overall linguistic development. This dissertation considers the place of sociolinguistic agency, or learners' willingness to adopt L2 sociolinguistic conventions, within this pedagogical norm. It consists of three studies investigating social and affective challenges in the acquisition of features typical of Quebec French, and potential pedagogical solutions to these challenges.

Study One compared native and near-native speakers' use and understanding of the *-tu* interrogative, a typical QF vernacular feature. Ten dyads consisting of native and near-native speakers completed tasks in casual, semi-controlled, and controlled situations, and a short interview probing their awareness and understanding of QF question variation. Although the near-native speakers were familiar with *-tu*, they significantly underused it compared to native speakers and tended to do so within fixed (lexicalized) expressions.

Study Two investigated possible socio-affective explanations to the results of Study One by examining the effects of engagement and social networks on sociolinguistic performance. Twenty-one advanced QF learners completed a social network questionnaire and a sociolinguistic interview, which provided data on engagement and sociolinguistic performance. Sociolinguistic performance varied according to type of feature, engagement, and satisfaction with network support. Use of informal features (first-person *on* and *ne* deletion) correlated

positively with high engagement. The colloquial vernacular *-tu* was virtually absent, and the non-colloquial vernacular, subject doubling, correlated with social network satisfaction. Perceptions of QF and attitudes towards the QF community also appeared to play a role.

Study Three is a registered report presenting the theoretical framework, design, and methodology for a classroom study examining the effects of concept-based instruction on learners' understanding, appropriateness judgments, and use of sociolinguistic agency. The study illustrates how sociolinguistic agency might be promoted in the classroom.

The research reported on in this dissertation demonstrates the value of adding an agentive criterion to the pedagogical norm. This criterion underscores the importance of considering learners' identities, attitudes, and perceptions of the regional variety in pedagogical decisions on which features to teach and how. The findings offer suggestions for developing and applying the agentive criterion and for the teaching and study of sociolinguistic variation.

Acknowledgements

I began this doctoral program feeling like an inexperienced runner who had stumbled onto the starting line of an elite marathon. I was convinced it was only a matter of time before I stopped running and hobbled home. This turned out to be half true: there was indeed a lot of hobbling, but I surprised myself by staying on course. I owe the completion of this race to the wonderful community of mentors, colleagues, friends, and family who cheered me on, pushed me forward, and when necessary, carried me on their backs.

I would like to start with my supervisor, Laura Collins, whose contributions go far beyond the contents of this dissertation. She has patiently supported the many twists and turns my research has taken over the years and offered thoughtful questions and encouraging words every step of the way. She has also provided me with opportunities to teach, share my work, and serve the academic community, for which I will always be grateful. I have grown tremendously as a teacher, scholar, and person under her guidance. My committee members, Sara Kennedy and Walcir Cardoso, have generously offered advice and encouragement at every stage of my program. I have greatly benefited from their scholarly expertise during my coursework and comprehensive exams, and their kindness and patience in helping me navigate the many obstacles in the final writing stages.

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but most of all, I am grateful for your friendship. You have made the tough times better and the good times unforgettable.

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This achievement belongs as much to me as to Frank Perrin, and not only because he has read enough drafts and sat through enough run-throughs to defend this dissertation in my place. Thank you for trusting me, loving me, and getting me out of bed (or out of the lab) on days that I could do none of those things myself. I look forward to the rest of our life together.

I have come to realize that unlike a marathon, my take-aways from these last three years need not be defined by a finish line; and that the most important outcome is not so much a completed dissertation (or sore feet), but an appreciation of what it truly means to do meaningful work. Whatever this dissertation produces, my hope is that it does justice to the love and support that I have received from everyone on this list, and contributes in some way to a better understanding of language, pedagogy, and society.

Contribution of Authors

All three studies in this dissertation are sole-authored. Walcir Cardoso and Sara Kennedy advised on the design of instruments, analyses, and reporting for Studies One and Two, respectively. The literature review for Study Three uses data from an unpublished meta-synthesis conducted under the supervision of Laura Collins. All three committee members contributed editorial feedback for Study Two during my comprehensive examinations.

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Chapter One: General Introduction

Over the last three decades, researchers have recognized the need for language teaching to reflect authentic patterns of speech observed in target language communities. This has been especially prominent in the area of spoken grammar, where scholars such as Carter and McCarthy (1995, 2017) and Timmis (2005, 2012) have advocated for the teaching of widely used, yet non-prescribed features of English, such as ellipsis (*gotta go)* and vagueness (*where's the thing*). There has been some progress towards this goal, notably in the recognition of spoken features in major pedagogical grammars (e.g., Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999), instructional materials (e.g., Carter, Hughes, & McCarthy, 2000), and teaching practice (Jones & Carter, 2014; Timmis, 2005, 2013). Larsen-Freeman (2001) has also called for reconceptualizing pedagogical grammar as a "grammar of choice" (p. 117), providing evidence that grammar consists of choices allowing the proficient speaker to adjust for politeness (e.g., *Did you want some tea?* vs. *Do you want some tea?*), authoritative positioning (e.g., *I will show you a movie* vs. *We're going to watch a movie*), and other social attributes. Larsen-Freeman argued that speaker's linguistic choices reflect not only mastery of grammatical forms, but also of the social functions of these forms.

Despite this progress, recent studies have shown that learners may consciously resist incorporating spoken grammar in their own speech (Soruç & Griffiths, 2015), suggesting that issues other than lack of pedagogical attention may be at play. These challenges may be better understood by considering spoken grammar as a form of sociolinguistic competence – the ability to adjust one's language to different social contexts. Research has consistently shown that second language (L2) learners struggle to acquire sociolinguistic competence, particularly in classroom settings. While part of the challenge lies in the mapping of the formal properties of a structure to

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its sociocultural functions, recent studies also suggest that learners hesitate to make full use of their L2's sociolinguistic repertoire because of feelings of inauthenticity or non-acceptability that arise from deviating from prescribed forms. Soruç & Griffiths (2015), for example, showed that some learners associate informal spoken forms with an in-group of native or proficient speakers to which they do not belong, and thus feel that these forms are out of bounds for them as non-native speakers. Others may deliberately choose to use standard forms to ensure appropriacy in an unfamiliar community or as part of their socialization into a particular group of speakers (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004). With a few exceptions (notably the work of van Compernolle and colleagues, e.g., van Compernolle, 2013; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014), current recommendations for teaching spoken grammar and developing sociolinguistic competence have not taken these issues into account, focusing instead on having learners align with native speakers' sociolinguistic conventions. This limitation highlights a growing movement in second language acquisition (SLA) to acknowledge learner identity, agency, and choice in research and pedagogy; that is, to consider learners as legitimate and active users rather than passive acquirers of the L2 (Cook, 2002).

In line with this movement, this manuscript-based dissertation aims to define a place for learner agency within existing pedagogical norms for developing sociolinguistic competence in instructed contexts. It investigates the learning and teaching of sociolinguistic variation, with a focus on socially marked grammatical features of Quebec French, whose acquisition is likely to be compounded by the issues of identity and agency documented in recent studies. In the following sections, I situate the issue of L2 sociolinguistic competence within the broader context of second language acquisition (SLA). This is followed by an overview of research on sociolinguistic variation, the challenges it poses to L2 users, and recommendations for

addressing it in L2 classrooms. I then discuss existing pedagogical norms for teaching

sociolinguistic variation, their limitations, and how the dissertation aims to address them.

Sociolinguistic Competence in SLA

Research in second language acquisition (SLA) over the last 20 years has increasingly

turned to L2 users' ability to adapt their language to suit different social contexts – a skill

broadly known as sociolinguistic competence. Sociolinguistic competence is a component of

communicative competence (alongside grammatical, discourse, and strategic competence),

which enables learners to express themselves effectively and participate in meaningful exchange

in the L2. Hymes (1972) defines communicative competence as knowledge of and control over

various speech acts, and the ability to participate meaningfully in such acts. Regarding L2

users—and from a pedagogical standpoint—Canale and Swain (1980) consider sociolinguistic

competence to be part of this ability, defining it as knowledge of sociocultural rules. This

includes how utterances fit communicative purposes, and discourse rules, which specify what

topics, responses, and linguistic features are appropriate for a given situation. For example, an

English speaker draws on sociolinguistic competence to decide between the following utterances,

both of which are grammatical: (1) *Could you please sell me one train ticket to Chicago* and (2)

I'd like a ticket to Chicago please. While (1) would be prescriptively correct and get the speaker

to her destination, (2) might be more acceptable given the informal, usually fast-paced nature of

a service encounter. Such a skill is especially important when a situation calls for a specific

linguistic form (for example, a polite greeting like *Good evening* in formal situations) or when a

different form would be considered inappropriate (for example, *Hey you* when talking to people

of authority).

The recognition of language and language learning as inherently social helped to establish sociolinguistic development as an important branch of SLA research and pedagogy, which initially was focused on grammatical competence. Interest in L2 sociolinguistic development has steadily increased since the 1990s (e.g., Bayley & Preston, 1996; Dewaele & Mougeon, 2002; Regan, Howard, & Lemée, 2009), in part motivated by pedagogical concerns over learners' difficulties in acquiring and using sociolinguistic features in the L2 (van Compernolle & Williams, 2012).

Sociolinguistic Variation

Several studies on the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence are informed by the Labovian variationist tradition (Labov, 1972), which explores *sociolinguistic variation*: the existence of multiple linguistic forms or *variants* for a given meaning, where the use of any one variant is conditioned by a number of social factors. Labov is credited with driving the first of three "waves" of variationist research (Eckert, 2012) with his pioneering work on social class differences in the use of word-final /r/ in American English (Labov, 1967, 1969). This early research was characterized by quantitative approaches, the identification of geographically defined speech communities, and categorical social constructs such as class and prestige. The second wave began in the 1980s with Milroy (1981, 1987), who studied the effects of social networks on the spread and maintenance of vernacular features in Belfast English. An important theme to come out of this wave was that variants that might be stigmatized or deviate from the prestige variety can have local value; that is, they are valued as markers of group membership and solidarity with the speech community. The third wave challenged previous findings by viewing variation not as the product of predetermined social structures, but as an inherent feature of language, which people can use to create their own meanings (Eckert, 2012). One important

concept that emerged in this period is indexicality, which refers to the meanings carried by specific features outside of their semantic or grammatical properties. For example, the French second-person address forms *tu* and *vous* convey different meanings and index different types of relationships between interlocutors (Morford, 1997; Silverstein, 1992, 1996). Another important contribution from this period is the recognition of speakers' agency; that is, in certain contexts speakers make sociolinguistic choices that could not be accounted for by variables such as age and gender.

Other scholars have offered psycholinguistic accounts of variation, particularly in the use of non-prescribed features of language. Preston (2000) proposed that the first language variety that a speaker learns is the *vernacular*, a spoken, informal variety picked up from family members and friends. Varieties acquired later, such as academic and formal language, constitute a separate grammar that require greater stylistic control than the vernacular. Speakers choose between these grammars using a "sociocultural selection device" (Preston, 2000, p. 142), which takes into account external factors including indexicality.

L2 Acquisition of Sociolinguistic Variation

Within SLA, two models that may capture learners' use of sociolinguistic variation include continuous competence (Tarone, 1983) and variable competence (Ellis, 1985). Tarone (1983) argues that learners' speech styles can be placed along a continuum from careful to vernacular. In this model, learners initially produce language forms with the same level of cognitive control as a careful speech style. As they become able to produce these forms more spontaneously or with greater automaticity, the level of control comes closer to a vernacular; i.e. it is familiar and unmonitored. Ellis's (1985) variable competence model proposes that a learner's knowledge of variable rules is defined by different types of discourse, which are

distinguished by different levels of attention and monitoring. According to this model, learners encounter variable L2 rules as they participate in different discourse types. Similar to Tarone (1983), this model predicts that learners initially produce variable structures in a manner similar to a careful speech style. As experience with variable discourse types increases, learners may be able to apply these rules to a wider range of linguistic forms and produce them with greater spontaneity.

Both models align with Preston's (2000) claim that the vernacular is produced in less careful or unmonitored speech styles. Similarly, empirical research seeks to explore how L2 learners come to approximate the sociolinguistic patterns employed by native or proficient speakers, particularly in their use of features associated with casual speech (for an overview, see Bayley & Regan, 2004). In other words, L2 acquisition of sociolinguistic variation is observed through learners' ability to align with the speech community's vernacular. The general finding from this research is that sociolinguistic variation is difficult to acquire, often emerging only in advanced stages (for an overview, see Dewaele, 2004a). More specifically, learners appear to struggle with the choice between formal and informal variants, and overuse formal variants where a native speaker would be more likely to use the informal (Nadasdi, Mougeon, & Rehner, 2005; Mougeon, Rehner, & Nadasdi, 2004; Regan, 1995, 2004). There is evidence, however, that these learner challenges may be limited to production. For example, van Compernolle and Williams (2011) reported that intermediate-level learners had some awareness of a formal-informal distinction in French, but that this did not always translate into their speech. Similar studies by Kinginger and Farrell (2004), Soruç and Griffiths (2015), and French and Beaulieu (2016) showed that sociolinguistic knowledge does not always lead to subsequent use of the target features.

Variationist and Social-Psychological Perspectives

The difficulty that learners face in adopting L2 sociolinguistic patterns, and the disconnect between sociolinguistic knowledge and performance, has been attributed to a number of reasons. Studies within the variationist tradition have found associations between sociolinguistic performance and everyday language use, opportunities for interaction, and frequency of contact with native speakers (Mougeon & Rehner, 2009; Nagy, Blondeau, & Auger, 2003; Rehner, 2010). In one of the earliest studies in this area, Adamson and Regan (1991) found that Vietnamese and Cambodian migrants learning English as a second language acquired the local pattern of using the progressive verb ending *-in'* (vs. *-ing*) through contact with native English speakers. This trend was particularly evident among males, who either wished to differentiate themselves from female speakers, or to express toughness or masculinity (Trudgill, 1983) – early evidence that learners can exercise sociolinguistic agency, although this has not been explored until recently. Subsequent studies have consistently supported the notion that exposure to the target language community promotes convergence towards sociolinguistic norms. For example, Regan's (1995) study of Irish exchange students in France found that after completing a study abroad period, they converged with native speakers in their (non)use of *ne* – a negation particle that is often deleted in connected speech and is associated with informal usage. These gains were maintained even a year after the end of their sojourn (Regan, 2004). Similar findings have been reported in other study-abroad studies (Howard, 2012a; Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Trentman, 2017).

These variationist studies suggest that learners' struggles in acquiring sociolinguistic variation can be attributed to lack of opportunities to use variable forms in interaction. However, recent research suggests that the issue is also one of resistance on the part of the learners to adopt

sociolinguistic conventions. Soruç and Griffiths (2015) found that their students purposely avoided using the English discourse markers they had recently learned in class because they felt it was inconsistent with their identity as L1 Turkish speakers, or as L2 English users. Some learners in French and Beaulieu (2016) also reported feeling that their perceived proficiency level might make their use of French informal features less effective. Other learners appear to favour formal variants because of a desire to appear polite, even among peers, or because such features may index social class (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004) – despite evidence that formality does not necessarily equate to politeness. This additional hurdle seems to come from not from lack of exposure or interaction, but from social or learner-internal factors such as identity and motivation. These are difficult to account for using quantitative variationist methods, which relies on discrete, categorical constructs such as age and social status.

Some research has attempted to complement variationist approaches by examining learners' sociolinguistic patterns from a social-psychological perspective. Social-psychological models make links between speakers' language use and their perceptions of the communities associated with the language (Ellis, 2008). For example, learners' language may vary as they assess the "social/psychological distance" between themselves and their interlocutor, a phenomenon known as *convergence* and *divergence* (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). Recent studies employing social-psychological methods in L2 sociolinguistic variation have made use of social network theory (SNT; Granovetter, 1973; Milgram, 1967) in study abroad contexts. SNT studies draw empirical links between linguistic development and the formation of social networks in the L2 community. Study abroad studies have shown that large, complex social networks help promote various aspects of linguistic development from pre- to post-sojourn (Baker-Smemoe, Dewey, Bown, & Martinsen, 2017; Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2015;

Dewey, Bown, & Eggett, 2012; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Kinginger, 2008, 2011). SNT research has only recently turned to the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation, and so far supports these findings. In particular, large social networks and positive relationships with target language speakers appear to provide greater exposure to sociolinguistic variation and encourage positive attitudes, resulting in greater use of informal variants (e.g., Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Kinginger, 2008; Sax, 2003; Trentman, 2017).

The Teaching of Sociolinguistic Variation

Another possible explanation for learners' difficulty in acquiring L2 sociolinguistic patterns, particularly their underuse of informal variants, is that these variants are seldom addressed in language teaching and instructional materials. This is corroborated both in the literature on spoken grammar (Cullen & Kuo, 2007; Jones & Waller, 2011) and sociolinguistic variation (Etienne & Sax, 2009; Rehner & Mougeon, 2003). These two streams of research have generated recommendations for the teaching of sociolinguistic variation, largely independently of each other.

Recommendations from Spoken Grammar Research

Most contemporary research on spoken grammar is informed by early corpus studies which showed that sentence-based grammars do not fully account for the interactive nature of spoken language (Brazil, 1995), and that many features frequently used in conversation, such as left-dislocation and ellipsis, are left out of pedagogical materials in favour of prescriptive forms developed for written language (Carter & McCarthy, 1995; McCarthy & Carter, 1995). Carter and McCarthy (1995) advocated for greater attention to be paid to spoken grammar in language teaching and materials, arguing that for L2 learners to develop communicative competence, they

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should have access to the full range of linguistic resources available in the target language. These same authors offered one of the earliest recommendations for the teaching of spoken grammar, known as illustration-interaction-induction (III, McCarthy & Carter, 1995). This approach begins with *illustration*, where learners are guided towards noticing the target feature in language samples, followed by *interaction*, where they are led to notice gaps in their current knowledge by using the feature in communicative activities. The last step, *induction*, helps learners generate hypotheses about the feature's use and functions. Building on this work, Timmis (2005) proposed a framework for spoken grammar pedagogy, identifying principles for selecting texts, designing tasks, and promoting learner awareness of spoken features in language classrooms. Among his main suggestions were adding cultural access, discussion, and reflection components, allowing learners to relate to the cultural aspects of the target feature and situate it within their own interactional contexts. Mumford (2009) recommended adding production practice to Timmis's framework, as well as using native-speaker speech as a basis for selecting features that might help learners speak more fluently (i.e., without slowing down for grammatical accuracy) and appropriately (e.g., using vague language such as *that kind of thing* in casual contexts).

Recommendations from Sociolinguistic Competence Research

The pedagogical approaches described above did not explicitly define spoken grammar as a sociolinguistic feature, nor its mastery as constituting sociolinguistic competence. However, much research on L2 sociolinguistic competence does involve features characteristic of spoken grammar, notably the informal/formal distinction between the French second-person pronouns *tu* and *vous* (variants of English singular *you*) and *on* and *nous* (variants of English *we*). One of the first classroom-tested recommendations for teaching these forms is the functional-analytic approach (Lyster, 1994), which teaches both the formal and discoursal properties of

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sociolinguistic features through consciousness-raising activities, explicit explanations, and production practice. Van Compernolle (2013) and van Compernolle and Henery (2014) have also explored concept-based instruction, an approach derived from sociocultural theories of learning which involves teaching variable features alongside relevant concepts such as social distance and self-presentation. There are also recommendations on the teaching of regional varieties, such as teaching *voseo* (a second-person address form typical of Latin American Spanish) through films and music (Shenk, 2014), explicit teaching of lexical, syntactic, and phonological differences between dialects (Schoonmaker-Gates, 2017), and teaching of sociolinguistic concepts to enable critical discussions of the dialectal variation (Shin & Hudgens Henderson, 2017).

Challenges in the Teaching of Sociolinguistic Variation

Many of the suggested approaches to teaching sociolinguistic variation have been well-received in L2 classrooms and have led to positive learning gains (Lyster, 1994; Shin & Hudgens Henderson, 2017; Timmis, 2005; van Compernolle, 2013). However, a number of challenges have also emerged in recent studies. Soruç and Griffiths (2015), examined L1 Turkish students' speech following a university-level EFL lesson on English discourse features (e.g., ellipsis and vagueness markers), designed after the III model. They found that the majority of learners hesitated to use the target features, which they felt were more characteristic of native or proficient speakers and thus inconsistent with their Turkish identity. Similar views have been reported in French L2 classrooms, where some students were hesitant to adopt what they considered native-speaker usage (French & Beaulieu, 2016). Such resistance can also come from members of the speech community. Ruivivar and Collins (2018, 2019) showed that when advanced English L2 speakers do use non-prescribed spoken grammar features (topic fronting, subject ellipsis, disjointed descriptions, and historical present), their accents – which identify

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them as non-native speakers – contributed to these features being perceived as less acceptable compared to similar constructions produced by native speakers, despite the speech being simultaneously rated as highly comprehensible. These studies suggest that resistance towards the use of socially marked features might be conditioned by a sense of identity and belonging in the speech community (Norton, 2000), both on the part of learners and language community members. While learners should certainly not be expected to adopt native speakers' sociolinguistic patterns, their hesitation to adopt what they consider native-speaker norms seems to stem from their feelings of belonging and identity, which may constrain their ability to exercise sociolinguistic agency (van Compernolle, 2009) in making informed choices about their use of language features (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, 2012).

As might be evident from this review, interest in authentic, sociolinguistically accurate L2 pedagogy is growing, but fairly recent. There is a need for more research on how sociolinguistic variation in general, and spoken grammar in particular, might be addressed in the classroom, with a view to addressing the more recently documented challenges of sociolinguistic agency.

A Pedagogical Norm for Teaching Sociolinguistic Variation

The issues described above raise the complex question of how sociolinguistic variation should be taught, particularly when the feature in question deviates from prestige or prescriptive rules and/or are closely tied to social identity. To answer this question, researchers have often drawn upon the pedagogical norm put forward by Albert Valdman (2000, 2003). Valdman developed and refined this pedagogical norm over several decades, beginning in the 1960s, with the goal of guiding the selection of features without overrepresenting prescriptive, colonial, or ideal native-speaker standards. Building on Bourdieu's (1991) principle of linguistic capital,

Valdman emphasizes the teaching of features that would allow learners to communicate in a wide variety of contexts in a way that facilitates their linguistic development and integration; in other words, features that would offer the greatest benefits in proportion to instructional time. He breaks this down into three criteria: sociolinguistic, which recommends features that are used in actual speech within the community; epilinguistic, which considers community members' expectations of L2 users; and acquisitional, which takes into account factors that influence overall L2 development.

A number of studies have applied Valdman's pedagogical norm to the selection and sequencing of target features, many of them in an edited volume by Gass, Bardovi-Harlig, Magnan Pierce, and Walz (2002). Two of these studies explore left-dislocation, a sociolinguistically variable structure of French. Left-dislocation can occur as *c'est*-clefts (*C'est Cora qui appelle,* "It's Cora who is calling"), *ya*-clefts (*Il y a Benoit qui s'en vient*, "There is Benoit who is coming), or subject doubling (*Le chien il court,* "The dog it is running). Ossipov (2002), based on an analysis of native-speaker corpora from continental and Canadian French, offers suggestions based on the sociolinguistic and acquisitional criteria. First, she recommends that beginning learners be taught dislocation in discourse contexts that are frequently used, such as introducing new topics and making contrasts. Second, she recommends teaching constructions that align with learners' interlanguage patterns; for example, *c'est* constructions align with learners' tendencies to coordinate verb number with the closest noun phrase, as in *Mes parents et mon frère dit bonjour* ("My parents and my brother say<u>s</u> hi"). Kerr (2002) examined the speech of French L2 speakers of different proficiencies and found that left-dislocations were rarely used at the lowest levels, but approached native-like usage among advanced learners. Drawing on the acquisitional criterion, she concludes that the ability to apply discoursal variation is contingent

on learners' overall linguistic competence, and it is unlikely that learners at early levels "will have developed sufficient competence to be able to make use of such discourse-based features" (p. 194). She therefore argues that discourse-motivated constructions are best taught in later stages.

More recently, Beaulieu (2012) applied the sociolinguistic and epilinguistic criteria in defining a pedagogical norm for French L2 nursing students in Alberta. She found that patients preferred that nurses use informal language and found those who used formal features to be cold and distant. A later study (Beaulieu, 2018) revealed the opposite, with patients preferring formal variants; however, analysis of interview data suggests a mediating effect of previous linguistic experiences. Patients who were educated in French-majority environments preferred more formal address forms, while those who grew up with French as a minority language (and therefore had limited French instruction) showed no preferences. The schooling effect was mitigated, however, when participants were dependent on French-language health services. This suggests that satisfying Valdman's (2000) epilinguistic criterion cannot assume homogenous community-wide preferences, but should consider contextual requirements and individual experiences that influence community members' expectations of L2 users.

Limitations of the Pedagogical Norm

As evidenced by the studies above, Valdman's (2000) criteria offer a useful guide for maximizing instructional time to prepare learners for a variety of communicative contexts. However, it is only recently that researchers have focused on learners' motivation to learn and use a given structure for their own communicative purposes; in other words, learners' sociolinguistic agency (e.g., Beaulieu, Woll, French, & Duchemin, 2018; French & Beaulieu, 2020). The pedagogical norm in its current form can inform decisions on what L2 users *need* to

learn, but does not take into account what they *want* to learn based on their perceptions of their own linguistic needs and social-psychological factors such as linguistic identity and belonging. Some learners may well want to adopt "native-like" linguistic patterns, but others may not necessarily wish to align with local sociolinguistic norms for a number of reasons, many of which are hinted at by recent studies: they may identify more strongly with a different group (Drummond, 2012; Regan, 2013), have negative perceptions of the L2 community (Ruivivar, 2020), or feel that some linguistic features are inconsistent with their social positioning as L2 speakers (Soruç & Griffiths, 2015).

Pedagogical decisions on teaching sociolinguistic features, therefore, should take into account how learners wish to express their identities and position themselves in the community through the target language. This is consistent with a growing push in the SLA community to recognize the role of learner agency in language teaching and learning. Central to this position is that learners are not passive receivers of linguistic information, but active users capable of using language for social, creative, and other purposes (Cook, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Szabo, 2006).

<div align="center">**The Dissertation**</div>

The goal of this dissertation is to contribute to the emerging work, notably by Beaulieu, French, and van Compernolle, in defining a place for sociolinguistic agency in a pedagogical norm for teaching sociolinguistic variation in general, and spoken grammar in particular. I do so by investigating learners' knowledge and use of spoken grammar features in their L2, identifying possible explanations for learners' desire to use or avoid such features, and, building on these findings, presenting the design and materials for implementing and evaluating a pedagogical approach to sociolinguistic agency. In addition to this overarching goal, the dissertation also

makes specific contributions to the areas of grammatical variation, the acquisition of vernacular varieties, and sociolinguistic development in non-academic settings. I discuss these specific contributions in the following sections.

Sociolinguistic Variation and Grammar

Most research on sociolinguistic variation has been on phonological features, with grammatical variation only emerging in a handful of studies since the 1980s (for an overview, see Eckert, 2012). This is partly because phonological variants occur much more frequently than grammatical ones, and so they lend themselves better to quantitative examination (Cheshire & Stein, 1997; Rickford, Wasow, Mendoza-Denton, & Espinosa, 1995). Macaulay (2012) also points out the difficulties in compiling corpora from a sufficiently varied number of speakers, and providing opportunities for a range of grammatical structures at sufficiently high rates for analysis. Nonetheless, Cheshire (1982) proposes that these less frequent features can help us better understand the social aspects of grammar and the part it plays in language change (and by extension, language learning). In addition, Hudson (1996) argues that while both phonological and grammatical variation tend to mark social identity or group membership, the production of phonological variants is often spontaneous and unmonitored. Syntactic variation, on the other hand, often involves deviating familiar forms, or in the case of L2 users, prescribed forms learned in instructional settings. Therefore, studying how L2 users make these conscious deviations, especially for social, discoursal, or pragmatic purposes, can be more informative regarding their practice of sociolinguistic agency.

Vernaculars and Quebec French

This dissertation is also concerned with features characterizing dialectal variation in a target language; that is, features that are closely associated with (though not necessarily exclusive to) a specific, usually geographically defined community. These features are commonly described as vernacular, though the term is not fully synonymous with the definitions presented in earlier sections. Preston (2000) defines the vernacular as a variety of a language (usually the speaker's L1) that is acquired at a young age and is typically picked up through exposure to the everyday speech of friends and family, and as such is usually casual and unmonitored. From a second-language acquisition perspective, Nadasdi et al. (2005) note that vernacular features are highly informal, occur almost exclusively in speech, and are associated with lower social strata. Such associations stem from historical notions of prestige attached to standard varieties (historically the Parisian variety, in the case of French; Ayres-Bennett, 1996) which tend to be idealized as superior to other, usually regional varieties (Milroy & Milroy, 1991). Despite this stigmatization, the linguistic features that characterize regional varieties may also carry what Labov (1972) refers to as covert prestige: they are valued as markers of belonging, solidarity, and identification with a community. The features studied in this dissertation are considered vernacular based on this definition.

Studies on the L2 acquisition of vernacular features are rare, but they offer evidence that such features are almost categorically absent in L2 speech (Nadasdi et al., 2005; Ruivivar, 2019). As mentioned above, there is evidence that learners avoid informal features associated with native-speaker usage. In other words, learners may not feel that these features are consistent with

their identity or perceived group membership – a sentiment that may well extend to, or even be amplified by, vernacular features.

The focus of the dissertation is Quebec French (henceforth QF), the variety of French spoken in Quebec, Canada. French has been the official language of Quebec since the passing of the Charter of the French Language, commonly known as Bill 101, which sought to make French the language of everyday activities including instruction, commerce, and government. The charter laid out policies designed to preserve French in the province and protect Francophone identity amidst the predominantly English-speaking context of Canada and North America. Today, QF is a majority language in Quebec, spoken as either a first or additional language by 94% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2020). It is a key component of Quebecois identity, owing to the historical associations between linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical issues in the province. In particular, its distinct sociolinguistic features index belonging to the Quebec francophone community, and so issues of L2 learner identity, belonging, and agency may be more pronounced in this context.

Adult Immigrant Learners

Finally, this dissertation hopes to extend sociolinguistic variation research to adult immigrant learners in non-academic settings. Andringa and Godfroid (2019) note that the majority of SLA studies are conducted on convenience samples of university students, and call for more research to be conducted in non-academic contexts to improve the generalizability of SLA findings. The sociolinguistic variation literature is no exception to this trend: most studies have been conducted in university foreign language, immersion, or study abroad programs. Therefore, it is possible that our understanding of L2 sociolinguistic development is limited to this small demographic, which Murphy-Lejeune (2002) characterizes as "voluntary strangers":

learners with an academic interest in experiencing, but not necessarily adopting, a new language and culture. Although some students may consider the possibility of staying in a host community for longer, they typically do not, at the time of learning or study abroad sojourn, invest a large amount of time and effort in adopting the language and other aspects of the host country's culture (McManus, Mitchell, & Tracy-Ventura, 2014). Immigrants, on the other hand, typically intend to stay in the L2 community for longer periods and have more practical motivations to learn sociolinguistic norms, such as finding work. This can be compounded by issues of linguistic identity, ethnic identity, and attitudes towards the host community, which have been well documented in immigrant populations (e.g., Amireault, 2011; Drummond, 2012; Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid, 2005; Norton, 2000; Regan, 2013). Therefore, in answering the call for extending research to a wider population, this dissertation also tests the generalizability of current knowledge on L2 sociolinguistic development.

Research Questions

The overarching research questions of the dissertation are as follows:

1. To what extent do immigrant learners of QF know, understand, and use geographically constrained features of QF?

2. What factors influence their use or nonuse of these features, and are these factors similar to those found in university students?

3. How can the answers to these first two questions inform teaching practice?

Study One adopts a variationist perspective by comparing native and near-native speakers of QF in their rates of use, patterns of use, and understanding of the *-tu* question particle, a typical QF vernacular feature. Study Two attempted to explain these findings using a social-

psychological lens, investigating the effects of engagement and social networks on sociolinguistic performance. It also compares -*tu* with three other sociolinguistic features: a vernacular but less geographically defined feature (subject doubling), and two informal features, one of which is stable in its usage (*ne* deletion) and the other undergoing change from an informal to a standard variant (first-person *on*). The goal of this comparison is to reveal differences, if any, in the paths to acquisition for different types of variable features.

Study Three presents the theoretical framework and design for a classroom study evaluating the use of concept-based instruction to teach the two vernacular features from Study Two. The study extends current work on CBI to vernacular features, with the goal of determining whether such an approach can help overcome the learning challenges revealed in the first two studies. The manuscript is written as a registered report, a relatively new study format in which the study's theoretical background, methods, and proposed analyses are submitted to peer review and pre-registered prior to data collection. Once approved, the study is given in-principle acceptance; that is, publication is guaranteed provided that the researcher adheres to the approved methodology for data collection and analyses. This format promotes open science practices of transparency and reproducibility, and reduces the risk of questionable practices such as publication bias and selective reporting of results by focusing peer review on the relevance of the research questions and quality of methodology (Center for Open Science, n.d.). The format has gained popularity in the fields of psychology and medicine. Within applied linguistics, *Language Learning* has led the initiative to adopt registered reports as an empirical study format (Marsden, Morgan-Short, Trofimovich, & Ellis, 2018) and, at the time of writing, remains one of the few journals in the field to do so. Registered reports within applied linguistics are largely psycholinguistic and lack studies with a pedagogical focus. In fact, the Open Science Foundation

(OSF) registry shows only one pre-registered pedagogical study, currently in progress (Mifka-Profozic, Macis, Gass, Chiuchiù, & Behney, 2020). As such, Study Three in this dissertation also seeks to advance the open science movement in SLA and, in particular, inform how this initiative might be applied to classroom-based research and instructed SLA (ISLA). In addition, the registered report allows for research to move forward when there are impediments to data collection. In the case of this dissertation, data collection was interrupted by school closures in response to the 2019-2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Pursuing the registered report option provided an opportunity to receive feedback and refine the study design and materials in the meantime.

The objectives, main features, and individual contributions of the three studies are summarized in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1

Summary of Component Studies

Study	Goals	Target feature	Participants
1	Examine vernacular use in learners under ideal conditions for acquisition; variationist framework	*-tu* question	near-native speakers
2	Investigate individual learner factors (engagement, social network); social-psychological framework; compare informal vs. vernacular features	*-tu* question subject doubling *ne* deletion first-person *on*	advanced learners
3	Present a proposal for implementing and evaluating concept-based instruction as a way to address sociolinguistic agency in the classroom	*-tu* question subject doubling	high-intermediate learners

Introduction to Study One

Study One examined near-native speakers' use and understanding of a vernacular feature of QF, the *-tu* question particle. From a variationist perspective, these speakers meet the conditions purported to favour sociolinguistic development: exposure, interaction, and proficiency. The study thus aimed to confirm whether the underuse of vernacular variants reported in previous studies could be fully attributed to these factors, or, as hinted at by more recent research, might be explained by factors not captured in the variationist paradigm. This study also complemented performance measures with a measure of metalinguistic awareness to provide a more detailed picture of sociolinguistic competence, and offered insights for refining elicitation measures specifically targeting variable question forms.

Chapter Two: Study One

Sociolinguistic Competence and Vernacular Variation in Near-Native Quebec French

Recent decades have seen an increased interest in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by L2 learners. In particular, several scholars have explored how learners acquire the sociolinguistic norms observed by native speakers. Canale and Swain (1980) define sociolinguistic competence as knowledge of sociocultural rules, which includes how utterances fit communicative purposes, and discourse rules, which specify what topics, responses, and linguistic features are appropriate to a given situation. In second language acquisition (SLA), sociolinguistic competence is typically operationalized as an understanding of the social functions of a given linguistic feature and the ability to use this feature in appropriate contexts. In recent years, the term "multicompetence" has also been proposed, which takes onto account learners' communicative intentions in addition to their knowledge (Hall, Cheng, & Carlson, 2006).

Much of the work on L2 sociolinguistic competence specifically concerns sociolinguistic variation, or the use of different linguistic forms to express a single meaning. William Labov (1967) is credited with pioneering the quantitative study of sociolinguistic variation with his groundbreaking research, which revealed social class differences in the production or non-production of word-final /r/ in American English. Labov's work gave rise to what is now known as the variationist paradigm: the study of variable language use and how certain uses may be conditioned to different degrees by contextual factors such as age and social class, and linguistic factors such as adjacent sounds and grammatical features.

The variationist paradigm has also been applied to SLA, with influential studies (e.g., Dewaele, 2004; Regan, 1995, 2004) focusing on how L2 users come to approximate native-speaker patterns of variation. The general consensus among these studies is that sociolinguistic variation presents a challenge to L2 users. This literature also suggests that L2 sociolinguistic development is most likely to occur under two conditions: proficiency and exposure to (and interaction in) the target language.

Much of this work has been carried out in the context of Canadian French immersion (e.g., Mougeon, Rehner, & Nadasdi, 2004; Mougeon & Rehner, 2009, 2015; Nadasdi et al., 2005) and has focused on informal, non-geographically constrained features of French, such as *ne* deletion (Rehner, 2010) and first-person *on* (Mougeon & Rehner, 2009). These studies have found that learners underuse these informal variants, preferring their more formal counterparts (i.e., *ne* retention and *nous*). In contrast, studies of non-instructed learners, again in the context of Canadian French, suggest that exposure to the target language promotes use of various sociolinguistic features, including discourse markers (Sankoff, Thibault, Nagy, Blondeau, Fonollosa, & Gagnon, 1997) and gender neutralization (Blondeau & Nagy, 2004).

Outside of Canada, research on sociolinguistic variation has largely involved study abroad learners. These studies also report underuse of informal variants at the beginning of the study abroad period, which increases as learners spend more time in the community and interact with native speakers. Regan (2004) found such a pattern in *ne* deletion among Irish students spending a year in France, and Sax (2003) found similar patterns in American learners of French. In addition, research on near-native speakers—those whose grammatical competence is comparable to that of native speakers, and who have had extensive exposure to the target language—have been shown to closely approximate native-speaker patterns for a number of

variable features (Donaldson, 2011, 2016, 2017), supporting previous studies showing that

productive use of sociolinguistic variants emerges at advanced levels (Rehner, Mougeon, &

Nadasdi, 2003) and that proficiency can support sociolinguistic development (Howard, 2012a,

2014).

Acquisition of Vernacular Features

In this paper, vernacular features are defined as geographically constrained features that

tend to be associated with lower social status (Nadasdi et al., 2005) and, because they occur in

specific regional varieties, may be closely associated with – though not necessarily unique to – a

particular speech community. For example, Quebec French (QF) is distinguished from other

varieties of French by a number of vernacular features at the phonological, grammatical, and

lexical levels, such as: affrication before high front vowels (*dix* "ten"➔ /d͡zɪs/), subject doubling

(*Marc il part demain* "Marc he leaves tomorrow"), and locally unique expressions (e.g., *à cette*

heure "now", literally "at this hour"). These features often serve as markers of social identity and

may carry covert prestige (Labov, 1972).

Until recently, such features have largely escaped the attention of researchers in L2

sociolinguistic variation. In French, for example, the most widely studied sociolinguistic variants

include *ne* deletion, the first-person plural pronouns *on* and *nous*, and the second-person address

forms *tu* and *vous*. These features have been documented across different French-speaking

contexts (e.g., Dewaele, 2004b; Regan, 1995; Mougeon & Rehner, 2009). Early studies showed

some inconsistency in *ne* deletion, with Canadian French speakers deleting substantially more

than Parisian French speakers (Poplack, 1989; Sankoff & Vincent, 1977). However, recent

studies show that *ne* deletion has become comparable across varieties (Meisner, 2017). Bayley

(2005) notes that the study of learner language must take into account the regional varieties that

learners encounter. This is especially relevant to the acquisition of variable features, which has been shown to benefit from exposure to the target language. Early studies suggest that geographically and socially conditioned features typically appear late in L2 development (Geeslin, 2003; Geeslin & Gudmestad, 2011) and are virtually absent in earlier stages (Nadasdi et al., 2005).

The present study focuses on instructed L2 speakers' awareness and use of a vernacular feature of QF, the *-tu* question particle. It is used exclusively in yes-no questions alongside a number of other variants, which include the following (Coveney, 1996):

(1) *Est-ce que* fronting

   Est-ce que vous arrivez bientot?

   Is   it that you arrive   soon? (Are you arriving soon?)

(2) Inversion

   Arrivez-vous bientot?

   Arrive you   soon?

(3) Declarative

   Vous arrivez bientot?

   You   arrive   soon?

(4) Declarative + tag

   Vous arrivez bientot, n'est-ce pas?

   You   arrive   soon   is it not? (You are arriving soon, aren't you?)

(5) Declarative + pronoun tag (requires a noun subject)

   Alain arrive-t-il bientot?

   Alain arrives -t- he soon? (Is Alain arriving soon?)

The *-tu* question takes the form of a declarative question, with the *-tu* particle added to the first-occurring verb, as in (6):

(6) *-tu* question

Alain arrive-tu bientot?

Alain arrives-TU soon?

This variant originates from the archaic tag *-ti* in Standard French, a reduction of the tag *-t-il* seen in (5) (Elsig & Poplack, 2006). The *-ti* has mostly fallen out of use in European varieties of French, though it has been documented in *patois* varieties of Paris and Normandy (Vecchiato, 1999). However, it has been retained as *-tu* in North American varieties, most notably in Quebec (Vinet, 2000). As such, it is a geographically constrained variant: it is highly likely to occur in QF compared to other varieties of French and is closely associated with the local speech community. It also occurs almost exclusively in informal spoken contexts and would be considered unacceptable in formal or careful speech, making it likely a stigmatized vernacular (Nadasdi et al., 2005).

To my knowledge, the only other vernacular features of QF to have been investigated in the context of L2 acquisition are subject doubling (Nagy et al., 2003) and gender neutralization (Blondeau & Nagy, 2004). In these studies, increased contact with native speakers of QF was a strong predictor of nativelike variation patterns. While the *-tu* particle is also typical of QF, it differs from these features in several ways. First, it is closely associated with the Quebec Francophone community, perhaps to a greater degree than subject doubling and gender neutralization, which may discourage some L2 users who do not wish to identify with that community. Also, unlike other features, it occurs almost exclusively in highly informal speech and typically expresses a close relationship with the interlocutor. Second, it is highly salient in

that it constitutes an additional syllable at the end of a question and is produced with a rising

intonation. Learners may therefore also hesitate to use this feature because it entails a more

noticeable deviation from standard language. Such a trend has been observed in Anglophone

speakers of French in Montreal, who seem to align with socially prestigious variants, such as the

uvular /r/ over the apical (Blondeau, Nagy, Sankoff, & Thibeault, 2002). In other words, the *-tu*

question form may present an even greater learning challenge than that documented in previous

studies of geographic variation (e.g., Geeslin & Gudmestad, 2011; Nadasdi et al., 2005; Ringer-

Hilfinger, 2012).

The *-tu* variant in L2 French

Research on the *-tu* particle has largely been limited to theoretical analyses of native

speech (e.g., Elsig & Poplack, 2006; Léard, 1996; Vinet, 2000). These studies suggest that its use

is conditioned by both linguistic (features of the language being produced, such as syntax and

vocabulary) and extralinguistic factors (features of the context, such as formality and familiarity

between speakers). Factors theorized to favour *-tu* are summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Factors Conditioning Use of the -tu Question Particle

Linguistic factors	
Factor group	**Individual factors (factors in bold favour -*tu*)**
Verb length	**monosyllabic**
	polysyllabic
Verb semantics	cognitive
	non-cognitive
Subject	*je* (I)
	tu (you sg.)
	il/elle/on (he/she/impersonal 3rd per.)
	nous (we)
	vous (you pl.)
	ils/elles (he/she pl.)
Lexicalization	**lexicalized**
	non-lexicalized
Extralinguistic factors	
Speaker gender[1]	male
	female
Task type	**casual**
	semi-controlled
	controlled

Linguistic Factors

Verb length. Questions are more likely to take the -*tu* form when the first verb, in its inflected form, is monosyllabic, e.g. *Il boit-tu?* ("Does he drink", literally He drinks-TU?). In compound forms, this verb would be the auxiliary, as in *T'es-tu fait mal?* ("Did you hurt yourself", literally You are-TU hurt yourself?). Some subject pronouns require conjugations that render the verb polysyllabic, e.g. *Nous buvons*, "We drink," but as explained below, these pronouns strongly disfavour -*tu*.

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[1] Although I recognize the issues that may arise from a binary categorization of gender, I found it necessary to use this format to be consistent with previous research. For this study, the terms male and female refer to the speaker's self-identified gender.

Verb semantics. Cognitive verbs connote a state of knowing, feeling, or perceiving, such as *savoir/connaître* (to know), *aimer* (to like), and *entendre* (to hear). Elsig and Poplack (2006) also report that such verbs disfavour the use of -*tu*; that is, the form is more likely to occur with non-cognitive verbs.

Subject prononun. -*tu* is also expected to occur more frequently in questions with subject pronouns in the third person, regardless of number or gender (*il/elle, ils, elles*; he/she). Being highly informal, it is unlikely to be used with *nous*, considered a more formal variant of *on* "we," and with *vous*, a second person plural pronoun that also serves as a formal or polite address form.

Lexicalization. Frequently occurring verbs are more likely to take the -*tu* particle as they are believed to become formulaic over time (Léard, 1996; Vinet, 2000). However, no empirical studies have established which verbs are lexicalized with -*tu*. For this study, the 100 most frequent verbs appearing in Open Lexicon, a database of 19 French-language corpora (New & Pallier, 2013), were considered to be lexicalized.

Extralinguistic Factors

Speaker gender. It is well known in the sociolinguistic literature that women tend to lead language change within a given linguistic community (Labov, 1990; Tagliamonte & D'Arcy, 2009). This difference may be less pronounced among the native speakers as the -*tu* question is well established in the community and is no longer undergoing change. However, for near-native speakers, the use of -*tu* may represent change within this subset of L2 speakers as they seek to align with community norms. There are two possibilities here. On the one hand, female speakers may more readily pick up the change, as predicted by previous research. On the other, there is

evidence that males attach covert prestige to less preferred forms, whether to differentiate themselves from female speakers or to express toughness or masculinity (Adamson & Regan, 1991; Trudgill, 1983).

Task type. As noted above, and like most vernacular variants, *-tu* questions are used in highly informal spoken contexts. Vernacular varieties are typically learned at a young age from primary caretakers (Labov, 2001) and, for L1 speakers, tend to be used in less careful speech styles (Preston, 2000). L2 speakers, on the other hand, may default to a more standard variety consistent with instructional input. It is therefore possible that, while both native and near-native speakers are more likely to use *-tu* in casual speech, the effect will be stronger in native speakers.

The goal of this study is to examine whether this feature can be acquired by learners in ideal conditions for acquisition of sociolinguistic variation (high proficiency, exposure, and regular interaction with native speakers). It does so by comparing the rates of use, patterns of use, and metalinguistic awareness of the *-tu* question particle by native and near-native speakers of QF. The specific research questions are as follows:

1. Do near-native speakers of QF approximate native speakers' rates and patterns of use of the *-tu* question particle?
2. Do they have the same metalinguistic awareness of this feature?

Method
Participants

Participants were ten native and ten near-native speakers of QF. Both groups consisted of four male and six female speakers. The native speakers were born and raised in Quebec, and report speaking French in 80 to 100 percent of their daily interactions. The near-native speakers

have lived in Quebec between 6 and 17 years and learned French after age 15. They received

between six months and one year of full-time French instruction in various adult education

centres during their first year in Quebec; two are now working full-time in French-speaking

environments, three are studying in French-language universities, and five are in fully bilingual

French-English environments. They report using French in 70 to 100 percent of daily

interactions. Participants were aged 22 to 36, and all have daily contact with native QF speakers

at work, school, or both.

Materials and Procedure

Grammaticality judgment tests (GJT). Proficiency was measured using a condensed

version of the GJT developed by Birdsong (1992), provided in Appendix A. This instrument,

including its condensed form, has been widely used to establish proficiency levels, including in

recent studies involving high-proficiency to near-native speakers (e.g., Donaldson, 2017). In

addition, because the *-tu* particle represents nonstandard grammar, a measure of grammatical

intuition increases confidence that any non-use of the *-tu* particle is not due to lack of

grammatical knowledge.

The original GJT consists of 76 grammatical, ambiguous, and ungrammatical sentences

in French. Participants were asked to rate the acceptability of each sentence on a five-point scale,

from 1 = *not at all acceptable; I would never say this* to 5 = *perfectly acceptable; I would

definitely say this*. The sentences are divided into clear cases of grammatical usage, cases that are

ambiguous or would only be acceptable in rare cases, and cases that are clearly ungrammatical.

The condensed GJT used in the present study contained a selection of five sentences from each

category, for a total of 15 sentences. The primary reason for using the condensed version is time

constraint: the full test would have taken at least an hour in addition to the elicitation tasks, which might cause fatigue and compromise performance.

Task 1: Conversation. All three tasks were completed by dyads consisting of one native and one near-native speaker, both of whom were well acquainted. This pairing was especially important for the target feature, which occurs in casual speech. To make sure participants were comfortable with being recorded and to further establish a casual mood, they first completed a short warmup activity in which they shared facts about their recent activities (for example, what they did the previous day) and tried to find three activities they had in common. Afterwards, participants took turns telling each other a story about one of three topics: a recent trip, the last time they won a prize, or the biggest favour they have received or given. While one partner was narrating, the other was instructed to ask at least 15 questions to get as much detail as possible, during or after the story.

Task 2: Spot the difference. This task, provided in Appendix B, was adapted from a picture guessing game developed by Spada and Lightbown (1999), which was also designed to elicit questions. In the original version, Participant A was given a picture, and Participant B was given three versions of the picture, all but one of which were slightly different from that of Participant A. Participant B was instructed to find which of the three pictures matched his or her partner's. The participants then switched roles using a second set of pictures. The adapted version for this study used a different set of pictures and required Participant B to find the picture that had only three differences from that of his or her partner (the other two pictures had five and six). This meant that the participants needed to ask questions until they found at least four differences in two pictures, ensuring that enough questions were elicited for analysis.

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Because this task was designed to elicit semi-controlled speech, the pictures featured several words containing consonant and vowel clusters that were uncommon in French and English (e.g., "Gcibor," "Aastapäev"). This was expected to encourage the participants to speak carefully, as they needed to read or spell the words clearly without necessarily paying attention to their grammar.

Task 3: Reverse Q&A. For this task, each participant was given a stack of 12 cards, each containing a response. One participant picked a card from a stack and read the response out loud, and the partner had to think of a question that might generate that answer. For example, for a card saying *deux tasses de café* ("two cups of coffee"), a possible response would be *Qu'est-ce que tu bois le matin?* ("What do you drink in the morning?"). This was designed to elicit controlled speech, as participants had to attend to a number of grammatical features (e.g., gender, number, tense) for their questions to be logical. To generate enough questions to examine all factors, half the statements in each stack began with Oui or Non (yes or no), all possible subjects occurred with equal frequency, and half of the expected responses had a possible lexicalized *-tu* question form. A copy of the instrument is provided in Appendix C.

Metalinguistic awareness. The three tasks were followed by a short metalinguistic awareness interview, during which each participant was asked to (1) think of the different ways they ask questions in French, and (2) describe how the different question forms vary in terms of form and usage. The first question aimed to tap into their overall awareness of the variability in QF question formation and determine whether they were aware of *-tu* as part of this variation. The second question was intended to examine their awareness of the formal and sociolinguistic rules governing question formation.

Coding and Analysis

All tasks were audio-recorded, and all the questions were transcribed. Each question was then coded for use or non-use of -*tu*, and each of the six factor groups in Table 2.1. Analysis was carried out using Goldvarb X (Sankoff, Tagliamonte, & Smith, 2005). This program calculates the relative contribution of each of the selected factors (factor weights) to the occurrence of a feature, known as the application value. For the present study, the application value was the use of -*tu*; that is, Goldvarb calculated the degree to which each factor predicts its use. An initial analysis identified "knockouts," or factors for which the feature occurs with either 0% or 100% frequency, i.e., categorical use or non-use. Second-person plural (*vous*, "you") and first-person plural (*nous*, "we") were identified as knockouts with 0% frequency, suggesting -*tu* was not used at all in these contexts. Following standard methodology for variationist studies, these factors were eliminated from further analyses. The resulting dataset included 602 questions, of which 297 (49%) were produced by native speakers and 305 (51%) by near-native speakers. The data were then entered into Goldvarb for analysis.

For metalinguistic awareness, participants' responses were audio-recorded and transcribed, and coded following a 4-point metalinguistic awareness scale adapted from van Compernolle & Williams (2011). Coding was done by the author and an independent rater, with an inter-rater reliability rating of 100%. The coding scheme is described in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

Metalinguistic Awareness Coding Scheme

Score	Description	Example
0	Does not identify variation or provide an accurate explanation	***It's more about the delivery***, *you know? Like hey,* ça va*?*
1	Recognizes *-tu* variation but no explanation, or describes variation in a general sense	***I would say est-ce que is the more formal and also etes-vous, aimes-tu***, *that sort of thing. For informal, I yeah, I'd say* t'es-tu la*?*
2	Identifies *-tu* variation but provides vague/inaccurate explanation	*[-tu] isn't like standard French grammar because **you repeat the tu.***
3	Identifies *-tu* variation and provides accurate (though perhaps incomplete) explanation	*Formal is like Desirez-vous autre chose… the informal version is like qu'est-ce que tu veux toi... -tu is informal, we **just add it to the end of the, the verb** it seems?*

Results

To establish that the native and near-native speakers had comparable grammatical competence, both groups' mean scores from the grammaticality judgment test were compared by question. These scores are presented in Table 2.3. Items 1 to 5 represent grammatical sentences, 6 to 10 represent ambiguous sentences, and 11 to 15 represent ungrammatical sentences. The average scores are close between the native and near-native groups, despite some variability in the ambiguous sentences. Cronbach's alpha was α = .75, indicating that the condensed GJT had acceptable internal reliability. An independent samples *t*-test showed no significant differences

between the native ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.84$) and the near-native speakers ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.78$), $t(8) = .121$, $p = .90$, which confirms that the near-native speakers' grammatical intuitions are at least comparable to those of native speakers.

Table 2.3

Grammaticality Judgment Scores by Item for Native and Near-native Speakers

Item	Native Speaker *M* (SD)	Near-native Speaker *M* (SD)
Grammatical		
1	4.9 (.32)	5.0 (0)
2	5.0 (0)	4.9 (.32)
3	5.0 (.0)	5.0 (0)
4	5.0 (0)	5.0 (0)
5	5.0 (0)	5.0 (0)
M (SD)	4.98 (.04)	4.98 (.04)
Ambiguous		
6	1.8 (.42)	2.0 (0)
7	1.2 (.42)	1.5 (.53)
8	1.6 (.52)	1.4 (.52)
9	1.5 (.53)	1.3 (.48)
10	1.1 (.32)	1.2 (.42)
M (SD)	1.44 (.29)	1.48 (.31)
Ungrammatical		
11	1.2 (42)	1.4 (.84)
12	1.0 (0)	1.2 (.42)
13	1.0 (0)	1.1 (.32)
14	1.0 (.0)	1.4 (.70)
15	1.0 (0)	1.1 (.32)
M (SD)	1.04 (.09)	1.24 (.15)

The first research question asked whether near-native speakers of QF pattern similarly to native speakers in their use of the *-tu* question particle, following predictors identified in the literature. Table 2.4 shows the distribution of the yes-no questions between the native and near-native speakers. Despite the near-equal distribution of yes-no questions between the two groups, the native speakers produced a much higher proportion of *-tu*: 90 of the 297 (30%) took the *-tu*

form, compared to 46 of 305 (15%) for near-native speakers. An independent-samples *t*-test revealed that this was a significant difference, $t(18) = 2.06$, $p = .02$.

Table 2.4

Yes/No and -tu Questions Produced by Native and Near-native Speakers

	Total Y/N questions	***-tu* questions**	**% rate of use**
Native	297	90	30%
Near-native	305	46	15%
Total	602	136	23%

To determine whether the significance could be traced to individual or interlocutor effects, the questions and *-tu* rates of use for the native and near-native speaker in each dyad were 9compared using chi-square tests. The significance level was set at .05 for all comparisons. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 2.5. As the table shows, significant inter-speaker differences were found in four out of ten dyads (6, 7, 9, and 10), all with the near-native partner underusing the feature. All but one of the near-native speakers used *-tu* at lower rates than their native-speaker partners. The exception is the near-native speaker in dyad 4, who appeared to use *-tu* more than twice as often as her partner. Overall, the data suggest that while near-native speakers might sometimes converge with the question patterns of their interlocutors, they use *-tu* less frequently overall.

Table 2.5

Distribution of Yes/No and -tu Questions by Dyad

Dyad	Native	-tu (%)	Near-native	-tu (%)	Frequency comparison
1	42	15 (36%)	22	7 (32%)	X^2 (1, N = 64) = .10, p = .76
2	21	7 (33%)	21	2 (10%)	X^2 (1, N = 42) 3.54, p = .06
3	24	6 (25%)	29	7 (24%)	X^2 (1, N = 53) = .005, p = .94
4	21	3 (14%)	24	7 (29%)	X^2 (1, N = 45) = 1.43, p = .23
5	28	5 (18%)	27	3 (11%)	X^2 (1, N = 55) = .503, p = .48
6*	34	7 (21%)	48	3 (6%)	X^2 (1, N = 82) = 3.82, p = .05
7*	32	14 (44%)	33	4 (12%)	X^2 (1, N = 65) = 8.12, p = .004
8	30	10 (33%)	39	6 (15%)	X^2 (1, N = 69) = 3.07, p = .08
9*	37	12 (32%)	34	3 (9%)	X^2 (1, N = 71) = 5.93, p = .01
10*	28	11 (39%)	28	4 (14%)	X^2 (1, N = 56) = 4.46, p = .03
Total	297	90 (29%)	305	46 (16%)	X^2 (1, N = 602) = 19.9, p < .001

*Significant difference in -tu rates of use between speakers.

The results of the Goldvarb analysis for the entire dataset are presented in Table 2.6. Goldvarb performs a stepwise regression analysis to select the factor groups that make up the strongest explanatory model. The resulting model included only two factor groups: speaker status (native or near-native) and task type (casual, controlled, and semi-controlled). These are marked by square brackets in the table. As the table shows, and corroborating previous research, the largest difference in factor weights can be observed in speaker status; that is, native speakers are much more likely to use the feature than near-native speakers. For the latter, casual speech favoured the use of -tu, as predicted.

Within the variationist paradigm, factor weights over .50 indicate that a factor favours application of the rule, i.e., the feature under study is more likely to occur in the presence of that factor (Tagliamonte, 2006). Following this standard, a number of factor groups contradict predictions in the literature. These are indicated with an asterisk (*) in the table. For verb length, use of -tu was favoured by polysyllabic (e.g., *voyager*, "to travel") rather than monosyllabic verbs (e.g., *être*, "to be"). For subject, -tu was favoured by all but the expected predictive factor,

the third person singular. Tagliamonte (2006, p. 145) also recommends considering factor weights relative to each other; that is, how factors rank in their predictive power. Taking this into account, it is worth noting that, with the exception of speaker status and task type, the individual factor weights within each factor are very close, with the weaker factor typically approaching the .50 threshold.

Table 2.6

Goldvarb Analysis Results for Use of -tu in Yes/No Questions

Corrected mean			.20
Log likelihood			—296.979
Total *N*			602
Linguistic factors			
	Factor weight	**%**	**N**
Verb length*			
Monosyllabic	.48	21	95
Polysyllabic	.56	27	41
Verb semantics			
Cognitive	.49	28	17
Non-cognitive	.50	22	119
Subject*			
1st person singular	.65	35	6
2nd person singular	.52	28	43
3rd person singular	.48	20	79
3rd person plural	.65	29	8
Lexicalization			
Lexicalized	.51	21	71
Non-lexicalized	.48	24	65
Extralinguistic factors			
Speaker status			
Native	[.61]	30	91
Near-native	[.39]	15	45
Gender			
Male	.50	21	71
Female	.50	25	65
Task type			
Casual	[.64]	33	82
Semi-controlled	[.34]	12	24
Controlled	[.49]	20	30

*Relative factor weights not as hypothesized

One possible reason for these results is that the collective factor weights are influenced by the patterning of one group of speakers. Given the large difference in factor weights between the native and near-native speakers, it is likely that these two populations of native and near-native speakers have distinct patterns that may be obscured by the initial analysis. To test this hypothesis, separate Goldvarb analyses were conducted on each group's dataset. Tables 2.7 and 2.8 show the results of these analyses for the native and near-native speakers, respectively.

Table 2.7

Goldvarb Analysis Results for Native Speakers

Corrected mean			.29
Log likelihood			—169.636
Total *N*			297
Linguistic factors			
	Factor weight	**%**	**N**
Verb length			
Monosyllabic	[.46]	27	58
Polysyllabic	[.62]	41	32
Verb semantics			
Cognitive	.47	41	13
Non-cognitive	.50	29	77
Subject			
1st person singular	.53		4
2nd person singular	.57	40	31
3rd person singular	.46	25	50
3rd person plural	.74	56	5
Lexicalization			
Lexicalized	.47	26	40
Non-lexicalized	.53	35	50
Extralinguistic factors			
Gender			
Male	[.49]	32	52
Female	[.51]	29	38
Task type			
Casual	[.65]	43	58
Semi-controlled	[.33]	17	16
Controlled	[.43]	23	16

Table 2.8

Goldvarb Analysis Results for Near-native Speakers

Corrected mean			.13
Log likelihood			—122.135
Total *N*			305
Linguistic factors			
	Factor weight	**%**	**N**
Verb length			
Monosyllabic	.52	16	37
Polysyllabic	.45	12	9
Verb semantics			
Cognitive	.47	13	4
Non-cognitive	.50	15	42
Subject			
1st person singular	.84	40	2
2nd person singular	.47	16	12
3rd person singular	.50	14	29
3rd person plural	.53	16	3
Lexicalization			
Lexicalized	[.57]	17	31
Non-lexicalized	[.39]	12	15
Extralinguistic factors			
Gender			
Male	.49	11	19
Female	.51	21	27
Task type			
Casual	[.65]	21	24
Semi-controlled	[.30]	7	8
Controlled	[.58]	17	14

The separate analyses revealed different best-fitting models for each group. Task type remained a significant factor group for both; however, use of -*tu* was favoured only in casual speech for native speakers, whereas it was favoured in casual and controlled speech by near-native speakers. Each group also responded to one additional factor group: the near-native speakers appeared more likely to use -*tu* in lexicalized versus non-lexicalized contexts, while the native speakers seemed to favour -*tu* in polysyllabic over monosyllabic verbs.

We now turn to the second research question, which compared metalinguistic awareness of QF question variation between the two groups. Participants' responses in the metalinguistic interview were transcribed and coded according to a 4-point metalinguistic awareness scale (see Table 2.2). Figure 2.1 provides an overview of the scores comparing native and near-native speakers.
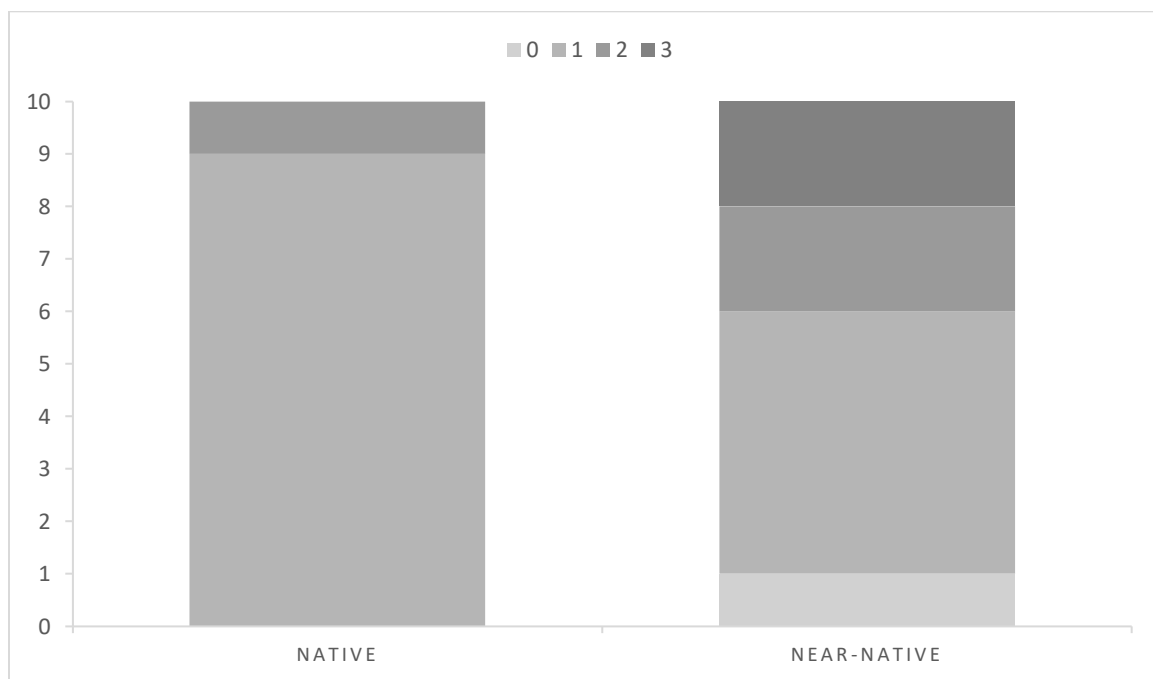
Figure 2.1. Metalinguistic awareness scores for native and near-native speakers.

All but one of the native speakers scored 1; that is, they simply recognize *-tu* as one of multiple possible question forms in QF, but are unable to elaborate on this variation. Most of these responses were limited to distinctions between formal and informal registers, correctly identifying *-tu* as informal. One native speaker scored 2, meaning she was able to identify *-tu* as a question form variant but the attempt to explain this variation was vague or inaccurate. Overall, metalinguistic awareness was low among native speakers.

There was more variability among the near-native speakers. One scored 0 as he did not show any awareness of syntactic variation, orienting more towards phonological features (i.e., intonation). Two speakers reached the highest possible score, 3, which is characterized by identification of *-tu* within a set of variable question forms along with an accurate explanation. Both of these speakers were able to comment on the grammatical behaviour of *-tu*, with one explaining that it is added to the end of the verb and the other noting that it is used in yes-no questions.

Discussion

Rates and Patterns of Use

This study compared the frequency and patterns of use of the *-tu* question particle in native and near-native speakers of QF, and found that (1) near-native speakers use this feature significantly less than native speakers; and (2) use of this feature is conditioned by similar factors in the two groups, but the strongest predictors differ. While both groups are most likely to use the feature in casual speech, as predicted in the QF literature, near-native speakers also seem to show a preference for using it in the controlled condition. This goes against the expected result that informal variants typically occur in unmonitored or casual speech. However, a possible explanation may lie precisely in the level of cognitive control: while native speakers might apply the expected patterning for a vernacular form such as *-tu* without much thought (Preston, 2000), its use by near-native speakers might represent a deviation from a standard or prestige grammar, which they may be more familiar with (Tarone, 1983). This may be related to lexicalization, the other significant factor that emerged in the near-native speaker model. Near-native speakers favoured the use of *-tu* in frequent, lexicalized expressions such as *c'est-tu* and *il y a-tu*, suggesting that they most strongly associate the particle with certain constructions, or are most

likely to use it as part of memorized chunks. Tarone (1983) also suggests that variability in L2 usage can result from "overlapping mental grammars"; that is, learners develop different grammatical systems that correspond to different types of interaction, and adjust their usage patterns for various grammatical forms as they encounter these different contexts. For example, for the near-native speaker in dyad 4, the *-tu* question marker may still be governed by competing mental grammars, resulting in a significant overuse of the form compared to her native-speaker interlocutor. It is also possible that each user's idiolect influences her or his use or non-use of the particle, a factor that may be worth investigating in a different study.

For the native speakers, the other significant factor group was verb length, with *-tu* use favoured in the presence of polysyllabic verbs. Again, this is contrary to predictions in the literature. A possible explanation is that *-tu* is more widespread in this age group and is being applied to an increasing range of contexts, with the change first being observed in native speakers. It is also likely that native speakers are more comfortable extending the use of *-tu* in a larger variety of linguistic environments, as opposed to the near-native speakers, whose use of the feature is more limited to lexicalized expressions.

The findings on rates of use contradict those of Blondeau and Nagy (2004) and Nagy et al. (2003), who found that L2 QF speakers with extensive exposure to the language patterned similarly to L1 speakers. To a lesser extent, they also run counter to Donaldson (2016), who found that near-native speakers display similar patterns of sociolinguistic variation to native speakers in their use of question forms. Rather, the near-native speakers in the present study pattern more similarly to learners in foreign-language contexts, who underuse informal variants (for an overview of this research, see Dewaele, 2004a) and almost categorically avoid vernacular variants (Nadasdi et al., 2005). It may be that because the *-tu* particle is an almost universally

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informal variant in QF, with a social role similar to those of local slang, it is more of an in-group marker in QF than features studied in previous research (e.g., *ne* deletion and use of *on* instead of *nous*). Dewaele (2004b) has found evidence that L2 speakers hesitate to delete *ne* specifically when speaking to native speakers because it may conflict with their perceived status as non-expert speaker. The same phenomenon may explain why the near-native speakers in the present study continue to underuse *-tu*, despite years of exposure and likely some declarative knowledge of how the feature is used.

The reasons for these findings may also be methodological. Previous studies have used spontaneous conversations (Donaldson, 2016, 2017) and informal interviews (e.g., Regan, 1995) without targeting a specific language feature. The present study used structured tasks designed to elicit as many questions as possible with a roughly equal distribution between factor groups. Although the participants were well acquainted and measures were taken to create an informal environment, this structure may have caused the speakers to adopt some level of formality, with the near-native speakers being especially cautious for the reasons described above.

The fact that near-native speakers tend to use *-tu* most when it exists in a lexicalized form suggests that they do have sociolinguistic competence in the form of awareness of frequently used constructions. Specifically, they adjust their language to the context by mirroring expressions frequently used by their native-speaker peers, rather than actively deviating from standard question forms. There is ample evidence of L2 users relying on such "lexical chunks" to communicate (e.g., Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Schmitt, 2000). In this case, chunks may be supporting L2 speakers' sociolinguistic competence by allowing them to approximate L1 norms without necessarily attending to the syntactic features of these norms. However, the fact that their use of *-tu* is restricted to these contexts demonstrates that they have not fully adopted QF

variation patterns. In other words, they draw on sociolinguistic competence to recognize—and occasionally produce—frequently occurring forms in certain contexts, but these forms are not productive across the range of contexts that exist in QF.

Another unexpected result was that both female and male speakers were equally likely to use *-tu*. As mentioned earlier, this might simply indicate that *-tu* is a stable form of QF and no longer represents linguistic change among native speakers. For near-native speakers, two possibilities were identified: that female speakers, being historically the leaders of language change (at least in L1 communities), would use the *-tu* more readily than males, or that males would use it more because of its covert prestige. It is possible that both factors are at play: the females are attempting to converge with local norms while males are using the vernacular for social positioning, resulting in overall similar rates of use.

Metalinguistic Awareness

The near-native speakers showed an overall greater ability to identify and explain the sociolinguistic and grammatical behaviour of *-tu*. The majority of these speakers scored 2, indicating that they are able to identify and partially explain the variable feature; notably, two participants scored 3, meaning they also provided accurate grammatical and sociolinguistic explanations. In contrast, all but one of the native speakers scored 1, indicating that they are aware of some variation but are unable to identify or explain it. While the sample size of 10 per group is not sufficient to make definitive claims about differences in metalinguistic awareness, perhaps a more interesting takeaway is the difference in variability of scores within each group. One explanation may lie in the formal instruction received by the near-native speakers, at least for those who were able to identify the locus of variation (i.e., who scored 2 or higher). Although these speakers are unlikely to have learned the *-tu* question in the classroom, the differences in

their classroom learning experiences could have resulted in varying levels of grammatical awareness, or varying inclinations to reflect on observed grammatical forms.

Limitations and Future Research

Because of the small number of speakers per group, the quantitative results may be skewed by usage patterns within individual speakers. This is especially likely as the tasks appear to have elicited an unbalanced number of questions among speakers (see Table 2). In addition, the questions with first-person singular and third-person plural subjects are sparse and may have exaggerated the factor weights. This difference was especially evident in the semi-controlled task, as most of the questions were about the images and thus used the third person. A larger sample would mitigate the effects of these differences on overall statistical results.

The stepwise method used by Goldvarb may also have missed other important factors; however, since factors have not been investigated in detail, there is no theoretical motivation for prioritizing one factor over another. Therefore, the stepwise approach fits the purpose of exploratory model building for the present study (Sankoff et al., 2005). Nonetheless, future studies should be conducted with larger, more balanced samples and using more robust statistical tests to confirm these findings.

Despite these limitations, the findings point to interesting directions for future research. Notably, an investigation of the role of the *-tu* question marker as a socially marked feature, using more recent speech data, might reveal other factors that influence its use, such as the speaker's age, gender, and socioeconomic status, all of which condition other linguistic features (Dewaele, 2004a; Labov, 2001). Also worth exploring are the different factors that contribute to

the underuse of *-tu*, including, as suggested by Dewaele (2004b), L2 speakers' identification as language users.

Introduction to Study Two

Study One showed that even in what could be considered ideal conditions for acquiring a sociolinguistic variable, and despite some metalinguistic understanding, near-native speakers of QF significantly underused *-tu* compared to their native-speaker peers. Study Two aimed to explore whether a social-psychological approach could shed some light on this finding, investigating the roles of learners' engagement with the L2 community and the size and quality of their L2 social networks. In addition, to determine whether the status of *-tu* as a vernacular variant also contributed to underuse, Study Two also examined other features at different points on a stylistic continuum. Of the three studies in this dissertation, this study provides the most in-depth look at sociolinguistic agency: it considers sociolinguistic performance from the L2 speaker's perspective, allowing a direct examination of how learner-internal factors play into their sociolinguistic choices.

Chapter Three: Study Two

Engagement, Social Networks, and the Sociolinguistic Performance of Quebec French Learners

The acquisition of sociolinguistic variation is a well-documented challenge among learners of French as a second language (L2). Research in this area has focused on how L2 users come to approximate proficient or native speakers' usage of informal versus prescribed variants, such as deletion of the negative particle *ne* (Armstrong, 2002; Dewaele, 1992; Dewaele & Regan, 2002; Regan, 2004; Rehner, 2010) and the use of *on* as a first-person plural pronoun instead of *nous* (Regan et al., 2009; Rehner et al., 2003). These studies have found that learners underuse informal variants compared to native speakers, and make almost no use of what Nadasdi et al. (2005) call vernacular variants: usually stigmatized, community-specific features such as the Canadian French/Quebec *rien que* ('only') and *m'as* (reduced form of *je vais,* 'I'm going to').

Several studies point to the facilitative role of context of learning in sociolinguistic development. More frequent use of informal sociolinguistic variants has been observed in learners having completed study abroad (SA) periods in Francophone communities (Kinginger, 2008; Lemée & Regan, 2010; Regan, 1995; Regan et al., 2009) and those who have regular interaction with Francophones outside the classroom (Mougeon et al., 2004). Similar findings have been reported for sociolinguistic performance in other target languages, including Spanish (Geeslin, Fafulas, & Kanwit, 2013; Kennedy Terry, 2017) and Arabic (Trentman, 2017).

Taken together, these studies seem to suggest that spending time in the target language community promotes sociolinguistic development. However, there may be possible barriers to acquisition resulting from learners' desire—or lack thereof—to align themselves with the target

language culture. Howard (2012b), for example, has offered evidence that individual learners can have considerably different learning trajectories, which can be influenced by factors outside of the learning context such as identity, attitudes, and engagement with the target language. Along with other researchers, he calls for a greater focus on such individual factors and their effects on L2 sociolinguistic development (Howard, 2012b; Howard, R. Mougeon, & Dewaele, 2013).

Part of the reason that these factors have not been explored in depth is that much of the literature comes from a variationist perspective, which relies on predetermined—albeit theoretically or empirically supported—social categories (though see Drummond, 2012, and Regan, 2013, for exceptions) and whose focus is on statistical associations between such categories and the use of a given sociolinguistic variable. Individual factors such as identity and engagement do not lend themselves well to such categorization. A social psychological perspective, on the other hand, may be better equipped to handle these learner-centric factors: rather than objective categorizations, it is concerned with learners' *perceptions* of the groups they are and are not part of, the relationships between these groups, and their relationships with other individuals (Ellis, 2008).

The present study takes on such a perspective to complement current research on sociolinguistic variation in L2 French. Using a mixed-methods approach, it aims to 1) provide additional insights into two constructs, engagement and social network, and 2) explain quantitative associations between these factors and sociolinguistic performance, using qualitative data on previous learning experiences and the possible social values of different sociolinguistic targets.

Engagement

Svalberg (2009) used the term *engagement with language* to describe learners' attitudes and behaviours towards a target language. This definition recognizes three aspects of engagement: affective, referring to perceptions of the language and its speakers; social, referring to readiness to initiate and maintain interactions; and cognitive, referring to awareness of linguistic features. The role of engagement in sociolinguistic development was recently investigated by Mougeon and Rehner (2015). Based on interviews about their learners' language learning experiences and behaviours, they identified three levels of engagement, each differentiated by bilingual or multilingual status: highly engaged bilinguals and multilinguals, moderately engaged bilinguals and multilinguals, and minimally engaged bilinguals and multilinguals. These classifications correspond roughly with the affective and social aspects of Svalberg's definition, in that highly engaged learners have spent or intend to spend considerable time in Francophone communities, have well-developed bilingual or Francophone identities, and have frequent interactions in French. These learners also made more use of informal variants at the phonological, lexical, and grammatical levels.

Social Network

Mougeon and Rehner's (2015) findings suggest that a social network that offers ample opportunities for exposure and interaction may be conducive to sociolinguistic development. Milroy (1987) defines a social network as a circle of contacts that people form within a community. He describes networks in terms of *density*, the number of shared connections within the network, and *complexity*, the variety of roles fulfilled by individual members. Studies applying social network theory to L2 acquisition show that large, dense, and complex networks offer better opportunities for the kind of discourse that supports overall linguistic development

(e.g., Dewey, Bown, & Eggett, 2012; Trentman, 2013). Social network effects on *sociolinguistic* development are less clear. Adamson and Regan (1991) found that Vietnamese and Cambodian learners of English acquired the informal *-in* progressive verb ending (vs. *-ing*) through regular contact with English speakers. In contrast, Ringer-Hilfinger (2012) found that SA learners in Spain noticed, but did not acquire, the variable phoneme /θ/. The author relates this finding to the learners' predominantly Latin American networks, whose variety of Spanish lacks the /θ/ variant. Recent studies have also considered the impact of specific social network characteristics, finding that learners benefit from varied and complex social networks. In an exploratory study of SA learners in France, Gautier and Chevrot (2015) reported higher *ne* deletion rates in learners who had both local and SA contacts from several social circles compared to those with fewer social circles. Trentman (2017) reported similar results in the acquisition of regional variation, finding that learners in Egypt who socialized with both local and SA students acquired features of Egyptian Arabic, despite having been instructed in Standard Arabic.

The Link Between Engagement and Social Networks

Although both engagement and social network characteristics correlate with sociolinguistic performance, it is unclear whether and how these factors are related. There is some evidence that engagement might result from access to supportive social networks. Isabelli-Garcia (2006) found that American SA learners in Argentina who gained access to a circle of local contacts showed greater linguistic development over time, measured through expert ratings of overall proficiency and morphosyntactic accuracy. This social network access appears to influence learners' positioning within and attitudes toward the linguistic community. For example, one participant had trouble initiating interactions with her host family, which led to negative perceptions of the community and, consequently, of the target language. Kinginger

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(2008, 2011), studying SA learners in France, found that those who had negative experiences with locals or failed to form strong relationships retreated into a comfort zone that purposely excluded French speakers, severely limiting their learning opportunities. However, to my knowledge, no research has directly looked at how social networks might predict engagement, and which of its aspects might be relevant.

Informal and Vernacular Variants

Sociolinguistic performance is typically operationalized as the frequency with which learners use informal variants. Howard (2012b) argues that sociolinguistic competence might be better understood in terms of the emergence of multiple features within individuals. He provides evidence that frequently used informal variants such as *ne* deletion and first-person *on* are usually acquired before less frequent ones, and calls for more research investigating such patterns.

In line with Howard's observations, it is worth noting that much of sociolinguistic development research has focused on variables that are documented across Francophone communities. Less attention has been paid to vernacular features, which are often community-specific. Vernaculars typically occur in highly informal, unmonitored speech (Preston, 2000) and are associated with lower social strata (Nadasdi et al., 2005). In Canadian French, Nadasdi et al. (2005) place vernacular variants at the least formal end of a stylistic continuum. *Ne* retention (versus deletion) and *nous* (versus *on*) are considered formal and prescribed in most pedagogical materials (Etienne & Sax, 2009). Informal and vernacular variants are characterized by deviation from this standard. However, vernacular variants are also often closely associated with a particular region or speech community. As such, they also tend to mark group membership. This is certainly the case for the two Quebec French (QF) vernacular variants examined in the present

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study: subject doubling (*Paul il vient de Bruxelles* "Paul <u>he</u> comes from Brussels") and the *-tu* question particle (*On y va-TU?* "We go-TU?").

Because of this added social value, vernaculars may be particularly sensitive to social-psychological factors such as engagement and social networks, although there is little empirical support to this claim. Immersion learners' underuse of informal variants and almost nonexistent use of vernacular variants has been attributed to the near absence of these features in teacher talk and pedagogical materials (Nadasdi et al., 2005; Rehner & Mougeon, 2003). This is not always the case for SA learners. For example, Geeslin et al. (2013) found that SA students in Spain and Mexico were able to use variable present-perfect constructions characteristic of their respective host countries over time. Likewise, the SA students in Salgado-Robles (2011) showed increased awareness and use of the geographically variable Spanish dative *le(s)* after their stay.

Learner Populations

While social psychological factors have been explored among university and SA learners, these same factors may have different effects outside of the academic settings in which most L2 sociolinguistic variation research has been carried out. The few studies investigating immigrant learners in non-academic settings do point to such a difference, particularly with regard to ethnic and linguistic identities (Cervatiuc, 2009; Drummond, 2012; Regan, 2013). Unlike university and SA students, these learners typically intend to stay in the host community for longer periods and face more urgent economic pressures to learn the language. Therefore, they may have different incentives to conform to local linguistic norms, including vernacular features.

The present study focuses on such a population in an attempt to reveal differences in their sociolinguistic development compared to university learners. In doing so, it also responds to

Andringa and Godfroid's (2019) call to extend L2 research to non-academic populations. In response to Howard (2012b), it also examines individual factors in relation to the acquisition of different sociolinguistic targets, and considers learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the target language. The research questions are as follows:

1. What engagement profiles can be drawn for immigrant learners based on their language learning experiences, strategies, and attitudes? How do these relate to their social networks?

2. Are there engagement and social network characteristics associated with their use of informal and vernacular variants of QF?

Method

Participants

Participants were advanced French L2 learners in a French-medium university in Quebec, Canada. The setting was non-academic as the course was not part of a degree program; rather, it was an independent course aimed at refining oral communication skills. To ensure that learners had some incentive to learn and adopt local linguistic norms, an important criterion for participation was an intent to live and work in Quebec in the next few years. This was clearly stated during recruitment and verified with each participant before data collection.

The final pool consisted of 21 participants, ranging in age from 25 to 52. All came to Quebec as immigrants between 2013 and 2017 and had completed one to four years of French study prior to taking the current course ($M = 2.7$ years). As the course required completion of prior intermediate courses or passing an advanced placement test, the learners were all considered to have advanced proficiency. They spoke a variety of first languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and Mandarin.

Data Collection

Data consisted of a 40- to 60-minute sociolinguistic interview following the Labovian paradigm (Tagliamonte, 2006) and a social network inventory questionnaire adapted from Lybeck (2002). Data collection took place in a research laboratory in Montreal, Quebec, between March and April 2019. The two instruments were administered consecutively, both in French, starting with the sociolinguistic interview, to ensure that the language and content were not influenced by the questions in the social network questionnaire.

Sociolinguistic Interview

The sociolinguistic interview was primarily designed to elicit casual speech (Labov, 1972). Following Mougeon and Rehner (2015), a secondary goal was to obtain qualitative information about the participants' language learning experiences, strategies, and attitudes, which were used to determine their engagement profiles. The first part of the interview was unstructured, allowing participants to talk about their interests and feel at ease with the interviewer. Because one of the linguistic targets is a question form, this was designed to be a two-way conversation, with the interviewer also offering new information and encouraging the participant to ask questions. The second part was semi-structured, with mandatory questions on participants' experiences as language learners and newcomers to Quebec. Typical questions in this section include: *What are the challenges of studying a second language? How do you cope with these challenges? Do you think it is important to learn QF?*

Several measures were taken to minimize the observer's paradox (Labov, 1970), the effect of the observer's presence on the authenticity of participants' speech. The interviews were conducted by a native speaker of QF, who maintained a friendly mood and established common

ground with participants by sharing similar interests and experiences. Participants were encouraged to talk about their personal experiences, which Labov (1970) recommends for eliciting unmonitored speech. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed; however, the first ten minutes were excluded from the analysis to allow the participants time to get accustomed to the recorder and interviewer. To create a context that would bring out any awareness or knowledge of the target features, the interviewer was also instructed to use the target features wherever contextually appropriate. The interviewer was extensively trained on the interview protocol before data collection, and followed an interview schedule with these parameters highlighted.

Social Network Inventory Questionnaire

Several instruments have been developed to capture social network characteristics (e.g., Milroy & Margrain, 1980; Dewey et al., 2012). However, the social network inventory questionnaire developed by Lybeck (2002) best served the purposes of the study as it is specifically designed for immigrant learners. It also gathers information on various kinds of social and material support, which may be particularly relevant to this population. The interviewer was present to help participants complete the questionnaire to make sure the questions were well understood and accurately answered.

The questionnaire followed Lybeck's (2002) procedure, with one exception: whereas Lybeck included both L1 (English) and L2 (Norwegian) contacts, this study only asked participants to list contacts they interacted with at least partly in French, as the focus is on learners' relationships with the L2 community and the learning opportunities it affords. Participants identified which of five types of support each contact provided: emotional, social, practical, financial, and informational. A contact can provide emotional support by offering

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encouragement, sympathy, or reassurance; social support by offering company for leisure activities; practical support by assisting in tasks such as moving or running errands; financial support by offering money or other material resources; and informational support by giving advice or information. A person could provide support in multiple categories. Next, participants rated each contact on the frequency of their interactions, closeness, reciprocity (i.e., whether one gives or receives more than the other, or whether both contribute equally), and complexity (i.e., whether they see each other in one or several contexts, such as work and leisure).

Participants then indicated which of their network members knew each other beyond mere acquaintance. Two members were considered to know each other if, for example, they had spent time together as part of the same group. This provided a measure of network density per Milroy's (1987) definition. Satisfaction is defined as the degree to which the participant is satisfied with the amount of support he or she receives for each of the five types of support. A complete list of these characteristics and their measurement is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Social Network Measures

Characteristic	Measure
Overall	
Size	Number of members
Density	% of members who know each other
Satisfaction • **Emotional** • **Social** • **Practical** • **Financial** • **Information**	1 – not satisfied at all 5 – extremely satisfied
Individual	
Support • Emotional • Social • Practical • Financial • Information	1 – not satisfied at all 5 – extremely satisfied
Interaction frequency	1 – once a month or less 5 – every day
Closeness	1 – not close at all 5 – extremely close
Reciprocity	1 – gives much more than receives 3 – gives and receives equally 5 – receives much more than gives
Complexity	1 – relationship limited to one context 3 – contact in several contexts

Sociolinguistic Variables

The sociolinguistic variables under study are *ne* deletion, first-person *on*, *-tu* question tag, and subject doubling. These features vary in their level of formality according to the stylistic continuum (Nadasdi et al., 2005) and the extent to which they are associated with the QF variety.

Ne **deletion.** *Ne* deletion in informal speech is widely attested in both European and Canadian/Quebec French. This feature is increasingly widespread; Ashby (1976, 1981, 2001) reported decreasing retention rates of 56%, 37%, and 18% in France over a 20-year period. In Canadian/Quebec French, near-categorical deletion was reported as early as Sankoff and Vincent (1977), suggesting that it is a stable informal variant in this variety.

First-person *on*. The use of *on* as a first-person plural pronoun is also well documented across Francophone communities (Mougeon & Rehner, 2009). However, its status as an informal variant appears to be in flux: scholars speculate that it is in the process of replacing its formal counterpart, *nous*, as the standard first-person pronoun (Etienne, 2018; Fonseca-Greber & Waugh, 2003). Fonseca-Greber and Waugh found near-categorical use of *on* (99%) in first-person contexts, with the rare use of *nous* by older speakers, which they interpret as an 'all but completed' change. Etienne (2018) observed a similar trend in teacher talk, suggesting that learners may also be aware of this change through classroom exposure.

Subject doubling. Subject doubling involves following a strong subject, typically a lexical subject, with a corresponding personal pronoun, e.g., *Ma mère elle m'appelle souvent* ('My mother she calls me often'). This feature is common in Ontario French and is characteristic of, though not exclusive to QF (Auger, 1998; Nagy et al., 2003). It may be considered a vernacular in that it is geographically conditioned and is closely associated with the Quebec Francophone community. Because the present study is concerned with aspects of social identity, for purposes of analysis, subject doubling will be considered a vernacular carrying less strong associations with the target language community.

-*tu* question particle. In QF, the first verb in yes-no questions is sometimes marked by the particle -*tu,* e.g., *Elle a-TU fini?* ('Has-TU she finished?'). This feature has been traced to the

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particle *-ti*, a reduction of the question form *a-t-il*, e.g., *Pierre a-t-il appelé?* ('Pierre has [t] he called?'). This particle was eventually dropped from most European varieties, but was retained in QF as *-tu* (Elsig & Poplack, 2006). Although stigmatization of the feature in Quebec is not attested, unlike subject doubling, its use would be considered unacceptable in formal contexts, making it more of a vernacular variant.

Coding

Engagement themes. The interview transcripts were first analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Creswell, 2012), identifying common themes across participants. Because the interview was semi-structured, these themes partially corresponded with the key questions in the interview protocol; however, additional themes also emerged. Coding was iterative and recursive; that is, as more interviews were analyzed, emerging themes from previous interviews were revisited and refined to ensure consistency. An independent coder applied the coding scheme to the first three transcripts and compared results with the researcher. Discrepancies were found in two initial themes (reason for learning French and attitudes towards variation); these were resolved through discussion. The same coder verified the final themes on another three randomly selected transcripts, which revealed no further discrepancies.

Social network characteristics. The 16 social network variables are summarized in Table 3.1 above. Size referred to the number of members in the network, and density was calculated by dividing the number of existing connections with the total of all possible connections. For example, in a network of three people, the possible connections are A-B, B-C, and A-C. If A and C do not know each other, network density will be .67 (two of three possible connections). The rest of the variables were measured in Likert-type scales. The higher end of the scale represents positive characteristics, so that a satisfaction score of 4/5 means indicates

high satisfaction with the support provided by the network. An exception to this is reciprocity, where the middle score of 3 represents a fully reciprocal relationship and the high and low ends indicate an unbalanced relationship.

Linguistic Analysis

Each participant's transcript was analyzed for the four variables under study. For *ne* deletion, all instances of negation were identified and coded for the presence or absence of *ne*. Negations not requiring *ne* were excluded, such as those occurring at the beginning of a clause, e.g., *Je lis, mais pas beaucoup* ('I read, but not much'). For *on*, only uses that clearly referred to the first-person plural were included. Uses that could be interpreted as a third-person pronoun, as in *Comment on dit 'cataratas'?* ('how does one/do we say [waterfalls]?') were excluded. *-Tu* questions were identified and compared with the total number of yes-no questions. For subject doubling, all strong subjects were identified and coded for presence or absence of an accompanying subject pronoun.

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Analysis and Results

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Engagement Profiles

The first research question asked what engagement profiles could be drawn based on immigrant learners' language learning experiences, strategies, and attitudes, and whether and how these are related to their social network characteristics. The initial analysis aimed to identify themes that might differentiate between learners' engagement profiles. Five such themes were identified: motivations for learning French; seeking opportunities to interact in French; performing activities in French when other languages are available; desire to learn QF; and attitudes toward QF. Several participants gave multiple or conflicting responses for motivation, desire to learn QF, and attitudes towards QF. For these categories, the interviews were revisited

and each participant was assigned a primary and secondary response. For example, a participant who mostly talked about employment but occasionally mentioned making friends would be primarily motivated by practical reasons, and secondarily by integration. Initial classifications were based on the primary responses, and the secondary responses were used to identify further similarities or differences between groups. The final engagement categories were *highly engaged* (*N* = 7)*, moderately engaged* (*N* = 8)*,* and *minimally engaged* (*N* = 6). Other than the themes on QF, these profiles are similar to those arrived at by Mougeon and Rehner (2015). However, since most participants also spoke English in addition to their L1, there was no distinction between bilinguals and multilinguals. Table 3.2 shows the characteristics of these three engagement profiles according to the themes.

Table 3.2

Engagement Profile Characteristics

Participants	Highly engaged	Moderately engaged	Minimally engaged
Motivation to learn French	Integration, Personal interest	Practical, Integration	Obligation, Practical
Seeks interaction	Always	Sometimes	Sometimes
Language choice	French > L1	French = L1	French = L1
Wants to learn QF	Yes, speak and understand	Yes, mostly understand	No/understand only
Attitude towards QF	Positive/Neutral	Positive/Neutral	Negative/Neutral

The highly engaged learners were primarily learning French to better integrate with the community or out of personal interest in the language. In Excerpt 1, for example, the learner talks about his personal interest in reading French literature. These learners also purposely seek opportunities to interact with French speakers. While some acknowledge that speaking QF is not

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necessary, they personally want to learn it and have positive attitudes towards it (Excerpts 2 and 3).

Excerpt 1, Participant 2

Je suis dans la littérature, beaucoup des auteurs francophones… nous avons une grande bibliothèque à côté de nous, mais en russe, quand j'ai compris que je que peux parler cette langue ahh je peux lire les œuvres de littérature.

[I'm into literature, there are lots of French authors… we had a big library close by, but in Russian, so when I realized I could speak French, I could read these literary works]

Excerpt 2, Participant 11 :

RA: Est-ce que c'est important de parler comme les québécois?

P11: Oui il faut parler comme québécois mais … je ne pense pas que c'est vraiment nécessaire.

RA: Mais est-ce que t'aimerais ça parler comme ça, ou avoir l'accent québécois?

P11: Ouais.

[RA: Is it important to speak like Quebecers?

P11: Yeah but I don't think it's really necessary

RA: But would you like to speak like that, or have a Quebecois accent?

P11: Yeah]

Excerpt 3, Participant 12

Je pense que par rapport à l'intégration c'est important bien comprendre le français québécois… par exemple je me trouve en disant 'là' à la fin de mes phrases et ça c'est très québécois et parfois je m'entends ah oui, tu as comme la mélodie québécoise et ça c'est normal

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[I think in terms of integration it's important to understand QF… for example I find myself putting 'là' at the end of my sentences and that's very Quebecois, and sometimes I notice I have Quebecois intonation and that's normal]

The moderately engaged learners also valued integration, but this was secondary to practical reasons such as finding work. They only occasionally seek opportunities to use French, as they keep a close L1 community and are happy to do activities in either language. These learners do not consider it necessary to speak QF, but make an effort to be able to converse with native speakers. One learner seemed to associate QF with less-educated speakers (Excerpt 4), though he sees such speakers as a further resource for practice, suggesting a positive attitude. Others, as in Excerpt 5, insisted on the importance of learning QF despite finding it challenging at first.

Excerpt 4, Participant 1

Quand on converse par exemple avec ton concierge… il n'a pas terminé [university]… *mais par exemple pendant le soir j'ai appris quelques phrases québécoises, je peux utiliser demain avec le concierge.*

[When we talk to the janitor, for example… he didn't graduate from [university]... but for example if I learn a Quebecois expression in the evening, I can use it the next day with the janitor]

Excerpt 5, Participant 4

Tu veux-tu, tu veux-tu, moi je pense qu'ils parlent de moi, mais maintenant, je comprends -tu c'est comme est-ce que… c'est important à comprendre, ça facilite l'intégration avec les voisins et au milieu professionnel. Il faut parler des inconvénients de ne pas parler français, l'isolement de rester toujours dans la même culture

[*Tu veux-tu, tu veux-tu*, I thought they were talking about me, but now I understand that -*tu* is like *est-ce que*… it's important to understand, it makes it easier to integrate with your neighbours and at work. It's about the disadvantages of not speaking French, the isolation of always sticking to the same culture]

The minimally engaged learners also reported practical motivations, would do activities in either French or their L1, and occasionally mentioned integrating with the community. However, this was often out of a sense of duty rather than personal desire or interest. In Excerpt 6, for example, the learner feels a need to suppress her L1 out of respect for the Francophone community. Many learners also had negative orientations towards QF, claiming a preference for 'standard' French. However, unlike Excerpts 4 and 5 above, they had negative opinions of QF and saw no need to it (Excerpt 7).

Excerpt 6, Participant 6:

Quelques fois quand je suis dans le autobus, je ne suis pas sûre si parler en espagnole, je sens que je dérange l'autre… c'est comme façon de respecter l'autre. Tu es dans une ville qui on parle en français, tu parles en espagnole je ne comprends pas… je crois que ça dérange un peu.

[Sometimes on the bus, I'm not sure whether to speak Spanish, I feel like I'm bothering others… it's like a way of showing respect. You're in a French-speaking city, you speak Spanish and I don't understand… I think it bothers them a little]

Excerpt 7, Participant 7

Mon but premièrement apprendre de parler français standard… je ne veux pas parler maintenant comme Québécois… c'est langue de niveau vraiment bas… par exemple, comme personnes qui travaillent avec (laugh)… les plombiers.

[My priority is to speak standard French… I don't want to speak like Quebecois at this

point… it's a really low-level language… for example, like the person who works with…

(laugh) plumbers]

Engagement and Social Networks

With the engagement profiles created, we now turn to the quantitative social network

data. These data were compared between engagement profiles to see if they could be

differentiated by particular social network variables. This information is provided in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Social Network Characteristics by Engagement Profile

	Highly Engaged	Moderately Engaged	Minimally Engaged
Size	4	3.88	3.67
Density (0-1)	.63	.78	.89
Complexity (1-3)	2.43	2.21	1.35
Support[a]			
Emotional	3.57	3.13	3.17
Social	3.43	3.75	2.67
Practical	3.29	2.75	3.17
Financial	2	1.38	1.30
Information	3.43	3.63	3.17
Total Support	15.71	14.63	13.50
Satisfaction (1-5)			
Emotional	4.43	4.63	2.83
Social	3.86	4.25	2.67
Practical	4.14	4.13	3.00
Financial	4.14	3.75	3.17
Information	4.71	4.25	2.83
Total Satisfaction	4.26	4.20	2.90
Frequency (1-5)	3.77	3.74	4.25
Closeness (1-5)	3.46	3.59	4.17
Reciprocity (1-5)	3.09	2.80	3.20

[a]*Note.* Lybeck (2002) reported network support as the percentage of network members providing each type of support. However, because networks were too small to yield meaningful percentages, raw numbers are provided instead.

Participants had relatively small and dense Francophone networks: network sizes ranged from three to seven contacts, whereas previous studies report upwards of 10 contacts per participant and consider density scores over .30 to be high (Gautier & Chevrot, 2015). Nevertheless, there were noticeable trends in other social network characteristics. Highly engaged learners had the most complex networks; that is, they interacted with their contacts in multiple social contexts. They also reported more support and satisfaction in the practical and financial categories. Minimally engaged learners scored the lowest on all support measures except for practical and emotional, where they were at least comparable with the highly engaged group. Interestingly, they also reported having the most frequent interactions and closest relationships with their network members.

To determine whether and how these characteristics predict learners' engagement profiles, a multinomial logistic regression was performed. Collinearity diagnostics revealed that several variables were potentially collinear or redundant. Of the 16 variables, 9 significantly correlated with size, and 6 with frequency and reciprocity. Total support and total satisfaction were also highly collinear with their respective component variables. These variables were eliminated from the model, following Field (2017). Pairs of variables that showed potential collinearity were density and complexity; closeness and emotional support; and financial and practical support; and financial and practical support satisfaction. Again following Field, these were merged before inclusion in the model. The reference category for the dependent variable was high engagement, and the social network predictor variables were added to the model using an enter selection method. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Regression Results for Social Network and Engagement

Measures	Nagelkerke R^2
Density/Complexity	.76**
Support	
Emotional/closeness	.23*
Social	.04*
Practical/financial	.29
Information	.59
Satisfaction	
Emotional	.50
Social	.50
Practical/financial	.51
Information	.61**

*p = .05; **p < .01

Regression results indicated that the model was *not* significant, χ^2 (9, 21) = 45.86, $p =$ .23. Only four social network variables significantly predicted engagement profile: density/complexity, closeness/emotional support, social support, and satisfaction with informational support. This suggests that while there is some overlap between the two, social network characteristics as a whole do not reliably predict engagement as defined in the present study. The two constructs were thus treated as separate independent variables for the remaining analyses.

Engagement and Sociolinguistic Performance

The second research question asked whether engagement profiles and social networks were associated with sociolinguistic performance. Table 3.5 shows the mean rates of use in each engagement group. The participants produced limited contexts for *-tu* production (i.e., yes-no questions), and even in these contexts virtually never used it. This was therefore excluded from further statistical analysis. The other variables were subjected to either a one-way ANOVA or a

Kruskal-Wallis *H* test, depending on normality, with the target feature as a dependent variable

and engagement profile as the independent variable.

Table 3.5

Sociolinguistic Performance by Engagement Profile and Sociolinguistic Variable

Participants	Highly engaged Mean (SD)	Moderately engaged Mean (SD)	Minimally engaged Mean (SD)
ne deletion	59% (15%)	58% (23%)	29% (29%)
First-person *on*	84% (20%)	87% (11%)	85% (24%)
-tu question	0%	3% (9%)	0%
Subject doubling	74% (9%)	56% (10%)	37% (12%)

Ne **deletion.** Engagement profile had a significant effect on *ne* deletion, $F(2, 3.587)$, $p =$

.05. Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons revealed significant differences between high and low

engagement and between moderate and low ($p = .05$ in both cases), but not between high and

moderate ($p = .99$). This indicates that highly engaged and moderately engaged learners delete *ne*

at comparable rates, but significantly more than minimally engaged learners.

First-person *on*. The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no significant main effect of

engagement profile on first-person *on*, $\chi^2(2) = .597$, $p = .74$, indicating that learners choose *on*

over *nous* at similar rates regardless of engagement.

Subject doubling. There was a significant main effect of engagement profile on subject

doubling, $F(2, 22.733)$, $p < .001$. Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons revealed significant

differences across the board ($p < .001$ in all comparisons), suggesting that use of this feature

increases with engagement.

Social Network Variables and Sociolinguistic Performance

We now turn to the effect of social network variables on sociolinguistic performance. The assumption of a linear relationship was not met for several variables, ruling out the possibility of regression analysis. Instead bivariate correlations were run between each target feature and social network variable. As Table 3.6 shows, significant correlations were only found for subject doubling. This feature correlated with network complexity; emotional, social, and informational support satisfaction; and overall satisfaction.

Table 3.6

Correlations Between Social Network and Sociolinguistic Variables

	Ne deletion	1st person *on*	Subject doubling
Size	.06	.19	.16
Density	-.37	-.50	-.29
Complexity	-.28	.09	-.53*
Support			
Emotional	.14	.13	-.08
Social	-.01	.04	-.17
Practical	.13	.39	-.11
Financial	-.08	-.25	.26
Information	-.12	.25	-.04
Total Support	.02	.25	-.09
Satisfaction			
Emotional	.30	.08	.55*
Social	.16	.14	.34*
Practical	.32	.19	.32
Financial	.19	.07	.38
Information	.36	.04	.66**
Total Satisfaction	.30	.12	.50*
Frequency	-.11	.20	-.20
Closeness	-.30	-.10	-.41
Reciprocity	-.19	.10	-.06

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

Discussion

Engagement and Social Networks

This study examined the relationship between engagement and social network, and found that social network partially overlaps with, but does not predict level of engagement in this group of learners. Highly engaged learners have less dense and more complex Francophone networks; that is, they have contacts in several social circles and interact with them in a variety of contexts. Minimally engaged learners consistently scored lowest in support satisfaction, despite having average to high levels of practical and emotional support. These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that supportive social networks in the L2 community encourage positive attitudes and learning initiatives (Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Kinginger, 2008, 2011). Highly engaged learners also reported the most support and highest satisfaction in the practical, financial, and informational categories. These types of support may involve more risk-taking in the form of requesting favours or asking questions, which may have helped increase learners' confidence in interaction. Highly engaged learners may also be more comfortable taking these linguistic risks within their composite networks, which include a mix of casual and close contacts. Minimally engaged learners, with their closer contacts and greater emotional investment in their relationships, may be hesitant to such risks for fear of losing face.

Another interesting finding is that the immigrant learners in this study had small networks compared to university and SA learners (e.g., Dewey et al., 2012; Gautier & Chevrot, 2015). A likely explanation is that these learners, like many immigrant populations, find themselves balancing language learning efforts with work, family, and other responsibilities. With fewer opportunities to form relationships in the host community, many of them rely on L1 contacts to meet emotional, social, and practical needs. Even so, they varied considerably in their

attitudes and engagement levels. Many participants with very small networks were highly

engaged, while the participant with the largest social network (seven members) was only

moderately engaged. The engagement profile themes suggest that highly engaged learners may

overcome social network limitations by seeking interaction in French outside their social circles,

similar to high-achieving SA students (e.g., Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006;

Kinginger, 2011; Trentman, 2017). This in turn may be motivated by positive attitudes toward

the L2 community and a desire to learn French for meaningful (i.e., personal or practical)

reasons, as opposed to the sense of duty which characterized minimally engaged learners. These

observations correspond with the affective and social aspects of engagement (Svalberg, 2009).

Taken together, these results suggest that engagement is facilitated by access to multiple and

diverse contexts of interaction. In other words, learners may not need large social networks to

engage with the L2; rather, the networks they do have should span different social contexts (e.g.,

work and leisure) and afford opportunities for language use on different emotional levels (e.g.,

intimate and practical).

Sociolinguistic Performance

In terms of sociolinguistic performance, the most interesting result is perhaps the near-

absence of the -*tu* question particle, despite the learners showing some awareness of the feature

and the interviewer using it several times in each interview. While it may have been a

methodological issue in that the interview produced limited contexts for -*tu* production, this near-

absence has been observed for other similar vernacular variants (Nadasdi et al., 2005). These

findings do, however, contradict social network research showing that such variants are more

likely to be maintained in small, dense networks (Milroy, 1987; Milroy & Margrain, 1980). One

possible explanation is that Milroy and colleagues studied L1 speakers, whose belonging to the

community may be less contingent on language use. In contrast, for immigrants, language is a tool for negotiating belonging (Norton, 2000), and so the learners in this study may be reluctant to use features closely associated with the L2 community. These learners also show some cognitive engagement (Svalberg, 2009), with many commenting on QF features such as *-tu* questions and the sentence-final *là*; however, this did not translate into production. Other studies have attributed this discrepancy to learners' sense of non-belonging or non-ownership of the target language (e.g., French & Beaulieu, 2016; Soruç & Griffiths, 2015).

The underuse of *ne* deletion by minimally engaged learners is consistent with other research showing that this feature can be acquired through exposure and interaction (e.g., Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Regan, 1995, 2004). In contrast, almost all participants used first-person *on* at high frequencies. In Mougeon and Rehner (2015), even minimally engaged learners who preferred *nous* came to use *on* at almost the same frequency as the highly engaged group over a three-year period. These findings lend support to Fonseca-Greber and Waugh's (2003) proposition that *on* may be shifting in status from a stylistic variant to the standard first-person pronoun. Indeed, Mougeon and Rehner attribute their findings to the high frequency of *on* in teacher speech and pedagogical materials, which was not the case for *ne* deletion (Rehner et al., 2003).

Subject doubling proved to be the most sensitive to engagement, and the only variable influenced by any of the social network factors. There was a clear gradation in frequency of use from high to low engagement, similar to findings by Nagy et al. (2003). In their study, L1 English speakers who have had considerable interaction in QF acquired subject doubling at least partially, with greater frequency in those reporting regular French interaction. As for social network, the feature correlated with network complexity and four measures of satisfaction:

emotional, social, informational, and overall. Learners who interact with their contacts in multiple contexts, indicating complex if not close relationships, were thus more likely to use the feature. One possible interpretation is that learners are likely to pick up local sociolinguistic patterns if they associate the language with a range of functions, from asking quick favours to talking about their feelings. The correlation with several satisfaction measures also suggests that the *affective* dimensions of social network are particularly relevant for this feature. Learners who have positive attitudes towards the Francophone community may be more open to learning new features (or perhaps knowingly deviate from prescribed forms or mirror their native-speaker interlocutors' patterns), and may even do so to further their existing relationships. In contrast, minimally engaged learners, who feel a greater sense of obligation than interest, may be focused on French for practical purposes (e.g., employment) and may not focus on features that are peripheral to this cause.

To conclude, this study complements current research on sociolinguistic development by closely examining the social forces influencing different aspects of learners' sociolinguistic performance. The findings highlight variable acquisition patterns for different sociolinguistic features, as well as potential differences between immigrant L2 learners and the more widely studied population of university students.

Implications for Teaching and Research

Scholars have called for the sociolinguistic features to be given more attention in L2 classrooms (e.g., Carter & McCarthy, 1995, 2017; Shenk, 2014). However, the present study's findings raise the question of whether and how to do so, especially for features that are strongly associated with the local speech community. Valdman (2000, 2003) recommends teaching features that are frequently used in the community, are expected of L2 users, and facilitate

language acquisition in general. All four variables considered in this study are widely attested in L1 usage. Regarding the second criterion, Beaulieu (2018) found that L1 listeners' preferences between the second-person address forms *tu* and *vous* are influenced by their French learning experiences. However, unlike address forms, the target features in this study do not necessarily index politeness, but may arise to facilitate real-time interaction (Brazil, 1995; O'Grady, 2012) and mark convergence with in-group norms (Bourhis & Giles, 1977), which may elicit more positive responses from L1 speakers. Further, in response to the third criterion, it can be argued that learning these features can improve learners' fluency and general conversational skills (Mumford, 2009).

Nagy et al. (2003) also note that underuse of certain features may not represent incomplete mastery, but rather a deliberate decision to express one's identity by diverging from local norms. The latter may be the case particularly for the *-tu* question, which is associated with QF, and perhaps stigmatized. Many of the learners in this study expressed a desire to learn QF at least for receptive purposes, despite perceiving some stigma in some features. These issues are not clearly accounted for by Valdman's (2000, 2003) pedagogical norms. However, they are consistent with Larsen-Freeman's (2001) call to teach the broader social functions of grammatical features, including their roles in identity negotiation. Studies exploring the explicit teaching of such features have reported positive results in production, awareness, and depth of understanding (e.g., Beaulieu et al., 2018; French & Beaulieu, 2016, 2020; Lyster, 1994; van Compernolle, 2013; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014). In addition, the social network findings from the present study may justify research on how affective factors can be considered in teaching, for example by incorporating interaction with community members into the curriculum.

Introduction to Study Three

Studies One and Two offered evidence that L2 users do not use vernacular variants for a number of reasons, including perceived in-group membership and negative perceptions of the local variety or the L2 community. Study Three explores how L2 teachers might address these challenges by promoting sociolinguistic agency; that is, enabling learners to make informed choices about adopting local sociolinguistic conventions. It presents the design and evaluation of concept-based instruction for teaching the two vernacular variants examined in Study Two, and measuring the effects of this approach on learners' conceptual understanding, appropriateness judgments, and sociolinguistic agency. As detailed in Chapter One, this manuscript was conceptualized and written as a registered report and, as such, it includes the study's theoretical background, methods, and proposed analyses, which will be submitted to peer review and pre-registered prior to data collection.

Chapter Four: Study Three

Teaching Sociolinguistic Variation Using Concept-Based Instruction

The development of sociolinguistic competence in a second language (L2) has attracted much research interest in the last few decades. This was in large part motivated by the concept of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972), which emphasized learners' need to use language meaningfully in interaction. Sociolinguistic competence, a component of communicative competence, refers to the understanding of the social functions of language and the ability to choose appropriate linguistic forms based on social factors such as register, formality, relationships between interlocutors, and self-presentation.

Sociolinguistic Variation and Pedagogy

A number of researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) have explored the L2 acquisition of sociolinguistic competence using methods for studying sociolinguistic variation pioneered by Labov (1967), which explore quantitative associations between linguistic choices and social contexts. This research typically operationalizes sociolinguistic competence as learners' appropriation of the patterns of variation employed by native or proficient speakers. The general finding is that sociolinguistic competence is a particularly difficult area of second language acquisition, usually emerging only in the advanced stages (Dewaele, 2004a). This difficulty has been attributed in part to the lack of attention given to variable language features in L2 pedagogy. Etienne and Sax (2009), for example, show that French language textbooks favour the teaching of prestige or standard variants, such as the first-person plural pronoun *nous* versus the more colloquial *on*, and that any attention to sociolinguistic variation tends to be oversimplified. English language teaching scholars have also found frequently used, non-

prescribed features of spoken grammar to be underrepresented or oversimplified in instructional materials (Cullen & Kuo, 2007; Jones & Waller, 2011). Carter and McCarthy (1995) argue that for L2 users to develop full communicative competence, they must learn the grammar of speech as it is used in authentic contexts, rather than the prescriptive, writing-based rules commonly found in language textbooks.

Since the publication of these seminal works, recommendations for bridging the gap between L2 pedagogy and real-life language use have been offered from the areas of spoken grammar and sociolinguistic competence. Among spoken grammar scholars, the most notable contributions are McCarthy and Carter's (1995) III approach (illustration, interaction, induction) and Timmis's (2005) framework for teaching spoken grammar. From the broader field of sociolinguistic competence, recommendations include functional-analytic instruction (Lyster, 1994) and concept-based instruction (CBI, Lantolf & Zhang, 2019; van Compernolle, 2013; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014). Although the methodologies vary, these approaches commonly aim to raise learners' awareness of variation, explicitly teach formal and social functions of informal features, and provide them with opportunities to use these features in interaction.

More recent teaching approaches have begun to recognize sociolinguistic agency by emphasizing sociolinguistic awareness as a pedagogical goal, either on its own or privileged over production. For example, van Compernolle and colleagues (e.g., van Compernolle & Henery, 2016; van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, & Weber, 2016) have successfully used concept-based instruction in university foreign-language contexts, focusing on learners' understanding of the social norms underlying sociolinguistic choices. Beaulieu, French, and Gagnon (2016) and French and Beaulieu (2020) have also tested variations of the Awareness-Practice-Feedback sequence originally developed by Ranta and Lyster (2007). In this approach, the awareness phase

involved consciousness-raising tasks designed to promote noticing of stylistic features of spoken French. The practice and feedback phases focused on oral comprehension (though some production was also involved in the 2016 study), encouraging students to create form-meaning connections related to the target forms.

Pedagogical Challenges

Classroom studies generally report positive results for the teaching of sociolinguistic competence, both in terms of increased sociolinguistic awareness (e.g., Beaulieu et al., 2018; van Compernolle & Williams, 2011) and contextually appropriate use of the target feature (Jones & Carter, 2014; Timmis, 2005, 2013; van Compernolle, 2013). However, L2 learners may also resist adopting L2 sociolinguistic patterns because they associate informal features with native-speaker usage, an in-group they do not necessarily identify with (French & Beaulieu, 2016; George, 2013; Ringer-Hilfinger, 2012; Soruç & Griffiths, 2015). These findings speak to issues of social identity, language ownership, and learner agency which have only recently begun to be addressed in the literature. Few of the teaching recommendations that have been put forward to date take into consideration learners' desire (or lack thereof) to adopt local linguistic norms. Some learners choose to do so for practical reasons, such as adopting the practices of the community with which they wish to integrate (e.g., George, 2014; Kang, 2010). However, for many learners, their status as L2 users "tends to convey with it an attitude of caution when it comes to employing the full range of available second language resources" (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004, p. 19), resulting in an avoidance of informal and vernacular features. This trend runs counter to the now-prevalent view in research, perhaps best articulated by Cook (2002), Larsen-Freeman (2012), and Leung (2005), that learners should not be considered passive receivers of linguistic information, but active users capable of using language for a variety of purposes. That

learners do not seem to share this view suggests that their non-use of sociolinguistic features may not necessarily result from an informed choice. The question, then, becomes how to teach sociolinguistic forms in a way that (1) challenges perceptions of non-ownership or non-membership by L2 users, and (2) promotes sociolinguistic agency by enabling them to make informed choices about their language use.

Instructed Second Language Acquisition and L2 Sociolinguistic Variation

This study attempts to extend the discussion on the teaching of sociolinguistic variation by considering the issue through the principles of instructed second language acquisition (ISLA). Loewen (2015) defines ISLA as a field of inquiry concerned with "how the systematic manipulation of the mechanisms of learning and/or the conditions under which they occur enable or facilitate the development and acquisition of an additional language" (p. 2). Research within ISLA examines how pedagogical choices such as instructional goals, timing of instruction, and type of instruction influence language learning. Within the literature on teaching sociolinguistic variation, a typical instructional goal is the understanding and production of target sociolinguistic structures, which is achieved through some sequence of consciousness-raising, explicit teaching, and production and/or comprehension practice. In light of the challenges described above, ISLA raises two important questions. First, how can learning environments and tasks be designed to promote informed choice—and thus sociolinguistic agency—particularly when learners underuse sociolinguistic features due to a sense of non-ownership or belonging to the target language community? Second, how can sociolinguistic agency be operationalized and measured as an instructional goal? Addressing these questions might help to address the challenges identified above by reconceptualizing sociolinguistic variation as a resource for communication rather than

a social (native-speaker) norm, thus recognizing learners' agency and their status as legitimate users of the L2 (Cook, 2002).

The Current Study

This study builds on the work of van Compernolle (2013), who used concept-based instruction (CBI) to teach variable features in French. One strength of this approach is its focus on learners' ability to understand and appropriate the social concepts underlying variation and use this understanding to reflect on their own language patterns – an important component of sociolinguistic agency. The goal of the study is to determine whether these benefits extend to vernacular structures, whose acquisition appears to be more sensitive to the socio-affective issues mentioned above. More specifically, it compares CBI with a more traditional approach, adapted from functional-analytic instruction, in terms of their affordances for promoting sociolinguistic agency in an instructed context.

Concept-based Instruction

CBI developed from systemic-theoretical approaches developed by Gal'perin (1989), which is based on sociocultural theories of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Sociocultural theory views learning as a social process and learners as primarily social beings who learn by participating in the surrounding culture. Language is therefore seen as mediating the learning process. Within SLA, sociocultural theory views language learning not as the acquisition of knowledge or skills, but as learning to use and control a resource for thinking, communicating, and understanding (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Drawing on these principles, CBI places emphasis on the construction of meaning through conceptual categories. Its primary aim is to enable learners to draw on their understanding of broad social concepts to inform future action; that is, to make informed decisions on what linguistic structures to use. Inherent in this approach is a

focus on semantics and pragmatics, as learners are guided towards expressing meanings in order to fulfill social or communicative ends (Williams, Abraham, & Negueruela-Azarola, 2003).

Consistent with the goal of promoting sociolinguistic agency, CBI presents sociolinguistic choices as probabilistic rather than categorical or rule-based. It allows learners to engage in "agentive choice-making" (van Compernolle, 2013) in which they select linguistic forms based on self-identified social goals such as expressing a particular identity or indexing different types of relationships. Accordingly, a typical measure of learning within CBI is an understanding of the macro-cultural factors underlying sociolinguistic conventions and the ability to draw upon this understanding to make sociolinguistic choices.

Quebec French Vernacular

The current study applies CBI methodology to the teaching of vernacular features of Quebec French (QF). Vernacular is defined here as spoken grammatical forms that deviate from prescriptive rules (Carter & McCarthy, 1995), are closely associated with a given speech community (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 1998), and are often stigmatized or associated with lower social status (Nadasdi et al., 2005). There is evidence that the challenges to learning and teaching sociolinguistic variation may be amplified in the case of vernacular structures, as their use is compounded by the learners' sense of social identity, prestige, and belonging (e.g., George, 2013; Ringer-Hilfinger, 2012; Soruç & Griffiths, 2015). This is likely to be the case in QF, a minority variety of French but a protected majority language in Quebec, and a key component of Quebec identity owing to historical associations between linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical issues in the province. These issues have been acknowledged (e.g., Mougeon & Rehner, 2015; Nagy et al., 2003) but not closely examined in studies of L2 French, with the exception of Beaulieu et al. (2020). The distinct sociolinguistic features of QF index belonging to

the Quebec francophone community, and so the socio-affective issues identified in previous research may be more pronounced in this context.

Target Features

The pedagogical intervention targets two vernacular features typical of QF, subject doubling and the *-tu* question particle, which have not been the subject of any published classroom study. Subject doubling involves "echoing" a strong subject, such as a noun phrase, with a corresponding personal pronoun (e.g., *Ma voisine elle joue du piano* "My neighbour she plays the piano"). This feature is characteristic of, though not exclusive to, Quebec French, to the point that it is almost categorically present in the speech of native or proficient speakers (Auger, 1998; Nagy et al., 2003). The *-tu* question particle is added to the first verb of a yes/no question (e.g., *Ils sont-TU arrives?* "Have-TU they arrived?"). This feature was present in early European French but eventually disappeared in many varieties due to stigmatization (Elsig & Poplack, 2006), but continues to be widely used in QF.

Like the T-V distinction in French and several other languages, these two forms can be mapped onto the concepts of social distance and self-presentation. While subject doubling can be acceptable across informal and formal contexts, it may be slightly unacceptable in situations where the interlocutors are socially very distant (e.g., talking to a person of high authority) or where the speaker wishes to present as highly formal (e.g., giving a professional presentation). The *-tu* question particle, in addition to being limited to very informal speech, may be associated with lower social strata, as is the case with other vernaculars.

Research Questions

The study aims to determine whether the issues of identity and agency that seem to underlie learners' reluctance to use vernacular features can be addressed with a teaching

approach that promotes agency and choice. Importantly, and in line with the theoretical foundations of CBI, the goal is not to increase their willingness to use these features, but to help them make linguistic decisions not from perceived out-group status or non-ownership of the language, but from practical social concepts drawn upon by proficient speakers. Specifically, the study asks how concept-based instruction (CBI) compares to the more widely used functional-analytic instruction in terms of the following:

1) increasing learners' conceptual understanding of social distance and self-presentation as they relate to the use of subject doubling and -*tu* question forms

2) improving learners' judgments of the social appropriateness of these features

3) encouraging learners to practice sociolinguistic agency

Based on previous research reporting positive outcomes in conceptual understanding and sociolinguistic judgment (van Compernolle, 2013; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014), it is hypothesized that CBI will lead to greater gains in these measures (research questions 1 and 2) than the comparison group. Regarding the third research question, Negueruela (2003) reported some development in agency, operationalized as the ability to direct future language use based on conceptual knowledge, resulting from CBI for non-sociolinguistically variable features. For the features targeted in this study, learners' reluctance to align with perceived native-speaker norms may persist, as this cannot be expected to change significantly within the planned 4-hour intervention. It is expected that learners receiving CBI will show some evidence of putting sociolinguistic agency into practice compared to the comparison group, but that the effect will be smaller than that for conceptual understanding and sociolinguistic judgment.

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Method

The study will employ a non-equivalent control group design involving two intact

groups, one of which will be instructed on the target forms using the CBI approach and the other

using a method adapted from the functional-analytic approach (Lyster, 1994), which is more

typical of previous pedagogical recommendations. This quasi-experimental design is suitable

when comparing intact classes where random assignment is not possible (Campbell & Stanley,

1966; Johnson & Christensen, 2019), as is the case for this study. A control group was not

deemed necessary because the goal is to evaluate CBI in relation to current pedagogical

recommendations, rather than determine its efficacy. Research has shown that the outcome

measures in the study – conceptual understanding, appropriateness judgment, and sociolinguistic

agency – are seldom acquired through exposure alone but can be developed with instruction (van

Compernolle, 2013; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014). Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed

that learners would benefit from some form of instruction more than learners who receive none.

Data will include written conceptual definitions of the target features (RQ #1), an

appropriateness judgment task (RQ #2), and learning journals completed in the students' own

time (RQ #3). Data pertaining to the first and second research questions will be collected before

and after the instruction. Learning journals will be completed twice, once after the lesson on each

of the two target features. Details on the procedures and instruments are provided below**.**

Participants

Participants will consist of two intact French as a second language classes, each

consisting of 10 to 15 adult immigrants in Quebec of advanced proficiency, determined through

class placement and self-reports. The classes are offered by a community centre providing a

variety of services to newcomers, including language courses. These learners are typically

between 20 to 50 years old, have been in Quebec for at least a year, and have been learning

French for about the same amount of time. At the time of data collection, they are likely to have

been exposed to some sociolinguistic variation in their interactions (though not necessarily

sociolinguistically rich input), but not explicitly taught these forms in class.

CBI Procedure and Materials

For the CBI group, each of the two target features will be taught over two consecutive

one-hour sessions. During the first session, the students will first complete the conceptual

definitions and appropriateness judgment tasks. The teacher will then begin the lesson by

distributing conceptual diagrams introducing the two target concepts of social distance and self-

presentation, and invite students to discuss their understanding of these concepts in pairs or small

groups. The teacher will provide guidance as needed. This will be followed by a whole-class

discussion on how the students understood the concepts and how they relate to the target feature.

During the second session, students will (1) review the information from the previous session,

and (2) write and perform strategic interaction scenarios (DiPietro, 1987) in which they model

their language use according to self-chosen identities and relationships, followed by a debriefing

and reflection section.

Conceptual diagrams. The conceptual diagrams were adapted from a concept-based

coursebook developed by van Compernolle (2013). These materials were meant to be used for an

entire semester and included several sociolinguistic targets. The adapted version for the present

study will consist of two conceptual diagrams per target feature, illustrating social distance and

self-presentation (i.e., two diagrams for subject doubling and two handouts for -*tu* question

particle). Following previous adaptations of this approach (van Compernolle, 2013; van

Compernolle & Henery, 2014), these diagrams explain the target concepts of social distance and

self-presentation both visually and in writing. These are shown below with English translations of the explanations; the materials will be provided to students in French (see Appendix D). Social distance is presented as the degree to which one is emotionally close or distant to the interlocutor, and supported with examples. Different degrees of social distance are presented along a continuum. As Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show, subject doubling is shown as acceptable for all but the most distant of relationships, indicated by the example of a student meeting a professor. The -*tu* question particle, on the other hand, is acceptable only in close relationships.

SOCIAL DISTANCE

Social distance means how close you are to a person. For example, you can be very close to your best friend, but more distant with a professor you have just met.

VERY CLOSE:	LESS CLOSE, BUT FRIENDLY:	DISTANT:
Example: best friends	Example: work colleagues	Example: student and professor
Ton chien il est vraiment drôle!	*Ta présentation elle était super!*	*Tes devoirs sont toujours excellents.*
	OR	
Moi je voudrais un petit lapin.	*Ta présentation était super!*	*? Tes devoirs ils sont toujours excellents.*

Figure 4.1 Visual diagram for social distance and subject doubling.

SOCIAL DISTANCE
Social distance means how close you are to a person. For example, you can be very
close to your best friend, but more distant with a professor you have just met.

VERY CLOSE:
Example: best friends
On y va-tu au party?

Tu connais-tu Georges?

LESS CLOSE, BUT FRIENDLY:
Example: work colleagues
T'es-tu prête pour ta présentation?
OR
Es-tu prête pour ta présentation?

DISTANT:
Example: student and professor
Est-ce que vous pouvez m'aider?

? *Tu peux-tu m'aider?*

Figure 4.2. Visual diagram for social distance and -tu question particle.

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show the diagrams for self-presentation. Self-presentation is defined as the type of impression one wants to make on the interlocutor. Again, subject doubling is associated with a wide range of identities, with notable exceptions being highly professional and careful speaker. The *-tu* question particle is associated with such descriptors as fun and friendly.

SELF-PRESENTATION
Self-presentation means introducing yourself or showing a part of your identity to others.
For example, you can present yourself as friendly, professional, approachable, and so on.

FRIENDLY
Moi je m'appelle Ben.

Ma sœur elle s'appelle Yasmin.

PROFESSIONAL
Je suis agente de bord.

? *Mon travail c'est très intéressant.*

APPROACHABLE
Moi je fais beaucoup de peinture!
OR
Je fais aussi des sculptures.

Figure 4.3. Visual diagram for self-presentation and subject doubling.

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SELF-PRESENTATION
Self-presentation means introducing yourself or showing a part of your identity to others.
For example, you can present yourself as friendly, professional, approachable, and so on.

FRIENDLY	PROFESSIONAL	APPROACHABLE
T'as-tu besoin d'aide?	*Avez-vous* besoin d'aide?	*As-tu* besoin d'aide? OR
Tu veux-tu aller au parc?	? *Tu veux-tu* un verre de vin?	*Tu veux-tu* voir un film?

Figure 4.4. Visual diagram for self-presentation and *-tu* questions.

It is important to note that these materials are not meant to provide categorical information about what forms to use in which situations, or what concepts describe particular relationships. Rather, they are presented as probabilistic; i.e., some forms are more likely to be used, but not guaranteed, in certain situations, and the goal is to help students make links between the target concepts and guide their linguistic choices. Students will be given opportunities to discuss, reflect on, and even modify the information as they see fit; for example, they might argue that students can be close to professors or distant with colleagues, with the teacher providing guidance as needed. They will also be encouraged to reflect on what sociolinguistic accommodations one might make when interacting with others who speak a different variety of French. Where possible, learners will be allowed to use their L1 for the task to promote in-depth discussion.

Strategic interaction scenarios. Strategic interaction scenarios are based on a model by DiPietro (1987), where communicative activity rather than language is the unit of instruction.

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Students are placed in pairs and each partner is given a role to play (e.g., a job interviewer and a job applicant), which they can elaborate as they wish: for example, they can choose to be strict or friendly. Partners are not aware of their respective roles. They then perform a spontaneous dialogue in these roles, keeping in mind the target language expected of someone in their character's position. Two strategic interaction scenarios will be used in the study, each designed to encourage use of either *-tu* or subject doubling. This is followed by a debriefing stage in which students, with their peers or a tutor, reflect on their performance and language choices. While the peer or tutor can provide feedback at this stage, the primary goal of the debriefing is to encourage learners to further reflect on their own language choices.

According to Negueruela (2003), strategic interaction scenarios are more representative of real-life communication in that partners do not fully know each other's chosen identities and express their own identities through language. It also combines communicative activity and reflection, which is in line with the goals of CBI. Below is a sample prompt in English; the full set of prompts, in French, is provided in Appendix E.

ROLE A

You are talking to a new employee at work over breakfast. She started last week and you have talked to her a few times. You know you will be working closely together in the next few weeks, so you want to show that you are friendly. You've also heard that she plays the guitar and you would like to introduce you to some colleagues who are thinking of forming a band.

ROLE B

You have been at your new job for a week and you are having breakfast with one of your colleagues. You've heard that he wants to form a band with other people at the company, which you would like to join as a guitarist. However, you have not talked to them much. You would like to be part of the group, but because you are new, you also want to appear professional and dedicated to your work.

Comparison Group Procedures and Materials

The comparison group will be taught the target features using a method adapted from functional-analytic instruction (Lyster, 1994). Similar to the CBI group, this instructional treatment is expected to take place over two one-hour sessions per target form and will consist of a consciousness-raising activity, explicit instruction, written exercises, and a traditional role-play.

Consciousness-raising activities. The first session begins with a consciousness-raising activity where students read two versions of a casual conversation, one using the target feature and the other omitting it (see Appendix F). The teacher will first ask the students which version appears more relaxed and casual, following Timmis's (2005) recommendation that learners first aim for global comprehension before zeroing in on the target feature. To draw attention to subject doubling, students will be asked to underline all the subjects in the dialogue, then note the differences between the two versions. For the *-tu* question, the teacher will draw attention to the verbs in the dialogue and have students identify which verbs take the *-tu* particle (i.e., the first verb in the question).

Explicit instruction. Students will then be given explicit instruction on the formal and social properties of the target feature. In this approach, unlike CBI, students do not engage in discussion or reflection on the concepts, but rather will be given grammatical, followed by sociolinguistic information. Subject doubling, for example, will first be presented as a syntactic modification where the subject is followed by a corresponding subject pronoun (e.g., Ma voisine joue du piano vs. Ma voisine <u>elle</u> joue du piano, "My neighbour plays the piano" vs. "My neighbour she plays the piano"). The teacher will then explain that this phenomenon is common among proficient users of QF, can be expected with all but the most emotionally distant

interlocutors, and often helps the speaker appear fun or friendly. For the *-tu* question particle, the teacher will first show that the *-tu* particle can be added to the first verb in a yes/no question (e.g., *Ils sont ici?* vs. *Ils sont-tu ici?*, "Are they here?" vs. "Are-TU they here?"), then explain that this is commonly used in spoken, casual conversations among close interlocutors, and disfavoured in highly formal and distant interactions.

Written exercises. After the instruction, students will complete a set of written exercises to practice identifying and supplying appropriate forms for a given context (Appendix G). The exercises consist of written dialogues where the target features are omitted, as the conversations take place between two new acquaintances who are more careful with their speech. After reading the dialogues, students are asked to rewrite them as if the conversation were between two friends, paying attention to grammatical forms as appropriate.

Traditional role-play. In lieu of strategic interaction scenarios, students will engage in traditional role-plays involving scenarios that require a choice between prescribed and non-prescribed variants. The goal of this step is to provide practice in using the communicative functions of each target feature in interaction (Lyster, 1994). The prompts will be similar to the strategic interaction scenarios; however, learners performing the traditional role-play are aware of their partners' roles and can plan their language accordingly. The timeline of instruction and data collection for both groups is summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Timeline of Instruction and Data Collection

Session	CBI	Comparison
1	Conceptual definitions	
	Appropriateness judgment tasks	
	Presentation of conceptual diagrams	Consciousness-raising task
	(social distance, self-presentation)	Explicit instruction (grammatical and
	Discussion of conceptual diagrams	social functions)
	Whole-class discussion	Exercises
2	Review of concepts	Review of target feature
	Strategic interaction scenarios	Role-play
	Reflection and discussion	Summary of lesson
	Conceptual definitions	
	Appropriateness judgment tasks	
	Learning journals (to be completed at home)	

Note. The *-tu* question form will be taught in Sessions 1 and 2, and subject doubling will be

taught in two subsequent sessions (3 and 4) which are identical in format.

Measures and Instruments

Three types of learning outcomes will be measured. First, understanding of concepts

related to the target features (RQ #1) will be measured through definitions of the two target

features elicited during in-class activities. Next, intuitions regarding appropriacy of the target

forms (RQ #2) will be measured through appropriateness judgment tasks administered in class

following the second instruction session for each feature. Finally, students will complete

reflections on their learning and use of the target forms (RQ #3) in their own time after each of the four instruction sessions.

Conceptual definitions. Conceptual definitions of the two target features, subject doubling and *-tu* questions, will be elicited through an in-class writing activity. Students will be asked to write down, in their own words, their understanding of these two features, using the guide questions adapted from Negueruela (2003). A sample prompt in English is provided below, and the full set in French is provided in Appendix H.

1. Below are three pairs of similar sentences. Look at the sentences in <u>Column B.</u>

    a. What is the meaning behind the use of *elle, ils,* and *c'est* in these sentences?

    b. Do you see a difference in meaning between the sentences in Columns A and B? Explain.

    c. Do you think the sentences in Column A can be used in the same situations as those in Column B? Why or why not?

Column A	Column B
Ma grand-mère ne veut pas venir en hiver.	*Ma grand-mère elle ne veut pas venir en hiver.*
Nos clients préfèrent les sessions du matin.	*Nos clients ils préfèrent les sessions du matin.*
Mon bureau est au cinquième étage.	*Mon bureau c'est au cinquième étage.*

The guiding questions are modeled after Negueruela's (2003) definition of the three core features of a theoretical concept, which are *general, abstract,* and *systematic* definitions (explained below). These features also serve as the framework for evaluating students' responses, as will be explained in the Coding and Analysis section. The original questions in Negueruela (2003) did not include examples; however, because this study targets variable features and concerns learners' understanding of this variation, it is important to frame them as

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being one of two or more possible options. In addition, the follow-up questions were added to encourage students to attend to the conceptual features of meaning and situational use, which will be part of the analysis. Students have the option of answering the question in French, if their proficiency allows; otherwise, they will also be allowed to write in English or their L1.

Appropriateness judgment tasks (AJT). The appropriateness judgment tasks were adapted from van Compernolle and Henery (2014) and include a series of five situations, for which learners were asked to choose the appropriate form and explain their responses in writing. For the present study, there will be a total of ten situations, five each for subject doubling and the -*tu* questions. Table 4.2 presents three sample situations, translated into English (the full set of prompts in French is provided in Appendix I). Because it is meant to tap into learners' intuitions beyond categorical formal-informal distinctions – which corresponds with the goal of the pedagogical intervention – the AJT purposely included situations in which the (in)appropriacy of the target feature is clear, and others which were more ambiguous (van Compernolle, 2013). For example, in Table 4.2, both subject doubling and -*tu* questions are acceptable in Situation 1 as the interlocutor is a close friend. In Situation 3, the prescribed variants are likely to be preferred as the speaker needs to appear professional or use careful speech in a formal setting. Situation 2 is more ambiguous as the interlocutor is a well-known acquaintance, although she is older and may be more emotionally distant. In several of these situations, the learner may well define the boundaries of the hypothetical relationship. Because of this, the AJT is not meant to test the accuracy of learners' responses, but simply to examine the reasoning behind their choices, the degree to which they draw on the target concepts to make these choices, how this might change as a result of instruction.

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Table 4.2

Sample AJT Situations

Situation	Description		
1	Your friend Kim arrives at a café where you have agreed to meet. You've known each other for a long time and she is coming back from a trip to Boston.	You want to hear about her trip. Which question would be appropriate? *Est-ce c'était bien Boston?* *C'est-tu bien Boston?*	You want to tell Kim your roommate is also going to Boston in the spring. How would you say it? *Jessie pense y aller en avril.* *Jessie elle pense y aller en avril.*
2	While you and Kim are chatting, Ms Khan walks in. She is one of your mom's best friends and has known you since you were little. She is around 60 years old. She sees you and says hi.	You want to ask Ms Khan how her family is. What question would be appropriate? *Est-ce que la famille va bien?* *La famille va-tu bien?*	After introducing Kim to Ms Khan, you want to mention that you both study finance. Which sentence would be appropriate? *Kim étudie aussi en finance.* *Kim elle étudie aussi en finance.*
3	You are preparing to give a presentation. You know that some very important people in your field are in attendance and it is important that you make a good impression.	You start by introducing yourself. What would be a good way to do so? *Bonjour, je m'appelle Sylvia Boise.* *Bonjour, moi je m'appelle Sylvia.*	After the presentation, you want to open the floor to questions. Which form would be more appropriate? *Il y a-tu des questions?* *Est-ce qu'il y a des questions?*

Learning journals. Following each of the four instruction sessions, students will be asked to complete learning journals in which they reflect on the concepts and features covered. The goal of the learning journals is to help the students connect this material to their previous knowledge, their experiences as language users and learners, and their own perceived

communicative roles. Students will be given corresponding prompts, shown in Table 4.3, to

encourage them to comment on these topics for analysis. The French version that will be given to

students is provided in Appendix J.

Table 4.3

Learning Journal Prompts

Prompt	Purpose
General	
What did you learn in this lesson that you did not know before?	Determine what part/s of the lesson were the most salient or memorable to learners
Conceptual	
Before this lesson, were you aware of different types of relationships or social interactions? Is there anything about this concept that you found new or interesting?	Determine how familiar learners were with the target concepts prior to instruction, and their initial impressions of these concepts
Have you observed these relationships or social interactions in Quebec? How about other places you've lived in?	Encourage learners to connect the conceptual information to their past and present experiences
How do you think learning about them will influence how you use French?	Encourage learners to make links between the concepts and their own language practices
Linguistic	
Have you heard other people use [subject doubling, -*tu* questions] before this lesson? If yes, what did you think of it?	Determine whether, and to what extent, learners are already familiar with the target forms, and how they perceived these forms prior to instruction
Do any of the languages you know have something similar to [subject doubling, -*tu* questions]? If yes, does it work the same way as in French?	Determine whether, and to what extent, learners already know and use the target forms or their equivalents in other languages
Have you used [subject doubling, -*tu* questions] in French before? How about your other languages?	Encourage learners to draw similarities across their known languages and recognize shared sociolinguistic functions
How often do you think you will use [subject doubling, -*tu* questions] in your future interactions? Why?	Encourage learners to make links between the linguistic information and their own language practices

Coding and Analysis

Conceptual definitions. The conceptual definitions will be analyzed according to an adaptation of Negueruela's (2003) rubric. This rubric first describes the components of the three features mentioned earlier—general, abstract, and semantic—and then provides a coding scheme for the presence, partial presence, or absence of these components. The following descriptions have been adapted from Negueruela's scheme to suit the variable features targeted in the present study. Definitions at the *general* level refer to the overt meanings and properties of the target form, and can be observed on semantic (meaning of the form), functional (purposes/contexts of use), and perceptual (specific properties of the form). *Abstract* definitions show understanding of some or all of the implied features of a form, which includes appropriacy for certain registers social contexts (e.g., modality, register, formality). Finally, a definition is considered *systematic* if the above linguistic properties are clearly and accurately related to the target concepts of social distance and self-presentation. In addition, learners' definitions will be coded according to *explicability,* or the learners' awareness of and ability to define the feature at least at the general level; *generalizability* (referred to as "*independence*" in the original rubric), or ability to generalize use into different contexts; and *agency* ("*significance*" in the original), or recognition of the feature as a choice a speaker makes, rather than a rule. Finally, the *functionality* criterion targets the type of learning targeted by CBI, which is understanding in relation to appropriate contexts of use. To satisfy this criterion, the definition must be usable "as an effective cognitive tool in orienting future activity" (Negueruela, 2003). The criteria for analyzing conceptual definitions and their possible values are summarized in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Coding Scheme for Conceptual Definitions

Criterion	Definition	Values
Explicability	Learner is aware of and able to define the target feature	yes no
Generality	Refers to overt characteristics of the form	semantic functional perceptual
Abstractness	Refers to social/pragmatic characteristics	yes some no
Systematicity	Relates to target concepts	social distance self-presentation
Generalizability	Applies understanding to multiple contexts	semantic functional perceptual
Functionality	Definition can inform future language use	yes no
Agency	Recognizes speaker agency/choice (vs. rule)	yes no

Analysis will focus on how individual learners' definitions change over the three data collection periods. In addition, group results will be recorded and analyzed as a whole (e.g., how many students improve their definitions over time), and independent-samples *t*-tests (or Mann-Whitney U-tests, if distribution is nonparametric or sample size is smaller than expected) will be conducted to identify any significant differences between the CBI and comparison groups.

AJTs. The first part of the AJT responses is binary: for each situation, learners simply choose between using the target form or its prescribed counterpart; in other words, whether or not the target form is acceptable for the context. These responses will be recorded as A

(acceptable) or N (non-acceptable). As mentioned earlier, some of the situations are intentionally ambiguous and so will not be coded as correct or incorrect; any change in responses across the three time periods will be recorded individually for each learner. The second part of the AJT asks learners to explain their choices. These responses will be analyzed qualitatively by extracting common themes in learners' comments, following grounded theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2012). The target concepts of social distance and self-presentation will be used as initial coding categories; for example, comments on authority or power can be interpreted as referring to social distance, and comments on professionalism or sounding nativelike to self-presentation. However, additional categories can be created for comments that do not fit under these concepts.

Similar to the conceptual definitions, analysis will first focus on changes in individual learners' responses and explanations. Between-groups statistical analyses will then be carried out for both the binary response and the explanation (e.g., how many learners chose the target form for a given situation, how many learners commented on social distance).

Learning journals. The learning journals will also be analyzed following grounded theory methodology. The initial coding categories will correspond with the conceptual and linguistic prompts outlined in Table 4.3, and additional categories will be created to accommodate other themes as they emerge. This will require a recursive and iterative approach in that existing categories may need to be revisited and refined to ensure consistency across learners. Analysis will be similar to the conceptual definitions and AJTs in that the focus will be both on intergroup differences and intra-learner changes over time.

Potential Contribution

Drawing on sociocultural theories of learning, the proposed study explores the affordances of concept-based instruction (CBI) for promoting sociolinguistic agency in L2 classrooms. Recent research suggests that lack of recognition of agency presents challenges in the teaching and acquisition of sociolinguistic variation, as learners avoid certain forms out of a sense of non-ownership or out-group belonging. This study focuses on vernacular features of QF, a variety whose acquisition may be particularly sensitive to these issues. The study measures how learners' progress in terms of their conceptual understanding of the social concepts underlying two vernacular features, subject doubling and -*tu* questions and their ability to judge appropriateness and make informed linguistic choices based on this knowledge.

Findings from this study will contribute to the literature on L2 sociolinguistic competence and instructed second language acquisition. It provides insights on how sociolinguistic agency can be investigated as a measure of sociolinguistic competence, in addition to the more traditional constructs of awareness and performance, in an instructed setting. As such, it also adds to the literature on ISLA by extending the inquiry on selecting linguistic targets and pedagogical approaches to contexts where classroom acquisition can be complicated by socio-affective barriers to learning, here represented by a geographically distinct target language variety with close ties to local identity. To my knowledge, this will be one of the few classroom-based and sociolinguistic studies to be conducted as a registered report, which makes further contributions in terms of promoting open science practices. As part of a registered report, the pedagogical materials presented here will be made available both to researchers wishing to conduct similar studies and to teachers wishing to implement concept-based instruction or address vernacular variation in their classrooms. Further, the data collection instruments and

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analytical tools will be subject to rigorous peer review and made publicly available upon

publication, ensuring quality and replicability to other learning and teaching contexts.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The larger goal of this dissertation was to find a place for learner agency within existing pedagogical norms for teaching sociolinguistic variation. Focusing on adult immigrants' acquisition of the vernacular grammar of Quebec French, it offers insights on how various socio-affective factors can impact on learners' desire to adopt sociolinguistic conventions typical of their L2 community, and how such challenges can be addressed in the classroom. While specific findings and implications were discussed separately in each study, this chapter draws connections between the studies and discusses their broader implications for teaching and research. I begin with an overview of the main findings, followed by connecting themes between the three papers and implications for teaching and research. I then discuss the addition of an agentive criterion to the current pedagogical norm and suggest some ways that such a criterion can be developed and applied. Finally, I close the chapter with concluding remarks reflecting on the contributions of the dissertation.

Overview of Findings

Study One examines the -*tu* question particle – a prototypical vernacular in that it is highly informal and thus likely to be underused in an L2 – in a population of near-native speakers who have had extensive exposure to variation and opportunities for interaction. Results showed that near-native speakers use the -*tu* particle only marginally more than the intermediate and advanced learners in previous studies, and still significantly underuse it compared to native speakers. Study Two explores possible reasons for this finding by taking a social-psychological perspective, which considers individual and affective factors that may influence sociolinguistic performance. It looks at the relationship between sociolinguistic performance and learners' engagement and social networks, and compares the -*tu* particle with other informal features. The

main finding is that with supportive social networks and high engagement with the target language, learners can appropriate the L2 community's sociolinguistic patterns. However, this did not apply to the vernacular -*tu* which, consistent with previous studies, they almost categorically avoided. Qualitative analyses revealed evidence of perceived out-group membership, conflicting linguistic identities, and negative perceptions of the L2 community as possible explanations. Finally, Study Three is a registered report presenting the design and methodology for a classroom study implementing and evaluating concept-based instruction, an approach which has been shown to promote awareness and mastery of sociolinguistic features (van Compernolle, 2013). The main goal of this study is to determine whether such an approach can also be applied to vernacular features such as the -*tu* question form, which appears to amplify the issues of social identity and agency reported in both this dissertation and the existing literature (e.g., DuBois, 2019; Ruivivar & Collins, 2018; Soruç & Griffiths, 2015). A secondary goal of this study is to extend open science practices in SLA research to language pedagogy. To my knowledge, it will be among the few classroom-based empirical studies to be conducted as a registered report: a study that is peer-reviewed for the relevance of its research questions, the quality of the methodology, and potential contributions to the field prior to data collection. This ensures that the study is conducted following theoretically and methodologically sound protocols. In addition, the approved study materials—including the pedagogical materials, data elicitation tools, and analytical tools—will be pre-registered and publicly available to researchers and practitioners, allowing for replication, evaluation, and use by researchers and teachers alike.

Connecting the Three Studies

Taken together, these three studies provide a detailed picture of L2 learners' use of vernacular grammatical features of a target language. Study One confirms current findings that

learners rarely produce these features, but also highlights differences between their production and metalinguistic knowledge. The results suggest that given ideal conditions for acquisition, learners are able to notice and understand vernacular variation from their daily interactions, and in some cases even understand their formal and social functions, but this knowledge does not manifest in their speech. On the one hand, this shows that exposure to the target language and opportunities for interaction are indeed beneficial for sociolinguistic development. Compared to learners in French immersion contexts who had little exposure to informal spoken French (Nadasdi et al., 2005), the learners in this study, who had several years of regular interaction in French, made substantially more use of the vernacular. On the other hand, even in these conditions, they significantly underused the vernacular compared to native speakers. Although native-like sociolinguistic performance is certainly not the goal for all learners, it is fair to say that it raises the question of whether learners are exercising full sociolinguistic competence when deciding to use or avoid certain vernacular features. It also highlights the need for multiple measures when it comes to assessing sociolinguistic development, and more specifically, to investigate whether the discrepancy between metalinguistic awareness and production (van Compernolle & Williams, 2011) can be attributed to social-psychological or socio-affective factors, or the exercise of sociolinguistic agency, which had not been addressed within the variationist paradigm. This provided the impetus for Study 2, which examined whether such a role could be found for two constructs: social network and engagement. It also used a broader measure of sociolinguistic performance, comparing use of the vernacular *-tu* question form with other sociolinguistic structures to see whether the type of feature (informal versus vernacular, stable versus unstable, stigmatized versus non-stigmatized) mediated the effects of these factors. Both predictions were partially borne out: learners who were highly engaged with the L2

community and had supportive social networks in the L2 had more native-like patterning for *ne* deletion, a stable informal feature, and subject doubling, a non-stigmatized vernacular. Notably, -*tu* questions, the same vernacular form examined in Study One, was virtually never used by any of the participants. The interview responses revealed that for many participants, this resulted from the perception that these forms were representative of the Quebec francophone community, a group they do not consider themselves a part of. However, in addition to perceived out-group membership, there was also evidence of negative attitudes towards this community: a number of learners saw the feature as representing nonstandard speech, lack of education, and lower social class. These findings speak to broader trends of identity and language learning, on the one hand, and linguistic attitudes towards dialectal variation, on the other. A full discussion of these issues is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is sufficient to say that such perceptions certainly do not encourage learners to practice sociolinguistic agency over their language use.

This leaves us with the question of what these two study findings mean for pedagogy, which Study 3 attempted to address. Study Three came about through a synthesis of different pedagogical approaches to teaching sociolinguistic variation in order to identify how they promote the exercise of sociolinguistic agency, if at all. As explained in the manuscript, one approach that shows particular promise towards this end is concept-based instruction. The strength of CBI lies in conceptualizing sociolinguistic variation as a resource for meaning-making, and as such, it does not attach spoken grammar or any other target feature to native-speaker usage, in-group norms, or notions of prestige. In addition, it promotes not only adherence to sociolinguistic conventions, but also an understanding of how and why these conventions are in place (Liddicoat, 2006; van Compernolle & Williams, 2012). Findings from the study, once conducted, can be useful for teachers who wish to tackle the complex topic of

variation in the classroom, in line with the goal of informing learners to become critical and legitimate users, rather than passive receivers, of the language (Larsen-Freeman, 2012). The paper also makes important contributions in terms of both research and pedagogy: from a pedagogical standpoint, it shows that sociolinguistic agency can be directly addressed in the classroom, and from a research standpoint, it illustrates one method for evaluating sociolinguistic agency as a pedagogical outcome by adapting existing data collection and analytical tools. In other words, it represents a first step towards the overarching goal of this dissertation, which is to incorporate sociolinguistic agency into the current pedagogical norm.

Implications for Teaching and Research

The studies reported on here provide evidence that identity, engagement, social networks, and perceptions of the L2 community play an equally important role in sociolinguistic development alongside more commonly studied factors such as exposure and instruction. This highlights a need to account for learners' sociolinguistic performance and awareness (or disparities between these two) using both contextual and individual factors. Needless to say, both of these may differ across learning contexts. While this dissertation focuses on Quebec French, its findings are relevant to other contexts where learners need to decide which varieties or vernacular features to adopt based on available sociolinguistic information. Most research on such contexts is limited to French, English, and Spanish. The same issues impacting sociolinguistic development may well exist in other L2 communities. One interesting context might be Arabic, a uniquely diglossic language in that most speakers use a prestige variety in formal settings and a colloquial variety in everyday communication, such that learners who speak only the former can be excluded from native-speaker conversations (Palmer, 2007). Liao (2008) reports a different type of diglossia in Taiwan, where the Standard Mandarin imposed by

the Chinese ruling class is considered the prestige variety, while the Taiwanese dialect is associated with the lower class. L2 learners in these communities are likely to experience the same issues of linguistic and social identity, belonging, and agency when deciding to adopt or reject certain dialectal features, albeit to different degrees and in different ways. Extending the findings from this dissertation to a wider range of language contact situations would therefore help us better understand contextual and individual influences on L2 dialectal acquisition.

Regarding pedagogy, studies have shown that explicit instruction on different varieties of the L2, including ones considered non-standard, can promote listening comprehension (Schoonmaker-Gates, 2017) and improve grammatical and sociolinguistic intuitions (Shin & Hudgens Henderson, 2017). Studies One and Two of this dissertation demonstrate a need to orient future work towards the broader goal of sociolinguistic agency, and the more specific goals of addressing social-psychological, socio-affective, and acquisitional barriers to sociolinguistic development. This would be especially valuable for contexts where a non-standard variety is dominant and/or where these barriers are likely to come into play. Study Three presents one way that this can be carried out in the classroom, but further research will be needed to validate its usefulness in other teaching and learning situations, such as the ones described above.

Another goal of this dissertation was to extend research on L2 sociolinguistic competence to learners in non-academic settings. Study One showed that immigrant learners can make considerable progress in their use of vernaculars compared to university and study abroad students (e.g., Nadasdi et al., 2005), perhaps because of more prolonged exposure to variable language over time. However, challenges seemed to persist even in these favourable conditions. Study Two confirms that these challenges can stem from different motivations to adopt

sociolinguistic norms, different degrees of access to L2 social networks, and different ways of overcoming limitations. Notably, while university students' engagement has been defined by learning experiences and activities (Mougeon & Rehner, 2015), immigrant learners seem to be differentiated by motivation, initiative, and attitudes. Further, immigrant learners used some sociolinguistic features at a comparable rate to university students despite having small L2 networks compared. These findings challenge current assumptions on contextual and individual factors in sociolinguistic development. First, engagement may be characterized as much by attitudes as concrete experiences. Second, contrary to previous findings (Gautier & Chevrot, 2015; Kinginger, 2008; Sax, 2003; Trentman, 2017), sociolinguistic development may not require large networks, but rather supportive individual relationships spanning different contexts and initiation of interaction in different social spheres. More research is needed not only to verify these findings, but also to better understand how (socio)linguistic development takes place among immigrants and other learners in non-academic settings, the unique challenges they encounter and the strategies they use to overcome them, and how teaching might be adapted to meet their needs.

Revisiting the Pedagogical Norm and Future Research

The pedagogical norm defined by Valdman (2000, 2003) lays out sociolinguistic, epilinguistic, and acquisitional criteria for selecting which features to teach, representing features that are widely used in the community, positively viewed by community members, and consistent with learners' overall linguistic development. As mentioned earlier, recently documented challenges in acquiring sociolinguistic competence, in particular adopting community-specific linguistic norms, suggest that these criteria could benefit from a learner's perspective in choosing sociolinguistic targets. Such a goal is also in line with the current push to

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recognize learner agency in L2 pedagogy and research (Cook, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Leung, 2005). Findings from this dissertation make a strong case for revisiting Valdman's criteria with the goal of answering the following question: how can we refine the pedagogical norm so that learner agency is acknowledged in instructional decisions and addressed in the classroom?

The results of the first two studies suggest the need for an additional criterion, which may be referred to as an *agentive* criterion. This criterion asks whether learners want to learn and use a particular feature. Needless to say, this question is more complex than it seems. As was evident in Study One, it is possible for them to learn vernacular features and even understand it from a formal and sociolinguistic perspective without instruction, although they still seldom use the feature even in ideal conditions for doing so. Study Two showed that for many learners, this is at least partly a conscious decision not to align with target community based on negative perceptions of the L2 community itself and their place in it. While a language teacher may certainly wish to challenge such perceptions, this is beyond the scope of a pedagogical norm meant to guide feature selection. Drawing on the sociocultural theories that inform Study Three, it might be more fruitful to ask whether learners' current understanding of a given feature is sufficient to guide mediated action; that is, whether their (non)use of the feature is informed by an accurate and nuanced understanding of the feature and its functions. A feature may be worth teaching with the goal of helping learners make linguistic choices based on research-supported social, discoursal, and pragmatic functions. This is not to say that social-psychological and socio-affective reasons are not valid, but rather that learners can benefit from both subjective and objective information on which to base their linguistic decisions.

This of course raises the question of how the agentive criterion can be applied, particularly when deciding whether or not a feature meets this criterion. Applications of the pedagogical norm have investigated the sociolinguistic criterion through corpus studies examining how widely a feature is used in a given community, in what linguistic and social contexts, and for what purposes (e.g., Ossipov, 2002). Regarding the epilinguistic criterion, useful insights have come from listener judgment and perception studies to determine how L2 use of informal or non-prescribed features is perceived by native or proficient interlocutors (e.g., Beaulieu, 2012, 2018; Dubois, 2019; Ruivivar & Collins, 2018, 2019). The acquisitional criterion has been applied in studies examining learner speech, particularly whether a particular feature aligns with learners' interlanguage patterns and how its use might be influenced by learners' overall language proficiency (Kerr, 2002; Ossipov, 2002). Complementing these methods, an agentive criterion should be applied in learner-centric studies exploring learners' perceptions of the language and the language community, their sense of place and belonging, and how these perceptions influence their language use. Study Two presents an example of such a study conducted from a social-psychological perspective. Applied to the agentive criterion, the findings of this study might justify the teaching of vernacular features when acquisition (or at least production) is hindered by subjective perceptions, by providing learners with more objective information about the feature. Below, I present two possible avenues for research that might apply the agentive criterion.

Identity and Investment

Identity approaches to SLA probe how language learners negotiate their place in relation to the language community, how they gain or fail to gain access to social networks that support their linguistic and social integration, and how they construct identities that might allow them

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entry into these networks – often in contrast with identities imposed upon them (Norton, 2000; Norton & McKinney, 2010). An important concept in identity theory is that of investment, or the idea that learners invest time, effort, and resources in learning the L2 with the expectation that it will afford them "a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 17). This notion can be directly applied to the question of whether or not learning the spoken grammar or vernacular features of a particular variety might be a good use of instructional time. Specifically, studies might investigate learners' investment in aligning with a community's linguistic norms and what they hope to gain from acquiring this particular type of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991), for example, making friends, getting employment, or feeling a sense of integration. Longitudinal case studies, guided by the pioneering work of Norton (2000) and Toohey (2000), can also offer valuable information on how learners negotiate access to social networks and construct their identities in geographically or culturally distinct language communities such as Quebec, and whether teaching certain community linguistic norms might contribute to this cause.

Language Socialization

Drawing in part on sociocultural theories of learning, socialization approaches to SLA simultaneously explore language learning and "*the other forms of knowledge* that are learned in and through language" (Duff & Talmy, 2011, p. 95, emphasis in the original). Importantly for sociolinguistic variation and the pedagogical norm, this includes learners' knowledge of social and cultural practices of the target society and how these are manifested in variable language structures. Examples include the concepts of social distance and formality in T-V address forms in various languages, or the notions of distancing and politeness in the use of conditionals when making requests in English (e.g., *can you, will you* versus *would you, could you*). Research in

this area can explore the links between the sociocultural practices of a language community and learners' affective stance towards a particular language variety or feature. As language socialization studies are typically ethnographic and longitudinal (e.g., Duff, 1995, 1996; Toohey, 2000), such research can also reveal how affective stances develop over time, as a result of various social and interpersonal factors, and in both instructed and non-instructed settings. Findings from such studies can tell us whether learners' desire (or lack thereof) to adopt a local variety or sociolinguistic structure stems from a desire (or lack thereof) to adopt certain social practices or notions, and what experiences might contribute to the latter. Consequently, this information can guide decisions on what features might need to be taught to help learners socialize into the language community and understand its practices and values – knowledge they can draw upon to practice sociolinguistic agency.

Concluding Remarks

This dissertation was born out of my own language learning experiences, which began when I came to Quebec twelve years ago. Although I was quickly able to pass as *cent pourcent Québécoise* (in the words of my late professor, Camyle Gaudreau), outside of the classroom, I struggled to use the local spoken grammar in a way that facilitated communication and promoted my integration. This was partly because of interlocutors' insistence that I speak "proper" French. After completing a master's thesis on this topic, I was left with the question of what this means for language teaching where there are different regional varieties of the target language, and where these varieties can index such important notions as belonging and identity. Clearly there was there was more to learn and say about spoken grammar and sociolinguistic variation, especially when considering the question of what dialectal features to teach, and why, and how. Having now spent the better part of three years delving into these questions, I have come to

realize just how broad and complex they are. My hope is that this dissertation represents a small first step towards answering them. Specifically, I hope that the first two manuscripts demonstrate the need for further research on factors affecting the L2 acquisition of local vernacular varieties and what they mean for our understanding of L2 sociolinguistic development. I also hope that the third manuscript represents one possible approach to addressing learner agency, particularly in contexts where it can hinder the learning process, and how it can be implemented and evaluated.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Grammaticality Judgment Test for Study One

Note: The English translations do not appear in the actual test. Items 1-5 are grammatically acceptable and feature adverb placement, which does not always translate directly between French and English. Items 6-10 may be considered technically grammatical or acceptable in some uses (e.g., literary, narrative emphasis), but since no context is provided, they are ambiguous. Items 11-15 are grammatically unacceptable.

Lisez les phrases suivantes, puis décidez à quel point elles sont acceptables en français où non.

1 = pas du tout acceptable; je ne le dirais jamais
5 = tout à fait acceptable; je le dirais

1) Lucie a donné des fleurs à Henri.   1   2   3   4   5
   (Lucie gave Henri some flowers)

2) Albert finira bientôt son travail.   1   2   3   4   5
   (Albert will finish his work soon)

3) Marie a descendu prudemment les marches. 1   2   3   4   5
   (Marie went down the stairs carefully)

4) Thomas a pris une douche avant la fête.   1   2   3   4   5
   (Thomas took a shower before the party)

5) Dianne a placé les fleurs dans sa chambre.   1   2   3   4   5
   (Dianne put the flowers in her room)

6) Elle a oublié deux matinées de libre.   1   2   3   4   5
   (She forgot two mornings free)

7) Un étonné candidat a perdu les élections.   1   2   3   4   5
   (A stunned candidate lost the election)

8) Le très-connu romancier vient d'arriver.   1   2   3   4   5
   (The very famous novelist just arrived)

9) Elle a la lettre d'écrite.   1   2   3   4   5
   (She has the letter written)

10) Sophie nous a dit que c'était malade hier.   1   2   3   4   5
   (Sophie told us it was sick yesterday)

11) Cette maison s'est achète.   1   2   3   4   5
(This house bought itself)

12) C'était du surpris enfant.   1   2   3   4   5
(It was of a surprised child)

13) Elle en a téléphoné l'auteur.   1   2   3   4   5
(She has phone some to the author)

14) J'ai trouvé un problème de resolu.   1   2   3   4   5
(I found a problem of resolved)

15) La fatiguée avocate prenant le train. 1   2   3   4   5
(The tired lawyer taking the train)

Appendix B: Spot the Difference Task for Study One

Vous avez trois images qui sont légèrement différentes les unes des autres. Votre partenaire a une image, elle aussi légèrement différente des vôtres.

Vous devez trouver, en posant des questions, laquelle de vos trois images n'a que **trois différences** avec l'image de votre partenaire.

<div align="center">

Set 1

A

</div>

<div align="center">

A1 (3 differences)

</div>

A2 (5 differences)

A3 (6 differences)

145

B
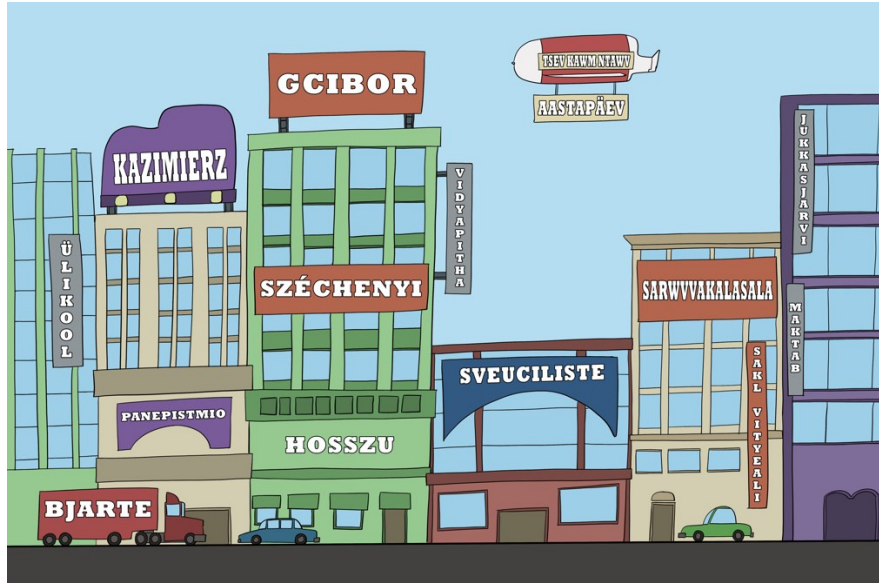
B1 (3 differences)

B2 (5 differences)

146
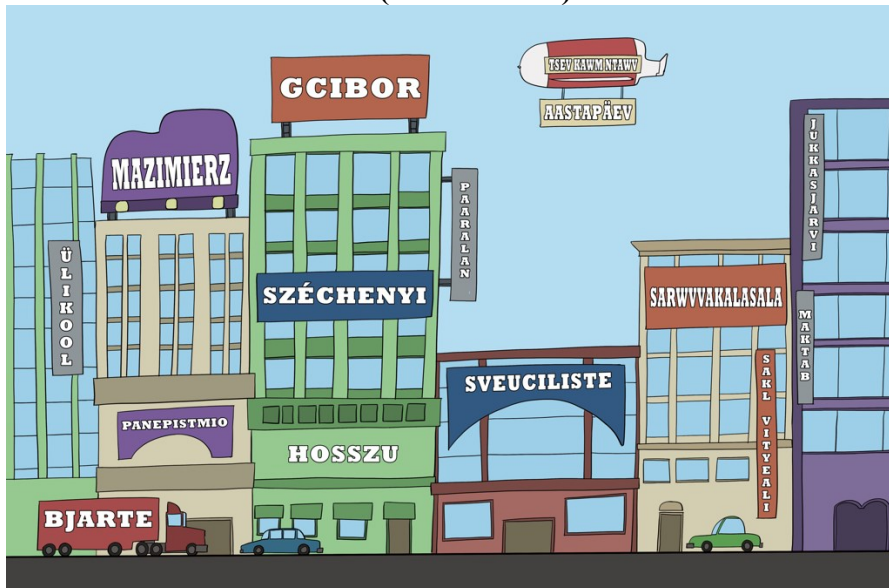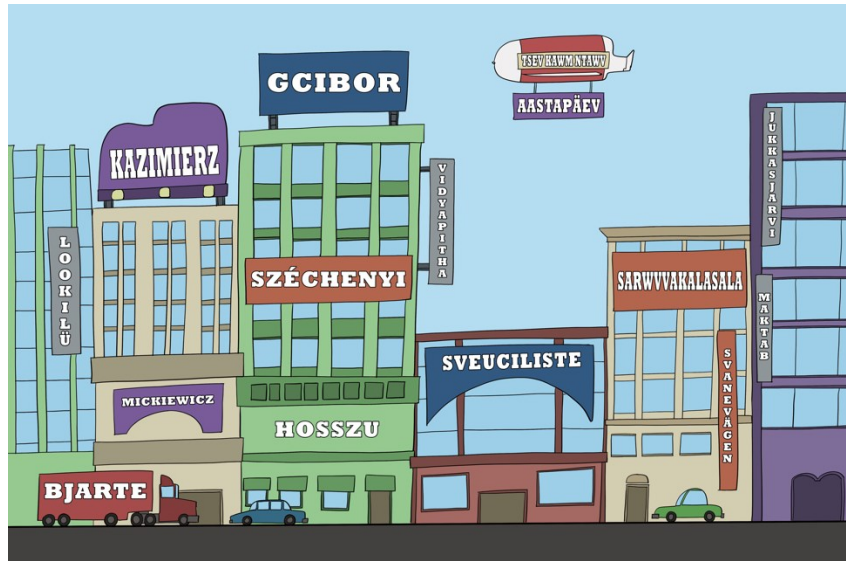
B3 (6 differences)

Appendix C: Reverse Q&A Task for Study One

Votre partenaire vous lira 12 phrases. Pour chacune de ces phrases, posez une question qui pourrait générer cette phrase comme réponse.

A

Parce qu'il était trop lourd.	Oui, parce que son bureau est au 48e étage.	Oui, nous devons y arriver le plus tôt possible.	Éteins-le, attends dix secondes, puis rallume-le.
Non, je me cachait en dessous du sofa.	C'est au milieu de nulle part, on a fait trois jours de randonnée pour s'y rendre.	Le dimanche de 7h00 à 9h00.	Non, c'est le 13 juin à 22h00.
Non, elle a mangé deux sandwichs au beurre d'arachides.	Deux tasses de café.	Oui, nous l'avons vu la semaine passé avec sa copine.	Soit Justin Bieber ou Justin Trudeau.

Oui, ils veulent voir ce qu'il se passe dans les laboratoires.	Pour qu'on puisse commander de la pizza sans sortir du lit.	Oui, tu devrais faire la demande en ligne et leur envoyer des photos.	Poussez sur le bouton monter ou descendre, entrer, et choisir un étage.
Sur la rue Beaubien, deux coins à l'est de Papineau.	Non, c'est juste là derrière toi.	D'ici sept mois, à peu près.	Oui, nous sommes arrivés il y a quatre heures.
Une presentation de deux heures sur tous ses plats préférés.	Un câble, un chargeur, des piles, et un guide d'utilisateur.	Non, c'est Chantal Drouin, mon ancienne prof de français.	Non, c'est un ami que j'ai rencontré à l'université.

Appendix D: Conceptual Diagrams for Study Three

LA DISTANCE SOCIALE
La distance sociale signifie à quel point vous êtes proche d'une personne. Par exemple,
vous pouvez être très proche de votre meilleur ami, mais plus distant avec un
professeur que vous venez de rencontrer.

TRÈS PROCHE:	MOINS PROCHE, MAIS AMICAL:	DISTANT:
Exemple: meilleur(e)s ami(e)s	Exemple: collègues de travail	Exemple: étudiant(e) et professeur(e)
Ton chien il est vraiment drôle!	*Ta présentation elle* était super!	*Tes devoirs* sont toujours excellents.
	OU	
Moi je voudrais un petit lapin.	*Ta présentation* était super!	**?** *Tes devoirs ils* sont toujours excellents.

1. Social Distance Diagram for Subject Doubling

.

LA DISTANCE SOCIALE
La distance sociale signifie à quel point vous êtes proche d'une personne. Par exemple,
vous pouvez être très proche de votre meilleur ami, mais plus distant avec un
professeur que vous venez de rencontrer.

TRÈS PROCHE:	MOINS PROCHE, MAIS AMICAL:	DISTANT:
Exemple: meilleur(e)s ami(e)s	Exemple: collègues de travail	Exemple: étudiant(e) et professeur(e)
On y va-tu au party?	*T'es-tu* prête pour ta présentation?	*Est-ce que* vous pouvez m'aider?
	OU	
Tu connais-tu Georges?	*Es-tu* prête pour ta présentation?	**?** *Tu peux-tu* m'aider?

*2. Social Distance Diagram for -*tu *Questions*

LA PRÉSENTATION DE SOI

La présentation de soi signifie se présenter ou montrer une partie de son identité aux autres. Par exemple, vous pouvez vous présenter comme amical, professionnel, accessible, etc.

AMICAL(E)	PROFESSIONNEL(LE)	ACCESSIBLE
Moi je _m'appelle Ben._	**_Je_** _suis agente de bord._	**_Moi je_** _fais beaucoup de peinture!_
		OU
Ma sœur elle _s'appelle Yasmin._	**?** **_Mon travail c'est_** _très intéressant._	**_Je_** _fais aussi des sculptures._

3. *Self-presentation Diagram for Subject Doubling*

LA PRÉSENTATION DE SOI

La présentation de soi signifie se présenter ou montrer une partie de son identité aux autres. Par exemple, vous pouvez vous présenter comme amical, professionnel, accessible, etc.

AMICAL(E)	PROFESSIONNEL(LE)	ACCESSIBLE
_T'as-tu_ _besoin d'aide?_	**_Avez-vous_** _besoin d'aide?_	**_As-tu_** _besoin d'aide?_
		OU
Tu veux-tu _aller au parc?_	**?** **_Tu veux-tu_** _un verre de vin?_	**_Tu veux-tu_** _voir un film?_

4. *Self-presentation Diagram for* -tu *Questions*

Appendix E: Strategic Interaction Scenarios/Role Play Prompts for Study Three

CBI Group : Strategic Interaction Scenarios

Scenario #1: Subject doubling

ROLE A

Vous parlez à une nouvelle employée à votre travail pendant le déjeuner. Elle a commencé la semaine dernière et vous avez parlé avec elle quelques fois. Vous savez que vous travaillerez beaucoup ensemble dans les prochaines semaines, vous voulez donc montrer que vous êtes amical. Vous avez également entendu qu'elle joue de la guitare et vous souhaitez la présenter à d'autres collègues qui souhaitent créer un groupe de musique.

ROLE B

Vous êtes à votre nouvel emploi depuis une semaine et vous déjeunez avec l'un de vos collègues. Vous avez entendu dire qu'il veut créer un groupe de musique avec d'autres collègues, ce qui vous intéresse parce que vous jouez de la guitare. Cependant, vous ne leur avez pas parlé beaucoup. Vous voulez faire partie du groupe, mais aussi montrer que vous êtes professionnel et dévoué au travail.

Scenario # 2: -*tu* question

ROLE A

Vous venez d'emménager dans une nouvelle ville pour commencer un travail de médecin de famille. C'est votre premier jour au travail, et vous rencontrez votre nouveau patient : un jeune garçon accompagné de sa mère. Quand ils entrent, vous vous rendez compte que la mère est une ancienne amie. Vous jouiez beaucoup ensemble quand vous étiez enfants. Vous êtes heureux de voir un visage familier dans cette nouvelle ville! Vous devez poser des questions de routine sur la santé de son fils, mais vous voulez aussi garder la conversation amicale.

ROLE B

Vous emmenez votre fils voir votre nouveau médecin de famille. Vous avez entendu dire qu'il est nouveau en ville. Quand il entre dans la salle, vous le reconnaissez comme un ancien ami de votre jeunesse. Vous êtes heureuse de savoir que votre médecin de famille est quelqu'un qui vous connaît déjà bien! Vous aimeriez savoir comment votre ami a été pendant toutes ces années et qu'il se sente le bienvenu dans cette nouvelle ville.

Comparison Group : Role Play Prompts

ROLE A

Vous parlez à une nouvelle employée à votre travail pendant le déjeuner.

ROLE B

Vous êtes à votre nouvel emploi depuis une semaine et vous déjeunez avec l'un de vos collègues.

Scenario # 2 : *-tu* question

ROLE A

Vous venez d'emménager dans une nouvelle ville pour commencer un travail de médecin de famille. C'est votre premier jour au travail, et vous rencontrez votre nouveau patient.

ROLE B

Vous emmenez votre fils voir votre nouveau médecin de famille. Vous avez entendu dire qu'il est nouveau en ville.

Appendix F: Consciousness-Raising Task for Study Three

<div align="center">Session 1: Subject doubling</div>

Version A

- *Moi, j'aime beaucoup ce restaurant, tout y est délicieux!*
- *Ah bon, j'ai hâte de l'essayer! Ma collègue, elle le recommande aussi.*
- *Oui, je suis content de l'avoir trouvé parce que mon resto préféré, il a fermé le mois dernier.*
- *C'est dommage. C'était quel genre de restaurant?*
- *Un restaurant italien. Le chef, elle s'appelle Carla, elle a un énorme talent en cuisine. Je pense qu'elle planifie ouvrir sa propre entreprise.*
- *Tant mieux!*
- *Les Montréalais ils sont tellement chanceux. On a un grand choix de restaurants.*

Version B

- *J'aime beaucoup ce restaurant, tout est délicieux!*
- *Ah bon, j'ai hâte de l'essayer! Ma collègue le recommande aussi.*
- *Oui, je suis content de l'avoir trouvé parce que mon resto préféré a fermé le mois dernier.*
- *C'est dommage. C'était quel genre de restaurant?*
- *Un restaurant italien. Le chef s'appelle Carla, elle a un énorme talent en cuisine. Je pense qu'elle planifie ouvrir sa propre entreprise.*
- *Tant mieux!*
- *Les montréalais sont tellement chanceux. On a un grand choix de restaurants.*

<div align="center">Session 2 : *-tu* questions</div>

Version A

- *Enfin la fin de l'hiver! T'es-tu content?*
- *J'aime bien le printemps sauf quand il pleut. La météo est si imprévisible!*
- *Oui, justement.*
- *Tu viens du Brésil, non? Il pleut-tu beaucoup là-bas?*
- *Oui, mais surtout entre décembre et janvier. C'est-tu la même chose en Algérie?*
- *Oui, on a une saison pluvieuse. Mais bon. Tu t'ennuies-tu du temps chaud en hiver?*
- *Je m'habitue au froid, mais j'avoue que je serai bien sur les plages de Rio!*

Version B

- *Enfin la fin de l'hiver! Es-tu content?*
- *J'aime bien le printemps sauf quand il pleut. La météo est si imprévisible!*
- *Oui, justement.*
- *Tu viens du Brésil, non? Est-ce qu'il pleut beaucoup là-bas?*
- *Oui mais surtout entre décembre et janvier. Est-ce la même chose en Algérie?*

— *Oui, on a une saison de pluie. Mais bon. Est-ce que tu t'ennuies du temps chaud en hiver?*

— *Je m'habitue au froid, mais j'avoue que je serai bien aux plages de Rio!*

Appendix G: Written Exercises for Study Three

Le dialogue ci-dessous se passe entre **deux personnes qui viennent de se rencontrer**.

—Que faisais-tu comme métier?

—Je travaille dans une garderie.

—Ah, c'est intéressant. Aimes-tu les enfants?

—Oui, beaucoup. J'ai toujours voulu une carrière où je pourrais travailler avec des enfants.

—Fais-tu de l'enseignement?

—Parfois avec les 3 a 4 ans, on apprend les couleurs, l'alphabet ou les chiffres. Les plus jeunes apprennent des chansons. Et vous?

—J'ai une boulangerie au centre-ville.

—C'est génial! Est-ce que tes clients ont un produit préféré?

—Les jeunes achètent généralement des sandwichs pour le déjeuner. Les plus âgés semblent aimer les tartes.

—J'aimerais en essayer un!

Dans l'espace prévu, **réécrivez le dialogue pour deux amis proches**. Utilisez -tu au besoin.

Le dialogue ci-dessous se passe entre **deux personnes qui viennent de se rencontrer**.

—Que fais-tu comme métier?

—Je travaille dans une garderie.

—Ah, c'est intéressant. Aimes-tu les enfants?

—Oui, beaucoup. J'ai toujours voulu une carrière où je pourrais travailler avec des enfants.

—Fais-tu de l'enseignement?

—Parfois avec les 3 a 4 ans, on apprend les couleurs, l'alphabet ou les chiffres. Les plus jeunes apprennent des chansons. Et vous?

—J'ai une boulangerie au centre-ville.

—C'est génial! Est-ce que tes clients ont un produit préféré?

—Les jeunes achètent généralement des sandwichs pour le déjeuner. Les plus âgés semblent aimer les tartes.

—J'aimerais en essayer un!

Dans l'espace prévu, **réécrivez le dialogue pour deux amis proches**. Utilisez le doublage de sujet au besoin.

Appendix H: Conceptual Definitions Task for Study Three

Voici trois paires de phrases similaires. Regardez les phrases de la **colonne B.**

Colonne A	Colonne B
Ma grand-mère ne veut pas venir en hiver.	Ma grand-mère elle ne veut pas venir en hiver.
Nos clients préfèrent les séances du matin.	Nos clients ils préfèrent les séances du matin.
Mon bureau est au cinquième étage.	Mon bureau c'est au cinquième étage.

    a. Quelle est la signification de l'utilisation de *elle*, *ils* et *c'est* dans ces phrases?

    b. Voyez-vous une différence de sens entre les phrases des colonnes A et B? Expliquez.

    c. Pensez-vous que les phrases de la colonne A peuvent être utilisées dans les mêmes situations que celles de la colonne B? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas?

Voici trois paires de questions similaires. Regardez les questions de **la colonne B**.

Colonne A	Colonne B
Est-ce qu'on réserve pour quatre personnes?	On réserve-tu pour quatre personnes?
François a-t-il confirmé sa présence?	François a-tu confirmé sa présence?
Veux-tu écouter le nouveau film de Thor?	Tu veux-tu écouter le nouveau film de Thor?

     a. Quelle est la signification de l'utilisation de *-tu* dans ces questions?

     b. Voyez-vous une différence de sens entre les questions des colonnes A et B? Expliquez.

    c. Pensez-vous que les questions de la colonne A peuvent être utilisées dans les mêmes situations que celles de la colonne B? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas?

Appendix I: Appropriate Judgment Tasks for Study Three
Subject Doubling

Lisez les situations ci-dessous. Pour chaque situation, choisissez une phrase ou une question que vous jugez appropriée. Expliquez ensuite votre réponse dans l'espace prévu à cet effet.

1. Votre amie Kim arrive dans un café pour votre rencontre. Vous vous connaissez depuis longtemps et elle revient d'un voyage à Boston.

Vous voulez dire à Kim que votre colocataire se rendra également à Boston au printemps. Comment diriez-vous cela?

☐ *Jessie pense y aller en avril.*
☐ *Jessie elle pense y aller en avril.*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

2. Pendant que Kim et vous discutez, Mme Khan entre. C'est une des meilleures amies de votre mère et elle vous connaît depuis que vous êtes petit. Elle a environ 60 ans. Elle vous voit et vous dit bonjour.

Après avoir présenté Kim à Mme Khan, vous voulez mentionner que vous étudiez tous les deux la finance. Quelle phrase serait appropriée?

☐ *Kim étudie aussi en finance.*
☐ *Kim elle étudie aussi en finance.*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

3. Vous devez suivre un cours de commerce international, mais le seul cours encore ouvert est en conflit avec votre horaire de travail. Vous décidez de demander personnellement de l'aide au chef de votre département. Vous ne l'avez jamais rencontrée, mais elle a l'air très sérieuse.

Vous voulez expliquer que vous devez changer de classe car vous devez travailler toute la journée le lundi. Comment devez-vous le dire?

□ *Mon patron veut que je travaille les lundis.*
□ *Mon patron il veut que je travaille les lundis.*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

4. Vous vous préparez pour faire une présentation au travail. Certaines personnes bien connues de l'industrie font partie des participants et il est très important de faire bonne impression.

Vous commencez par vous présenter. Quelle est l'expression la plus appropriée?

□ *Bonjour, je m'appelle Sylvia Boise.*
□ *Bonjour, moi je m'appelle Sylvia Boise.*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

5. Après la présentation, quelqu'un s'approche de vous et se présente. Vous le reconnaissez comme un vieil ami. Vous ne vous êtes pas vus depuis 15 ans, mais vous étiez les meilleurs amis de l'école primaire. Il est maintenant le vice-président du plus grand concurrent de votre entreprise.

Après avoir présenté votre ami à votre patron, vous voulez mentionner qu'il a grandi sur la Rive-Sud. Comment le feriez-vous?

□ *John vient de la Rive-Sud.*
□ *John il vient de la Rive-Sud.*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

-tu Questions

Lisez les situations ci-dessous. Pour chaque situation, choisissez une phrase ou une question que vous jugez appropriée. Expliquez ensuite votre réponse dans l'espace prévu à cet effet.

1. Votre amie Kim arrive dans un café pour votre rencontre. Vous vous connaissez depuis longtemps et elle revient d'un voyage à Boston.

Vous voulez entendre parler de son voyage. Quelle question serait appropriée?

□ *Est-ce que c'était bien, Boston?*
□ *C'est-tu bien, Boston?*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

2. Pendant que Kim et vous discutez, Mme Khan entre. C'est une des meilleures amies de votre mère et elle vous connaît depuis que vous êtes petit. Elle a environ 60 ans. Elle vous voit et vous dit bonjour.

a. Vous voulez demander à Mme Khan comment va sa famille. Quelle question serait appropriée?

□ *Est-ce que la famille va bien?*
□ *La famille va-tu bien?*

Expliquez votre choix.

```



```

3. Vous devez suivre un cours de commerce international, mais le seul cours encore ouvert est en conflit avec votre horaire de travail. Vous décidez de demander personnellement de l'aide au chef de votre département. Vous ne l'avez jamais rencontrée, mais elle a l'air très sérieuse.

a. Vous voulez demander au chef de département si elle peut vous transférer dans une autre classe. Comment devez-vous formuler votre question?

□ *Est-ce que je peux changer de classe après une semaine?*
□ *Je peux-tu changer de classe après une semaine?*

Expliquez votre choix.

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4. Vous vous préparez pour faire une présentation au travail. Certaines personnes bien connues de l'industrie font partie des participants et il est très important de faire bonne impression.

    a. Vous souhaitez savoir si tout le monde est prêt à commencer. Comment formuleriez-vous cette question?

    □ *Est-ce qu'on est prêt à commencer?*
    □ *On est-tu prêt à commencer?*

    Expliquez votre choix.

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5. Après la présentation, quelqu'un s'approche de vous et se présente. Vous le reconnaissez comme un vieil ami. Vous ne vous êtes pas vus depuis 15 ans, mais vous étiez les meilleurs amis de l'école primaire. Il est maintenant le vice-président du plus grand concurrent de votre entreprise.

    a. Vous voulez lui demander s'il vit toujours dans la région. Quelle question est la plus appropriée?

    □ *Est-ce que tu habites toujours à Montréal?*
    □ *T'habites-tu toujours à Montréal?*

    Expliquez votre choix.

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Appendix J: Learning Journal Prompts in French

Veuillez écrire ci-dessous vos impressions du cours d'aujourd'hui. Essayez de répondre à toutes les questions. Vous pouvez écrire dans votre langue maternelle si vous le souhaitez.

1. Qu'avez-vous appris dans ce cours que vous ne connaissiez pas auparavant?

2. Avant ce cours, connaissiez-vous les différents types de relations ou d'interactions sociales? Y a-t-il quelque chose dans ce concept que vous avez trouvé nouveau ou intéressant?

3. Avez-vous observé ces relations ou interactions sociales au Québec? Et les autres endroits où vous avez vécu?

4. Comment pensez-vous que l'apprentissage de différents types de relations ou d'interactions sociales changera votre façon de parler français?

5. Avez-vous déjà entendu d'autres personnes utiliser [doublage de sujet, questions avec -tu] avant cette leçon? Si oui, qu'en avez-vous pensé? (p. ex. agréable, amusant, irritant, désagréable)

6. Est-ce qu'il y a des constructions similaires à [doublage de sujet, questions avec -tu] dans les autres langues que vous parlez? Si oui, est-ce que cela fonctionne de la même manière qu'en français?

7. Avez-vous déjà utilisé [doublage de sujet, questions avec -tu] en français? Et vos autres langues?

8. Vous voyez-vous utiliser [doublage de sujet, questions avec -tu] dans vos futures interactions? Pourquoi?