LEARNER USE OF FRENCH SECOND-PERSON PRONOUNS IN
SYNCHRONOUS ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

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This study analyzes students' use of the French second-person pronouns *tu* (T) and *vous* (V) in small-group (2-3 students) inter-learner online chat sessions. The influence of internal linguistic factors (i.e., turn type and morphosyntactic environment) on learners' appropriate vs. inappropriate use of these pronouns is considered. The study also investigates the influence of Instructional Level on *tu-vous* use and the extent to which students from different instructional levels provide various types of peer assistance (e.g., lexical, morphosyntactic, and sociolinguistic/pragmatic). Pronoun use was extremely unstable for learners of all levels, and a Kruskal-Wallis analysis revealed that Instructional Level did not significantly affect appropriate T/V use overall. Instructional Level and Syntax did, however, significantly affect interrogative T/V use, as shown through multivariate analyses. Peer-assisted performance was limited to lexical retrieval. Pedagogical recommendations are presented for teaching and learning second-person pronouns in French.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and Scope

The second-person pronoun paradigm presents many difficulties for second language (L2) learners of French (Belz and Kinginger 2002, 2003; Dewaele 2004b; Kinginger and Belz 2005; Liddicoat 2006), especially for those learners whose first language has only one second-person form of address (e.g., 'you' in English). Learner textbooks and other pedagogical materials often present and portray the *tu-vous* paradigm in simplistic semantic terms, where *tu* is appropriate to use with friends, family, and persons of similar social situations and *vous*-singular is reserved for polite address or is even presented as the default (or unmarked) pronoun (Ager, 1990). However, these explanations fail to address the complexities and social implications of a system that not only has two forms for "you", but also employs *vous* as both a plural and singular-formal pronoun. As Gardner-Choloros (1991) notes, the use of French second-person pronouns can be ambiguous for even native speakers of French (see also Burt, 1995; Coffen, 2002).

Previous research has favored qualitative approaches to learners' sociopragmatic¹ development with respect to T/V systems, which is "embedded in the process of socialization" (Kinginger, 2000, p.29). For example, Belz and Kinginger (2002) performed a microgenetic² analysis, examining closely the development of two

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¹ Defined by Lyster (1994) as "The capacity to recognize and produce socially appropriate speech in context" (p.263).
² In a Vygotskyan framework, a microgenetic type of analysis examines the development of a defined process (e.g., sociopragmatic competence) during a specified period of time. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) note that "Wertsch (1985: 55) characterizes microgenetic analysis as 'a very short-term longitudinal study'" (p. 52).
US students’ understanding and use of T forms over the course of an eight-week period of on-line contact with native speakers of French. This type of detailed, qualitative analysis of small numbers of participants, an approach which refuses to see learners as bundles of variables but as people with individual identities and different experiences of social interaction (Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001), has provided valuable insights into L2 learning. Few studies, however, have used a quantitative method to analyze students’ choice of tu and vous. Dewaele (2005) stresses the importance of embracing quantitative research methodologies in order to "help researchers obtain a more complete picture" (p. 369).3 Although the analysis presented in this thesis is primarily quantitative, it is important to recognize that each tradition has its advantages and limitations. This corpus-driven study aims to analyze students’ use of second-person pronouns tu and vous in small-group (2-3 students) inter-learner online chat sessions, focusing specifically on the possible influence of internal linguistic factors, such as turn type and morphosyntactic environment, on learners' appropriate vs. inappropriate use of these pronouns.

This thesis analyzes data from a replication study of Williams (2003), in which one line of inquiry involved determining to what extent (and in which direction, if any) students from different instructional levels provide various types of support (e.g., lexical, morphosyntactic, sociolinguistic/pragmatic) for each other. As such, the current study also aims to investigate the amount and type of peer assistance (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988) that occurred in these small groups where each participant was enrolled in a French course at a different level (i.e., first, second, or third semester). As Tharpe and

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3 A discussion of the merits of quantitative vs. qualitative methods is beyond the scope of this thesis. Readers interested in this debate should consult chapter 2 in Lantolf and Thorne (2006).
Gallimore (1988) note, peer-assisted performance is when "peers themselves become the primary sources of learning for one another in the interactions over tasks of independent learning centers" (p. 176). Assisted performance is provided by "more capable peers" (p. 33). The novice-expert dynamic is of particular interest in this study, given the inter-level participant groups. In addition to investigating overall T/V use, therefore, this study aims to determine whether any peer-assisted learning occurred, and, if so, whether it involved students of more advanced levels (i.e. second- and third-semester students) aiding students of less advanced levels (i.e. first- and second-semester students). As well as investigating novice-expert roles within peer support, the type of assistance provided will be considered (e.g., task-related assistance, lexical retrieval, grammar assistance, or sociopragmatic assistance).

Relatedly, this study will examine whether Instructional Level is a significant factor in the use of tu and vous. Students who have more instruction in the language could be expected to demonstrate greater awareness of the T/V system. However, this may not necessarily be true when level is determined by credit hours accrued from previous French courses (i.e., not by a proficiency test), and students of the most advanced level (i.e., third semester) had a maximum of one year's university instruction in French. Thus, students in higher-level French course may not necessarily be more proficient than those in the lower-level courses. In fact, some of the first and second semester students in this study appear to have somewhat higher levels of proficiency than some of the third semester students. While a full discussion of this is beyond the scope of the present study, careful readings of the corpus revealed that many of the "A'

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4 "For Vygotsky, the contrast between assisted performance and unassisted performance identified the fundamental nexus of development and learning that he called the zone of proximal development (ZPD)" (Tharpe and Gallimore, 1988, p.30).
students” in second semester French, for example, were more proficient than the "C' or 'D' students" in third semester courses.⁵

1.2 Technology and Second Language Learning

The use of technology for language learning and teaching has evolved drastically ever since it was first introduced and made possible by new technologies in the 1960s. As Salaberry (2001) points out, there have been three principal periods of technology-enhanced language education: the "audiolingual era" (1960s), the period of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) (1970s and 1980s), and more recently the era of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (1990s and beyond). In his retrospective overview of technology-enhanced foreign language education, Salaberry (2001) considers the ways in which the foreign language educators of today can fully realize the "pedagogical potential" (p. 39) of modern-day technologies.

During the "audiolingual era" of the 1960s, influenced by the structural perspective of language teaching, the computer was viewed as a tutor, providing students with repetitive, drill-like exercises and corrective feedback (Kern and Warschauer, 2000). This mainly involved imitation of modeled discourse in language learning laboratories. Students, stationed at individual listening posts, were required to listen and repeat pre-recorded, isolated sentences. Since proficiency was linked to pronunciation, the exercises were designed to help learners master sounds of the target language, with no real consideration for presenting language within a communicative context.

⁵ Although final grades (i.e., A, B, C, etc.) for students are unknown, the main point here is that level as determined by class enrollment does not necessarily provide an accurate representation of an individual's level of proficiency.
The language laboratory was gradually surpassed by CAI. Much of this CAI software still involved computer drills: programs provided students with questions (based primarily on grammar or vocabulary), and, upon responding, the student was given feedback until he/she gave a satisfactory answer. Although CAI was initially praised for its capacity to provide instant feedback and explanation of errors, the mechanical nature of the software was soon criticized. Kleinman (1987), for example, denounced CAI programs as "little more than electronic textbooks". At this stage, the new technologies had failed to revolutionize learning techniques and methodologies; instead, the computer was simply a medium to which traditional language teaching methods were applied.6

Moving away from the idea that technology-based learning should mimic instructor-based learning, researchers next focused their attention on multimedia platforms. Pederson (1986) pointed out that the effective use of computers in L2 instruction was directly linked to "the extent to which it allows L2 teachers to implement effectively specific pedagogical tasks that may be difficult to achieve in other environments" (p. 46). In this more cognitive-oriented approach, the learner—not the computer—was in control of the learning process, which meant the computer-as-pupil metaphor replaced that of the computer-as-tutor: "The computer provides tools and resources, but it is up to the learner to do something with these in a simulated environment" (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p.9). The use of, for example, video, sound, graphics and text was favored in order to enhance L2 learning in novel ways.

Multimedia dictionaries and annotations (e.g., the use of text plus video for annotated

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6 CAI has not disappeared; in fact, many researchers are still very interested in instant feedback and autodidactic computer programs, publishing in journals such as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), ReCALL, System, and ALSIC.
words in reading passages), simulated environments (e.g., the videodisc program *A la rencontre de Philippe*\(^7\)) and computer-adaptive testing (CAT) (e.g., listening comprehension tests with computer-generated speech and keyboard answer selection) were introduced into the foreign language classroom. It was claimed that Intelligent CALL (Computer Aided/Assisted Language Learning), through its Natural Language Processor, could provide intelligent grammar feedback based on students' responses. As Salaberry notes, however, it is questionable whether Intelligent CALL can match the "highly contextualized nature" (p. 47) of feedback that humans are capable of providing.

Whilst CAI and CALL studies from the 1970s and 1980s focused on individualized instruction and learner-computer interaction, the popularity of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in the 1990s centered around an innovative and previously unexplored concept: learner-learner interaction via networked technologies (e.g., the Internet). Within this sociocognitive framework, the *computer-as-toolkit* model (Crook, 1994) described the new role attributed to technology: a medium for facilitating interactive human communication. Kern (1995) compared classroom discussions in face-to-face versus text-based telecommunication and found that the CMC environment increased interaction and learner participation. The synchronous electronic communication meant that fully elaborated turns could occur simultaneously (as opposed to face-to-face interaction, where only one student could speak at any given moment), hence generating more opportunities for students to participate and increasing language production. Kern also argued that synchronous written interaction

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\(^7\) Furstenberg, Murray, Malone, and Farman-Farmaian, 1993.
in CMC environments can reduce learner anxiety since students have more time to plan and develop utterances.

Another form of CMC, analyzed by Kinginger (1998), is two-way simultaneous videoconferencing. In Kinginger's study, French native speakers in France and English native speakers in the United States participated in two 60-minute videoconference discussions. The "face-to-face" electronic language exchange was conducted in French for the first 30 minutes and in then in English for the rest of the session. Following this exchange, the U.S. L2 learners benefited from an increased awareness of the differences between the French that they had been previously exposed to, which was mostly written, and the spoken conversational French used by their native speaking counterparts. Finally, Warschauer (1997) supported Kern's (1995) claims that CMC is an effective pedagogical tool. Warschauer argued convincingly that since there are little to no time or place constraints in online (as opposed to face-to-face) communication, many more opportunities for human interaction are presented. Warschauer also points out that CMC "encourages collaborative learning in the classroom" (p. 472), since it "creates the opportunity for a group to construct knowledge together, thus linking reflection and interaction" (p. 473).

Although the use of CMC is gaining more and more momentum in language education, it is today neither widely practiced nor researched. Salaberry (2001) notes that "one of the most understudied and perhaps underrated consequences of the use of new technologies has been the interaction among learners generated by activities based on the use of new technologies" (pp. 51-52). It is important, he also points out, to select particular technologies based on specific pedagogical objectives. CMC has the
potential to offer unique, enriching experiences to L2 learners, by putting them in touch with both native speakers and fellow students from all over the world, and by exposing them to a wider range of discourse options (Kramsch, 1985) seldom available in formal, structured pedagogical settings.

1.3 Tu and Vous Use in French

1.3.1 Overview

The use of the second-person pronouns tu (T) and vous (V) is influenced by many social and cultural factors. Since these factors are constantly changing and evolving, T and V choice is both dynamic and complex. Age, gender, the relationship between a speaker and addressee, the location of an exchange, social class – all of these factors, individually or combined, can play a part in determining second-person pronouns choice (Gardener-Chloros, 1991).

In tracing the historical evolution of second-person pronoun use (in French and other languages), Brown and Gilman (1960) described how a set of T/V norms became established in medieval Europe, which they describe in terms of the "power semantic" and the "solidarity semantic": "For many centuries French, English, Italian, Spanish and German pronoun usage followed the rule of nonreciprocal T-V between persons of unequal power and the rule of mutual V or T (according to social class membership) between persons of roughly equivalent power" (p. 257). The power dimension of pronominal choice was asymmetrical, since the person with higher power (e.g., the master of a household or a member of the nobility) used T with the person with lower power (e.g., a slave or a servant or a member of the common people), the latter

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8 For a more comprehensive overview of address pronouns in French (and some other European languages), readers can consult Maley (1972), Coffen (2002), or Peeters (2004).
responding with V. These dimensions highlight the fact that T and V do not simply represent a familiar/formal dichotomy, but can also express inferiority (T) versus superiority (V) when used asymmetrically. The solidarity dimension, on the other hand, was described as symmetrical: individuals of "like-mindedness" (p. 258) (resulting from, for example, common "political membership, family, religion, profession, sex and birthplace", p.258) used either reciprocal T or V with one another. Brown and Gilman also noted (in their study published in 1960) that "the mutual T is advancing among fellow students" (p. 261). Finally, the authors discuss the shift in T/V norms that occurred throughout the twentieth century, particularly since World War II, when the solidarity semantic became progressively more commonplace (amongst, for example, officers and soldiers, and employers and employees).

Whilst Brown and Gilman's dimensions of power and solidarity described two fundamental aspects of T/V choice throughout history, and ignited much interest in the field of second-person pronoun use, the scope of their dualistic, semantic approach has since been critiqued as somewhat limited (Morford, 1997; Mühlhäusler and Harré, 1990). Morford (1997), for example, advanced the argument that it is not simply the relationship between speakers that determines pronominal choice, but that individual speaker characteristics also play an important role. After interviewing middle-class native speakers of French, Morford argued that there are two "orders of indexicality" associated with T/V choice. In the first order, pronoun choice indexes, or points to, aspects of the immediate context (i.e., the type of social relationships and the nature of the occasion or setting). Pronoun choice also indexes, in the second order, aspects of the speaker's identity within a wider social context (e.g., social class, education, or
political orientation). Most importantly, within this double indexicality model, "pronominal address […] does not merely reflect a static social order but repeatedly puts into play and potentially transforms the categories in terms of which social relations, occasions, and identities are defined and redefined" (p. 29).

Although critiquing Brown and Gilman's binary view of T/V choice, Morford (1997, 2001) does support their claim concerning the modern prevalence of symmetry (i.e., both speakers using either T or V) in pronominal forms. Morford also notes a heightened presence of T in France, which has equally been documented in Quebec (Vincent, 2001). Morford attributes this to key twentieth-century moments in history, for example World Wars I and II and the social upheaval in France during May '68, which contributed to "more casual and less status-conscious modes of conduct" (Morford, 2001, p.23) amongst the "new" or "modern" middle classes. Although "differences in status, identity and personal disposition are still clearly […] conveyed by speakers through their use of the tu/vous system" (Morford, 1997, p.31), the emergence of more democratic societies has meant distinguishing social class and distance (not only through language but also through, for example, dress or customary etiquette) is no longer as valorized as it once was (for example, during the pre- and post-revolutionary periods).

1.3.2 Electronic French

The study of electronic French-language discourse is an area of research that is still in its very early stages. Williams and van Compernolle (2007) investigated second-person pronoun use in synchronous CMC, specifically on-line French-language chat
environments. The authors identified all tokens of T and V in a corpus of data taken from French-language chat channels intended for users of a wide range of ages.

In the first part of the study, "an overwhelming preference for tu" (p. 807) was observed in all channels, whilst V singular was found to be almost non-existent, accounting for just over 3% of all tokens, which even included clear instances of marked uses (e.g., mimicry, role-playing, and ludic episodes) of V singular. It appeared, therefore, that reciprocal T prevailed within the chat communities analyzed for their study. The authors then participated actively in the same chat channels, addressing other chat room users with V. Several users objected to or questioned the vouvoiement, making comments such as "on ne vouvoie pas sur un tchat", "pkoï tu me vouvois?" (p. 814), and "le tutoiement est plus approprié" (p. 815). There appeared to be an "inherent equality and solidarity in chat communities" (p. 815), which resulted in the observed generalized, reciprocal T use. Although cyberspace norms are shaped by unique, context-specific factors (e.g., lack of geographical constraints, an absence of immediately obvious distinctions of class and status), the more informal modes of conduct observed in electronic discourse do reflect those documented in face-to-face interaction (Morford, 2001; Brown and Levinson, 1987).

In order to expand the study of second-person address in on-line environments to another type of CMC, Williams and van Compernolle (2008) investigated T/V use in asynchronous online discussion fora, analyzing a variety of hobby- and wellness-oriented websites. The authors found a general preference for T when compared to V singular, although not to the extent observed in French-language chat (Williams & van Compernolle, 2007). In particular, V singular appeared to be used more frequently by
people identifying themselves as "experts" on a given topic (e.g., a pharmacist on the website Doctissimo.fr under the topic Médicaments), and thus social indexicality (Morford, 1997) was more present. van Compernolle (in press), who analyzed address strategies in a corpus of on-line dating advertisements from Quebec, also found a preference for T over V singular among on-line dating members who used singular address. He argues that T was favored because of the anticipation of the offline, face-to-face meeting. By avoiding an overly formal style of discourse, which may have appeared distant and therefore inappropriate, members may have used T strategically to portray, or index (Morford, 1997), favorable characteristics of their off-line self. Incidentally, it is also important to note that the use of T is generally considered to be more widespread in Quebec than, for example, in France (see Tétu de Labsade, 1990, p. 93). Nonetheless, it is obvious that little is still known about the use of second-person pronouns and other features of French in the numerous and expanding on-line communication environments.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter 1, I have outlined the aim and scope of this thesis, and described my theoretical framework. Chapter 2 includes a review of previous research on T and V use by learners of French, both in general and in technology-enhanced environments. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the current study, including details concerning participants, data collection, questionnaires and coding and statistical procedures. In Chapter 4, I present and analyze my results, with reference to my aim and scope, theoretical framework, and previous research.
Finally, in Chapter 5, I outline pedagogical implications of my findings, and include directions for future research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

This chapter presents an overview of research conducted on second language (L2) learners' use of second-person pronouns in French, and it is organized into two sections. The first section focuses on learners' use of tu (T) and vous (V) in spoken French and their understanding of the rules and parameters that govern the choice of one pronoun or the other. The second section reviews previous research on students' use of second-person pronouns in telecollaborative learning environments with extra muros native speaker participants.

2.1 Tu and vous Use by Learners of French

2.1.1 Dewaele (2004b)

Dewaele highlights the difficulties encountered by the second-language learner in choosing appropriate forms of address. As outlined in Chapter 1, the use of address forms such as pronouns, titles and names, is governed by an array of social variables (e.g., age, formality of setting, and the nature of the relationship between two speakers). A native speaker gradually acquires sociolinguistic competence through the process of socialization; L2 learners, however, may never have experienced any form of authentic interaction in the target language (i.e., in an authentic communication environment outside the classroom). Dewaele asserts that "[s]ociolinguistic rules governing pronouns of address are notoriously difficult in French, despite the fact that the number of variants is rather limited: the more formal vous versus the more informal tu" (p. 383). The pronoun vous can be used as a form of respect, yet it can also index social distance
between speakers or superiority of one interlocutor. The use of *tu* can be perceived as a marker of solidarity between speakers, but it can also index familiarity or inferiority, as suggested by Brown and Gilman (1960).

Dewaele outlines three different approaches used in the study of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence in L2 learning and development. The first is the variationist sociolinguistic approach,¹ which is centered around “progress of the interlanguage system towards a categorical target language (TL) norm” (p. 385). Researchers working within this framework have focused on the emergence of variation patterns over time.² Learners have been found to produce more formal than informal variants, and this has been attributed to the overuse of formal speech styles in the foreign language classroom (Mougeon, Nadasdi, and Rehner, 2002), as well as to the learners' lack of exposure to authentic informal communication with native age peers (Tarone and Swain, 1995).

The second approach is again sociolinguistic, but with an experimental (as opposed to observational) quality: the educator intervenes to facilitate the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence. Lyster and Rebuffot (2002), for example, found the singular *vous* to be absent from classroom discourse in French immersion programs, and concluded that L2 students lacked adequate instruction in appropriate use of address pronouns. Taking a didactic approach, they outlined ways for instructors to aid address pronoun learning, emphasizing the importance of student exposure to a wide range of

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¹ See Young (1999) for an overview.
² Some researchers (e.g. Sax, 2003) have studied variation in learners of different levels, a research method based on the "apparent time" construct (Labov, 1972, 1994), which infers developmental change. Others (e.g. Regan, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2004) have conducted longitudinal studies, documenting actual learning/development in the same group of L2 students over time (i.e., using a "real time" construct).
discourse within meaningful social contexts, which has also been advocated by Kramsch (1985, 2003), among others.

Sociocultural theory, which considers L2 pragmatic development from a Vygotskyan perspective (see Kinginger, 2001; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986), is another approach used in the study of the development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic proficiency by language learners. This approach considers each learner's pragmatic development within a sociocultural context instead of discerning and analyzing generalizable patterns that represent an entire group of learners. Researchers analyze the process of language socialization in L2 learners by studying how sociolinguistic competence (e.g., appropriate address form use) is influenced by authentic social interaction in the target language. This was the approach adopted by Belz and Kinginger (2002, 2003) and Kinginger and Belz (2005), who explored pragmatic development in L2 learners participating in a telecollaborative (i.e., on-line) language class with native speakers (see below for a detailed review of the telecollaboration projects and the researchers' findings).

Dewaele (2004b) examined second-person pronoun use in native and non-native speakers of French. He conducted two studies: in the first, participants completed questionnaires (i.e., self-reported data), indicating the pronoun that they would use (i.e., tu or vous) in different situations, depending on the characteristics of the interlocutor (i.e. gender, age and known or unknown). In the second study, Dewaele analyzed actual pronoun use in conversations between native and non-native speakers.

The results of the questionnaire data revealed that native versus non-native status significantly affected pronoun choice. Non-native speakers (NNSs) chose more V...
forms than native speakers overall; this finding relates to previous studies indicating L2 learners' overuse of formal variants (p. 385). NNSs who interacted in French regularly, however, were more likely to prefer (appropriate) V forms with strangers.

In the second study, Dewaele analyzed pronoun use in one-to-one audio-recorded conversations between native and non-native speakers. All participants were university students enrolled in a B.A. French program. The participants in each NS/NNS pair took turns interviewing and being interviewed about a range of personal and more general topics. The differences found between NS and NNS pronoun use were striking: no T use was observed at all in over one fifth of participants (all NNS), whereas eight out of nine NSs used only T. Many of the NNSs used T/V in free (i.e. random) variation, for example: "bon d'accord, et euh quand tu finis votre examen vous voulez travailler où et faiser quoi?" (p. 393). (The preceding quotation from Dewaele, 2004b, includes both a T form, tu, and two V forms, votre and vous.) Dewaele notes that his corpus revealed a "total lack of control of and confusion about the pronoun system for some NNS" (p. 398). Since participants completed a questionnaire concerning their use of French outside of the classroom, Dewaele was able to conclude that more frequent use of French was linked to an increased use of tu in the audio-recorded conversations (i.e., an increased awareness of the T of solidarity or symmetry amongst fellow students), and a decrease in pronoun instability. Dewaele also observed that some NNSs went from using inappropriate V to appropriate T after being explicitly counseled by their NS partner. These instances of peer-assisted performance led to an increased use of informal variants (i.e., T forms) by NNSs.
2.1.2 Liddicoat (2006)

Liddicoat examined L2 learners' awareness of personal address forms in French, focusing on students' understanding of address forms from a sociocultural perspective. Whilst Dewaele studied T/V performance data and NS/ NNS behavior comparisons, Liddicoat collected qualitative interview data on students' T/V awareness. Although previous research (e.g., Lyster, 1994, 1996) explored students' understanding of the sociostylistic differences between pronominal forms, Liddicoat aimed to glean insight into students' understanding of context as a factor in pronoun choice.

Liddicoat argues convincingly that textbooks fail to address the complexities of address pronoun usage, presenting "unitary and monolithic" (p. 63) descriptions that do not take into account variation in French-speaking regions (e.g. Quebec or North Africa), or social identity and context (see also Kinginger, 2000). The cultural significance of T/V pronoun choice is not adequately conveyed by the "familiar" versus "formal" dichotomy of meanings commonly presented in textbooks. Many other factors must be taken into account, such as speaker age, education, social background, and political and group affiliation (Braun, 1988). Mühlhäusler and Harré (1990) insist that a complete understanding of pronominal forms requires not only knowledge of the forms and meanings of address pronouns, as well as other forms of address, but also knowledge of their appropriateness in social contexts. Morford (1997) advances the double indexicality paradigm, arguing that pronouns index both the immediate context (i.e. the formality of the setting and the nature of the relationships existing between speakers) and the wider social context (i.e. the speaker's identity in society). Neither context is static; formality of setting, the nature of the relationship, and the speaker's
social identity can vary from one interaction to the next, including interactions taking place between the same speakers. Contrary to textbook treatments, therefore, the meaning of a pronoun form in conversation is not, as Liddicoat explains, "a semantic given, but rather emerges in interaction and is constructed through understanding of the cultural belief system of the participants" (p. 57).

The participants in Liddicoat's study were 10 beginning level L2 learners of French, who were all native speakers of Australian English. At the beginning of the project, participants discussed their understandings of T/V forms during semi-structured interviews. Participants then took part in three thirty-minute "awareness raising" activities over an eight-week period, during which they worked with several authentic texts (e.g., extracts from novels and short stories). Support questions directed the learners' attention to specific elements of the text: T/V forms, the nature of each interaction, the identities of the characters/subjects in the text, and the interpersonal relationships demonstrated. Students completed journal entries after each session, and participated in an end-of-project interview.

Liddicoat found that at the beginning of the study, participants had vague notions of the significance of address pronouns. They were aware that two different pronoun forms existed; few, however, could explain T/V beyond the formal/informal dichotomy of meaning. There appeared to be no real understanding of the sociocultural value of address forms. Some mentioned that they needed to experience a broader range of discourse types in order to increase their pragmatic awareness. For example: "S6: I feel I want to use French outside class so I can get the feel for when people use tu and vous in real life" (p. 68). After working with the authentic texts, students began to understand
the complexity of the address system. Instead of describing the T/V difference in categorical terms, the end-of-project interviews revealed that students were more likely to mention the importance of interpersonal relationships, focus on contextual cues, and understand the dynamic quality of the system of address in French. Liddicoat also observed intercultural learning, as some students began to “decenter from their own cultural paradigms” (p. 74) and appreciate the usefulness of the French language system of address (as opposed to, for example, questioning the need for a distinction between words for the English pronoun you). Liddicoat concludes by emphasizing the importance of exploiting authentic texts in the foreign language classroom, particularly to address sociocultural linguistic concepts such as T/V pronominal forms.

2.2 Learner Tu and Vous Use in Technology-Enhanced Language Education

2.2.1 Williams (2003)

Williams (2003) designed a study for first-, second-, and third-semester learners of French who met on-line in groups of three, with one student from each instructional level assigned to each group. The main foci of the study were the following: 1) to determine how students oriented themselves, their learning experience, and their attention to the tasks (in Vygotskian terms, their motives—not necessarily stable or static throughout the semester—for engaging in this goal-directed activity) and 2) how learners from each level provide different types of support for each other.

Williams (2003) found four main types of orientation centered around the following: task (e.g., instructions, time limits, language choice), form (e.g., lexical and morphosyntactic features), sociolinguistic/pragmatic features (e.g., the use of T and V),
and group cohesion (i.e., creating a sense of community, defined in a broad sense). In spite of dozens of opportunities for students to provide peer-assisted performance related to the use of T and V, only one instance of this was found in the data (Williams, 2003, pp. 145-146). Williams found that the majority of assistance given to other students was in the form of lexical items or providing encouragement. Even the peer-assisted performance that was expressed was only provided when prompted or solicited (p. 303). Although only one attempt at peer-assisted performance related to the use of second-person pronouns was made, yet many inappropriate uses of T and V were identified, Williams notes the following:

> Overall, the arbitrary use of both forms or the generalized use of only one of these did not present as many problems as one might imagine. The students did not realize when an inappropriate register or indication of grammatical number was used, or they did not consider these to be important enough to mention. Based on the data from the chat transcripts and [Questionnaire 3], the flow of the discussion seemed more important than attention to many grammatical details. Support was sought by initiating repair only when breakdowns in communication were realized. (p. 306)

2.2.2 Kinginger (1998)

Kinginger (1998) examined videoconferencing as a tool for language acquisition and pedagogy in the French-as-a-foreign-language classroom. During two sixty-minute videoconferences, fifth-semester American learners of French (US university level) and French university learners of English engaged in discussions about a range of topics, including Hollywood remakes of French films and children's literature. The first half hour of each conference took place in French and the second in English. Kinginger analyzed the interactions that took place in French in order to determine whether any peer-assisted performance (Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988), as a part of the learning process,
occurred between the French NSs and the American NNSs. Although many of the French learners of English had already lived in or traveled in an English-speaking country, most of the American students had only been exposed to standard, written forms and structures as presented in learner textbooks and grammars.

Only one example of peer-assisted performance was observed when one of the French students attempted to elicit a more elaborate response from his American partner. Although the American students could only participate minimally in the French portion of the videoconference, comprehension was later achieved when the class reviewed a videotape of the conference sessions. Working with the transcript, each interaction was examined in detail and the concept of linguistic variation was discussed, with reference to the speech produced by the French NS. The American students were therefore given the opportunity to explore in detail the differences between the written forms presented in textbooks of French, and the spoken forms that they encountered during the videoconference.

It appears that the American students were unfamiliar with the spoken variety of French to which they were exposed during the videoconferences. Kinginger concluded that the prior lack of exposure to features of spoken French could have prevented peer-assisted learning from taking place. For example, the main feature of the spoken language used by the French participants was the *utterance*, and not the complete sentence; the corpus also contained features such as repetitions, false starts, hesitations, and syntactic fragments. Kinginger also proposes that the American students could have been experiencing heightened language classroom anxiety (see
Horwitz et al., 1991), due to the stress of performing publicly (as well as being videotaped) in a language that they were learning.

Previous studies have also demonstrated that the language presented in American textbooks differs in important ways from NS usage (Behnstedt, 1973; Di Vito, 1991, 1992; Valdman, 1992). Although the American students in Kinginger's study were able to appreciate that "native speakers speak differently from what the books teach" (p. 510) in follow-up lessons, they were ill-equipped to deal with such discrepancies 'live.' Kinginger concludes that the availability of new technologies (e.g., telecommunications technology and the Internet), greatly facilitates communicative language teaching. She suggests, therefore, that future research needs to address the question of successfully integrating new technologies into foreign language programs, giving students opportunities to come into direct contact with the speech community that they are studying. Kinginger also mentions the challenge of overcoming the sociolinguistic stigmatization of spoken forms, since French teachers and NS "uphold the 'pure' forms of the written variety as the ideal to which all should aspire" (p. 510).

2.2.3 Belz and Kinginger (2002)

Belz and Kinginger (2002) investigated the cross-linguistic development of address form use in telecollaborative language learning environments. Fourth-semester students of French and German at a U.S. university conversed with native speakers in the target language via e-mail, threaded discussion and real-time electronically mediated chat. The telecollaboration project was conducted over eight weeks in the Fall 2002 academic semester. The study focused on two case studies of the development of
the T/V distinction in pronouns of address (i.e., informal *tu* vs. formal *vous* in French, and informal *du* vs. formal *Sie* in German). Belz and Kinginger emphasize that appropriate T/V pronoun use is a critical aspect of second language (L2) pragmatic competence, since it ensures successful social interaction in both French and German (Bayer, 1979; Calvet, 1976; Gardner-Chloros, 1991; also cited in Belz and Kinginger, 2002). In this study, the French *tu* or German *du* was sociolinguistically appropriate, since students worked in pairs (one English speaker with one German or French speaker), and the T form indexes solidarity or equality among students in a working relationship (see Brown & Gilman, 1960; Morford, 1997).

In the telecollaborative classroom, the students discussed texts taken from films, fairy tales and children's literature. The US learners of French and German prepared web sites to introduce themselves and their university. Belz and Kinginger performed a microgenetic\(^3\) analysis, examining the use of second-person pronoun address forms in the email and synchronous chat transcripts of discussions that took place between one US learner of French and her French speaking telecollaboration partner, and one US learner of German and his German speaking telecollaboration partner. Belz and Kinginger analyzed the development of the two US students' understanding and use of T forms over the course of the telecollaboration. It was hypothesized that access to native speaking peers may influence the English speakers' L2 pragmatic competence.

In both case studies, the telecollaborative partnerships resulted in an increased use of appropriate T forms of address by the US learner of French (Jennifer) and the

\(^3\) This term relates to Vygotsky's developmental approach to cognition (1978), and is defined by Belz and Kinginger as a "method [that] consists of the close examination of a particular developmental phenomenon within a given task, in this case, during telecollaborative language learning" (Belz and Kinginger, 2002, p.195).
US learner of German (Joe). At the beginning of the study, Jennifer’s awareness of the social indexicality of address form use was rudimentary, and she used both T and V pronouns of address in free variation. During the course of the exchange, however, Jennifer’s T use became more consistent. This might have been due in part to advice given to her by Victor, her French-speaking telecollaboration partner, who commented on her T/V switching, telling her: “take care, if you use ‘tu’ in your mail, use ‘ta’ or ‘ton’ or ‘tes’ instead of ‘votre’ or ‘vos’ . . . It’s not a big mistake, but any French person may see it.” (p. 198). Joe also seemed to benefit from his email exchange with a German NS (Gabi): his T/V pragmatic competence improved during the course of the chat. One explicit example of peer assisted performance occurred between Joe and Gabi. After Joe repeatedly addressed Gabi as V, Gabi insisted that he be addressed as T: “Joe BITTE nenne mich DU ‘Joe PLEASE call me DU’” (p. 208).

Belz and Kinginger (2002) conclude that meaningful social interactions with native speakers can help L2 students understand T/V usage. In both the French and German contexts, the learners’ attention was directed to appropriate T/V forms by the NS partners, and the learners’ use of appropriate second person pronouns increased. The findings appear to suggest that pragmatic competence acquisition is not based on textbook rule-learning or even explicit instruction from language teachers; exposure to authentic discourse, in situations where appropriate T/V use has direct socio-cultural implications and consequences, is essential. Other studies have demonstrated that increased contact with native speakers aids learners in developing sociolinguistic competence and stylistic range (Dewaele and Regan, 2002; Dewaele 2004a, 2004b; 4 The American students in this study were explicitly advised by their instructor to use the T from in correspondence with their partners. The French/German textbooks used by the US language learners also prescribed the use of T with fellow students.}
Regan, 1995; Sax 2003). The access to native speakers provided in the telecollaborative classroom can therefore be an extremely valuable pedagogical tool in developing the pragmatic competence of L2 learners.

2.2.4 Belz and Kinginger (2003)

This study (Belz & Kinginger, 2003) reviewed the telecollaboration project corpus analyzed in Belz and Kinginger (2002), focusing on the German-American partnerships only. The authors measured the direct peer assistance provided by the German NS, and the degree to which US learners approximated appropriate address form (T/V) speaker norms. Belz and Kinginger aimed to illustrate that the sociopragmatic ambiguity of pronouns of address in German might necessitate a teaching approach based on social interaction, where issues of face (i.e. social acceptance) are at stake. They argued that social roles presented in the traditional foreign language classroom are “both limited and prescribed” (p. 593), and do not allow for the development of pragmatic competence. The treatment of T/V (i.e., du vs. Sie in German) use in the 4th semester textbook of German that the US learners were using was both brief and potentially confusing. Students were instructed to use V with someone they didn’t know, but T with fellow students. They were also instructed to err on the side of caution and use V should they be unsure of which pronoun to use. The US learners of German were conversing with fellow students with whom they had never been in communication until the telecollaboration project began.

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5 This study—analyzing only German-American on-line partnerships—is included in the review of previous studies since it is part of the larger research program undertaken by Belz and Kinginger, involving both French and German.
The German NS used T at all times in their e-mail correspondence, even at the beginning of the collaboration. T use was not, therefore, related to the development of familiarity between US and German students over time. L2 learners could observe that address pronoun use differed to what was explained in their textbook (i.e. the prescribed use of V with strangers). Although the German students consistently used T in the initial stages of the collaboration, most of the US students (11/14) responded to the early emails from their German partners using V only, or a mixture of T and V. Most of those who used V inappropriately, however, (9/11) received explicit peer assistance from their German partners in appropriate use of T versus V. In one example of peer assistance, an expert speaker explicitly advised her American partner to use T because, she pointed out, one uses T with students, even if one doesn't know them well. This advice pertains to the so-called T of solidarity, which was first proposed by Brown & Gilman (1960).

Belz and Kinginger (2003) found that nearly all of the U.S. students (i.e., 10 out of 11) who had been using V inappropriately at the beginning of the telecollaboration showed clear linguistic development over the semester with regard to the T of solidarity. They interpreted this development as being due to the language socialization process, which one cannot experience in the traditional classroom: "address form competence is as much a matter of language socialization as it is of acquisition" (Belz and Kinginger, 2005, p.376). The feedback that the L2 learners received from their German speaking peers positively influenced their pragmatic competence because their "positive face" was threatened. In other words, the US students modified their pronoun use to please and be liked by their German speaking peers. Amongst the students that showed
improvement, half (5/10) experienced “abrupt development”, producing no additional inappropriate V pronouns after the peer intervention. The other half experienced “gradual development”, which occurred if “the relative percentage of V uses before peer assistance [was] greater than the relative percentage of V uses after the peer assistance, but [had] not decreased abruptly to zero” (p. 634).

Belz and Kinginger (2003) conclude that the telecollaboration case study "has broader implications in the developmental study of interlanguage pragmatics" (p. 641). Since “the T/V distinction is a system of meaning potential realized within social interaction according to a complex mapping of social indexicality” (p. 641), the L2 learner cannot acquire sound pragmatic abilities in this domain through traditional pedagogical materials (e.g., L2 textbooks and ancillaries), which often simplify T/V use. Although instructors can attempt to explain address pronoun complexities, direct contact with expert speakers, outside the formal learning context, appears to be much more effective in facilitating language socialization and the development of sociopragmatic competence.

2.2.5 Kinginger and Belz (2005)

In Kinginger and Belz (2005), the authors continue to analyze the development of address pronoun use in U.S. learners of French and German. Two case studies were examined: one within the telecollaborative classroom setting (Belz and Kinginger, 2002), and the other within a study abroad context.

A microgenetic analysis of one German learner's T/V use (a different student than the one whose discourse was analyzed in Belz and Kinginger, 2002) revealed a
pattern of gradual development of appropriate address pronoun use. The student in question (Grace) received peer assistance on several occasions over the eight-week telecollaboration project. During the first five weeks of the telecollaboration, she produced fewer and fewer inappropriate V forms; she did not, however, completely abandon inappropriate V use (in favor of the T of solidarity) until three weeks before the end of the telecollaborative partnership. The authors point out that Grace's pragmatic development was "idiosyncratic" (p. 415) (i.e. unique), based on her interpretations of the advice she was given by her German speaking partner, as well as on her prior knowledge of formal aspects of the German language (e.g. grammar and morphology).

Kinginger and Belz (2005) then go on to detail the cases of two US learners of French (Bill and Deirdre) who each spent one semester in France on a study abroad program. Researchers collected data concerning the nature of each student's experience, through semi-structured interviews (pre-departure, mid-term and post-experience), and journal entries. The authors also investigated the development of T/V use and awareness through pre-departure and post-experience performance data on a Language Awareness Interview designed for the study, and on speaking tasks designed to elicit T/V use in informal and formal situations. Kinginger and Belz found that the appropriation of T/V use and awareness differed for each student, and appeared to be related to the characteristics of the learner's experience. Bill, who consistently interacted with a wide range of people (e.g., classmates, colleagues, his host family, soccer teammates) in a variety of social contexts, gained a heightened awareness of the T of solidarity and symmetry between age peers and mastered contextually appropriate T/V use. Deirdre's interaction with French NSs, on the other hand, was limited to "service
encounters” (e.g., at supermarkets) and the required classes that she attended; she made comparatively little effort to engage in informal conversation with speakers of French. Deidre, at the end of her study abroad experience, appeared to have an increased understanding of V use, yet she continued to use T/V in free variation during the post-experience speaking tasks.

After multiple instances of peer assistance during the telecollaboration, Grace appropriated a sense of the social relevance of T forms, and Bill's exposure to a variety of "communities of practice" (Kinginger & Belz, 2005, p. 413; see also Lave & Wenger, 1991) during his semester abroad greatly favored his sociolinguistic development. The authors conclude that "multivalent participation in a variety of social contexts is crucial for the development of intercultural communicative competence" (p. 415), recognizing that each individual language learner experiences a unique pattern of pragmatic development, specific to the sociocultural context in which learning occurs.

2.3 Summary of Previous Research

The findings of studies conducted by Dewaele (2004b), Belz and Kinginger (2002, 2003) and Kinginger and Belz (2005) all indicate that direct contact with NSs of the target language can facilitate learning appropriate ways of using address pronouns in French. These researchers found that L2 learners tended to overuse formal variants (i.e., V forms) and to use T/V forms in free variation, but that pragmatic development (e.g., increased appropriate T use and a decrease in pronoun instability) often occurred through peer-assisted learning in interactions between NSs and NNSs.
L2 students who used French more frequently outside of traditional pedagogical frameworks, whether through living abroad, working with authentic texts, or conversing with NSs in technology-enhanced educational settings, were more likely to understand the complexities of pronominal forms, particularly their sociocultural value and the real or potential consequences associated with their inappropriate use. Liddicoat (2006) recognizes that foreign language textbooks provide limited, often simplistic, and sometimes confusing explanations of T/V use since textbooks tend to focus on formal/informal dichotomies and do not take into account the dynamic nature of the address pronoun system. Kinginger (1998) found that her L2 students were so unfamiliar with spoken forms of French—having primarily experienced written textbook instruction—that they were unable to learn from explicit peer-assisted performance during videoconferencing sessions. Belz and Kinginger (2002, 2003) insist that the integration of new technologies into foreign language programs can facilitate Communicative Language Teaching (Hall, 2001; Savignon, 1997) when learners have opportunities to use and observe discourse in communication environments in which sociolinguistic and pragmatic features of language can become more salient. As part of the language socialization process, students must have opportunities to participate in authentic interaction in the target language, where the misuse of address pronoun forms could lead to linguistic ambiguity (at best), or negative social consequences (at worst).
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

The data for this study come from 81 students enrolled in either first-, second-, or third-semester French courses (i.e., 1010, 1020, and 2040, respectively) at the University of North Texas during the spring 2006 semester. Participants were aged from 18 to 38 years, with a mean age of 21 years. As Table 3.1 indicates, the majority of participants were female (78.4%) and under 25 years of age (94.5%). In addition, an approximately equal number of first-, second-, and third-semester students participated in this study.

Table 3.1. Participants' Gender, Age Grouping and Semester Enrollment in French

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* 7 participants were absent when the background information data were collected

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6 Foreign language enrollment fulfilled University Core Curriculum and/or degree program requirements.
Academic status (i.e., freshman (1), sophomore (2), junior (3), senior (4), super senior (5), and graduate (6)) is reported in Figure 3.1. Most students were at the junior level or below (n = 64).

Figure 3.1. Participants’ Academic Status

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Tasks

One section each of first-, second-, and third-semester learners of French participated in the study. Students were assigned to small groups according to level. In total, 27 groups were created, each with three participants. Twenty-three groups included one 1010 student, one 1020 student, and one 2040 student. Due to the smaller number of 1020 students, two groups were formed with 1010 students only, and two groups included 2040 students only.
Participants engaged in a series of tasks over a twelve-week period. Each task involved discussion of a particular topic in French with other group members. Students were asked either to discuss a given theme (e.g., 'Friends and Family' (Task 2) or 'Your housing and neighborhood' (Task 4)) or to confer on translation (Task 7) or vocabulary (Task 3) exercises (see Appendix A for individual task details). Topics were related to themes covered in the first- and second-semester course textbook *Horizons* (Manley, Smith, McMinn, & Prévost, 2006) and the third-semester textbook *Quant à moi* (Bragger & Rice, 2005).7

The students produced varying amounts of data from task to task since most groups did not remain intact over the course of the semester due to absences. The entire corpus consists of just over 73,200 words, not including time and date stamps or computer-generated messages (e.g., "Student X has entered the room" or "Student X has left the room").

3.2.2 Web Course Tools

Discussions were conducted via synchronous electronic chat, accessed through the university's Web Course Tools (WebCT) course management system. WebCT is a system used in many institutions of higher education for e-learning. With WebCT, instructors can store materials on the server and/or create completely on-line courses, which can then be accessed by students enrolled in the course. Users can also incorporate tools such as discussion boards, mail systems, and live chat.

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7 For example, Task 4 (about friends and family) corresponded to chapters 1 (*A l'université*: identifying people and describing appearance and personality) and 4 (*En famille*: describing family members) of *Horizons*, and to chapters 1 (*Les Francophones chez eux*) and 3 (*Les heures de loisir*) of *Quant à moi*. 

34
A pre-existing Foreign Language Chat course on WebCT was used by participants for the purposes of the present study. Task instructions and a list of suggested discussion points were available to students on WebCT, in both French and English, prior to each discussion taking place. A total of seven tasks were planned over a twelve-week period; however, Task 5 could not be included in the analysis because the chat transcription function in WebCT did not work, leaving no record of data. Students could not participate in Task 6 due to a WebCT server malfunction. In total, then, this study examines data collected from five different chat tasks.

At the beginning of each 50-minute chat session, participants logged on to WebCT and navigated to the live chat tool (Figure 3.2), which contained 27 chat rooms. Students then entered the chat room that corresponded to their group; for example, participants in group 1 clicked on the door icon of Room 1, participants in group 2 clicked on the door icon of Room 2, and so forth.
Once inside a chat room (Figure 3.3), participants type messages in the text box at the bottom of the screen and click once on the Send button or press Enter on their computer keyboard. Almost instantly, the message appears above in the chat window for all users in the room to see. The participant list to the right of the chat window displays the names of those present in the room. When a participant enters or leaves, a message appears in the chat window ("User X has entered the room" or "User X has left the room") and his or her name is added to or removed from the participant list accordingly. While there is no limit to the number of messages a participant can send, an individual message is limited to 44 lines of text.

Chat sessions were conducted during regular class periods, and each session replaced one class meeting. A small number of students were absent during the
sessions, so rooms did not always contain the three designated participants. Chat instructions stipulated that if two group members were present in the chat room, the discussion should continue. Students were instructed to join the next room number on the list if they found themselves alone in their assigned room (e.g., a member of group 3 would join group 4).

3.3 Questionnaires

Three questionnaires were administered throughout the study: Questionnaire 1 (beginning of the semester), Questionnaire 2 (middle of the semester) and Questionnaire 3 (end of the semester). In Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix B), participants were asked to provide background information such as age, gender, and academic level (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, super senior, and graduate). Questionnaire 2 was not used for any type of analysis since its purpose was to elicit feedback about the WebCT chat tool, so that technological issues could be addressed during the second half of the study. The final questionnaire (see Appendix C) was designed to gauge students’ opinions of chat in general as well as those regarding the specific French chat assignments they had completed. Participants were also asked to rate WebCT user-friendliness and the degree to which they experienced technological problems during the chat sessions. Questionnaire 3 included 12 five-point Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and three extended response questions. Six of the 12 Likert-type items were included in the analysis, as shown in Table 3.2.
Table 3.2. End-of-semester Items from Questionnaire 3 Considered in Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. What is your overall rating of the chat sessions that you participated in for French class this semester?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c. I dislike chat in general (both English and French).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4d. I dislike chat in French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4e. I dislike chat in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4i. There was a link between the chat sessions and what we were learning in French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4k. There were no major technological problems related to the French class chat sessions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Coding and Statistical Procedures

At the end of the twelve-week data collection period, all chat transcripts were reviewed and all tokens (i.e., occurrences) of the second-person pronouns *tu* (T) and *vous* (V) were identified. Each T/V token used as a subject pronoun or in a tag (see section 3.4.4) was coded for appropriateness, level of student, number of people present in the chat room, and syntax.

3.4.1 Appropriate Versus Inappropriate T/V Use

*Two-way Chat*

Each T/V token was categorized as either appropriate or inappropriate. T tokens were deemed appropriate [TA] when a student addressed a single interlocutor; this normally occurred when only two students were present in a chat room, as in Excerpt 3.1. In this thesis, electronic discourse has been reproduced verbatim, and the term *sic* has not been used to indicate that grammatical, orthographic or typographic errors have occurred. In all excerpts from chat transcripts provided in this thesis, level (i.e., 1 for
1010; 2 for 1020; and 3 for 2040) has been indicated after the participant's initials in each turn.

Excerpt 3.1

10:40:57 AM LS2: quelle musique aimes-tu [TA]?
10:41:11 AM TM1: Oui, j'adore la musique.
10:41:31 AM TM1: j'aime Iron and Wine
10:41:38 AM LS2: oh, moi aussi!
10:42:04 AM LS2: et le soundtrack a Garden State
10:42:14 AM TM1: haha, et...Postal Service.
10:42:50 AM TM1: J'ecouter a Garden State maintenant.
10:43:53 AM LS2: oui, c'est un bon chanson... par Coldplay.
10:44:35 AM TM1: oui, moi aussi....
10:45:26 AM LS2: aimes-tu [TA] la musique de Tori Amos?
10:45:36 AM TM1: Non.... desole
10:46:13 AM LS2: je regret
10:46:20 AM TM1: haha

Two students, LS and TM, are alone in their chat room and are engaging in a one-to-one discussion; LS uses two appropriate T tokens to address TM.

V tokens in two-way chats were considered inappropriate [VI], since, as outlined in Chapter 1, reciprocal T (singular) use amongst students is both prescribed by textbooks of French, and observed in everyday speech.8

8 Data obtained from native French speakers has shown that the singular second-person pronoun of choice between students is invariably tu (DeLise, 1986).
Excerpt 3.2

10:20:41 AM CL3: Quelle appartement est-ce que tu [TA] habites?
10:20:50 AM KM2: Chapparal Apartements
10:21:00 AM KM2: tres vieux
10:21:04 AM KM2: et vous [VI]?
10:21:19 AM CL3: City Parc... tres nouveaux
10:22:10 AM CL3: Mais les murs sont tres légèrement.
10:23:00 AM KM2: J'ai des amis en City Parc.
10:23:47 AM CL3: Mes voisins enseignent danser de salsa
10:26:05 AM CL3: Est-ce que vous [VI] avez envie de déménager
10:26:43 AM KM2: Oui, j'ai envie de déménager.
10:27:41 AM CL2: Ou?
10:28:14 AM KM2: Mon ami et moi avons envie de une maison a Denton.
10:29:08 AM KM2: Nous sommes s'installer en mai.
10:29:26 AM KM2: Et vous [VI]? Est-ce que vous [VI] avez envie de déménager?
10:29:45 AM CL3: Non, J'aime City Parc
10:29:57 AM CL3: hehe
10:30:08 AM KM2: hehe

CL uses an appropriate T form to ask KM where she lives; KM, however, responds to CL's question with an inappropriate V tag (et vous?) and continues to use V in the excerpt. CL abandons T and reciprocates KM's V use (Est-ce que vous [VI] avez envie de déménager[?]).
Three-way Chat

When three or more students were present in a chat room, V use was coded as appropriate unless a single interlocutor was selected. Excerpt 3.3 shows appropriate V [VA] and T [TA] use in a three-way chat.

Excerpt 3.3

10:09:02 AM CF3: bien nous commencons
10:09:32 AM AB1: j’habite dans une chambre a la residence universitaire. et vous [VA]?
10:09:51 AM SC2: J’habite dans un appartement.
10:09:53 AM CF3: mon appartement est a cote de un cememtaire
10:10:11 AM CF3: quel residence {AB}?
10:10:40 AM AB1: maple
10:11:22 AM SC2: Est-ce que tu [TA] aime maple?
10:11:47 AM AB1: j’aime quelque peu

AB’s use of vous in a tag (i.e., et vous?) was coded as appropriate since he is asking a general question to the other two members of his group. The [VA] coding is further justified by the fact that SC and CF both answer AB’s question, each telling AB that they live in an apartment. SC’s use of T (i.e., tu aime maple?), however, is also appropriate, since the reference to Maple dormitory only implicates AB. It is nonetheless important to note that simply because two participants each reply to a question having a V form in it, this does not mean that the (V form) pronoun was used correctly. In this thesis, when two interpretations were possible, the coding was determined by the effect a pronoun’s use had on the participants—to the extent that this was somewhat obvious—based on their interpretation of how the pronoun was used.
Students occasionally used first names to direct questions to a particular member of a group, in which case T was the appropriate choice of pronoun. When multiple students chatted together, however, it was assumed that vous should have been used for general questions and discussions of the task. For example, in Excerpt 3.4, three students are taking part in the first chat activity of the semester, which involved students introducing themselves to group members.

Excerpt 3.4

10:15:58 AM CG3: Oùhabitez-vous [VA]?
10:16:46 AM CG3: J'habite dans Traditions Hall en Denton!
10:17:11 AM RH2: J'habite une maison a Denton.
10:18:04 AM CG3: Bon. Quel âge avez-vous [VA]?
10:18:08 AM JG1: J'habite dans CityParc en Denton.
10:18:40 AM CG3: J'ai vignt ans.
10:20:00 AM RH2: J'ai dix-neuf ans.
10:20:12 AM JG1: J'ai vingt ans.
10:21:07 AM RH2: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VA] a UNT?
10:21:20 AM JG1: J'ai vingt ans aussi
10:22:42 AM JG1: histoire d'art. et vous [VA]?

The first two questions that CG asks were clearly examples of VA, since CG is following task instructions and asking questions to the other members of his or her group. JG and RH respond, although JG's response is somewhat delayed. CG's tag question (i.e, et toi, {JG}?) was clearly TA, since JG's name is used, and RH had
already answered CG's question.⁹ The next person to ask a question is RH, who, like
CG, uses V appropriately. JG responds (she is studying histoire d'art) and then says et
vous? The appropriateness of JG's V tag is more ambiguous than the previous T/V
tokens in Excerpt 3.4, since it is possible that JG is deflecting RH's question (i.e.,
Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez a UNT?) and therefore only implicating RH. JG's tag was
coded as appropriate, however, since RH and CG had not yet told the group what they
were studying, and JG would simply be following task instructions by directing her tag
question to both group members.

Disrupted turn adjacency (Herring, 1999) is a prominent feature of the chat
discourse produced by the participants, particularly in rooms containing three or more
students: "in multi-participant CMC interactions, a message may be separated in linear
order from a message it is responding to, if another message or messages happen to
have been sent in the meantime" (p. 3). In Excerpt 3.5, we can see four overlapping, or
"disrupted", adjacency pairs:

Excerpt 3.5

10:43:23 AM JS3: Où êtes-vous né. [AP1]
10:44:16 AM PS1: Je pense que le francais est assez interessant.
10:44:36 AM PS1: Comment dit-on "you (plural)" en francais? [AP2]
10:44:37 AM DW2: Je suis né a Bedford, Texas, [AP1 et vous? [AP3]
10:44:43 AM DW2: vous* [AP2] [AP4]
10:45:22 AM JS3: je suis né dans Denton, mais je ne suis pas de Denton. [AP3]
10:45:55 AM DW2: Ou tu etudie a l'ecole?

Note that JG has also already answered CG's question one second earlier, but that CG has not yet seen
JG's response appear on the screen.
Unlike in spoken conversation, where question-response turns tend to be temporally adjacent, we can see that question-response turns in CMC are somewhat fragmented. For example, the answer to JS’ initial question *Où êtes-vous né* does not appear in the chat transcript until the fourth turn in the excerpt (i.e. fourth line of text).

3.4.2 Instructional Level

Instructional Level was determined by the course in which the student was enrolled. Therefore, levels 1, 2, and 3 refer to students enrolled in first-, second-, and third-semester French courses respectively, regardless of their official academic status (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, super senior, and graduate) or proficiency in French. No language proficiency exams were administered for this study.

3.4.3 Number of Participants Present in Chat Room

Coding also involved identifying the number of people present in a chat room when T or V was used. T/V tokens produced when only one student was present in a chat room were omitted in the final instantiation of the analysis. Two or three students were present during the majority of chat tasks, although a fourth participant occasionally joined the discussion. Since participants did not always enter or leave rooms at the same time, the data were carefully reviewed in order to determine when participants entered and exited the discussion, as illustrated in Excerpt 3.6.

*Excerpt 3.6*

09:39:41 AM AF3: has entered the room.
10:00:47 AM TC2: has entered the room.
10:01:36 AM TC2: Bonjour, {AF}.
10:02:00 AM AF3: Bonjour {TC}, ça va?
10:02:57 AM TC2: ça va, et vous [vi]?
10:03:20 AM AF3: je suis fatigué, j'ai me leve à cinq heures et demi
10:04:25 AM FC1: has entered the room.
10:04:30 AM TC2: Tu etudies [TA]?
10:04:34 AM FC1: Salut
10:04:41 AM AF3: Salut {FC}
10:04:49 AM AF3: ça va?
10:05:06 AM FC1: pas mal
10:05:13 AM TC2: Salut, {FC}

The first V token (TC2's use of the tag et vous?) was coded as inappropriate since TC is addressing AF, the only other person in the room. At 10:04:25 AM, a third participant (FC) enters the room. TC’s use of T five seconds later (i.e., tu etudies?) was nonetheless considered appropriate since it was directed to AF only. Furthermore, FC’s presence was not acknowledged by TC until 10:05:13 AM.

3.4.4 Syntax

The syntactic environment in which each T/V token was produced was also coded. Syntax included the following three categories: tag (question tags or declarative tags), subject-verb (SV) word order, and verb-subject (VS) word order.
Tags

T/V tags included question tags, as in Excerpts 3.7 and 3.8.

Excerpt 3.7

09:53:10 AM AB3: has entered the room.
10:00:16 AM KB2: has entered the room.
10:00:25 AM KB2: Bonjour.
10:01:52 AM AB3: bonjour
10:01:55 AM AB3: bonjour
10:01:57 AM AB3: oops
10:02:05 AM KB2: Ca va?
10:02:33 AM AB3: ca va
10:02:36 AM AB3: et toi [TA]?
10:02:51 AM KB2: oui, ca va

Excerpt 3.8

10:25:36 AM BT3: Et qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans votre quartier?
10:26:47 AM JT3: et vous [VI]?
10:28:53 AM BT3: Comme ci comme ca, C'est bruyant pendant le jour, mais tout à fait la nuit. Il y a tres voitures pendant le jour.

In Excerpts 3.7 and 3.8, only two students are present in each chat room. In Excerpt 3.7, AB uses an appropriate T question tag (et toi?) to address KB. In Excerpt
3.8, JT uses an inappropriate V question tag (et vous?) to address BT.\textsuperscript{10} Note that "votre quartier" (line one of Excerpt 7) is not a valid V token - possessive adjectives (ton, ta, tes, votre or vos) were not included in the analysis.

T/V tags also included declarative tags, as in Excerpt 3.9.

\textit{Excerpt 3.9}

\begin{center}
10:46:30 AM AF3: il etait bon chat..avec vous
10:46:48 AM TC2: tu [TA] aussi!\textsuperscript{11}
10:47:06 AM TC2: j'ai cours aussi
10:47:15 AM AF3: au revoir \{TC\}
10:47:16 AM TC2: au revoir \{AF\}
10:47:22 AM TC2: has left the room.
10:47:24 AM AF3: has left the room.
\end{center}

In Excerpt 3.9, the chat session is drawing to a close and TC and AF are the only remaining group members in the room. Before leaving, AF says that he enjoyed chatting with TC ("il etait bon chat avec vous"); TC responds with an appropriate declarative T tag ("et tu aussi").

\textit{Subject-verb Syntax}

The subject-verb (SV) syntax category included interrogative and declarative sentences where the subject pronoun (tu or vous) preceded the verb. Examples of interrogative subject-verb tokens are given in Excerpt 3.10.

\textsuperscript{10} Note that "avec vous" does not apply to the syntactic categories established in this study (vous is the object of the preposition avec), and therefore was not coded as a V token.

\textsuperscript{11} The disjunctive pronoun toi (not "tu") would be grammatically correct in this instance; tu was coded as an appropriate T token, however, since the analysis in this thesis focuses on sociolinguistic competence, not grammatical accuracy.
Excerpt 3.10

10:32:17 AM KB2: vous [VA] connaissez vous voisins?
10:32:19 AM LA1: les filles en du hall sont tre bruyantes
10:32:29 AM AB3: oui
10:32:45 AM LA1: non
10:32:45 AM AB3: mon voisin est amiable
10:32:57 AM AB3: mon "suitemate"
10:33:29 AM LA1: mon suitemates sont moyens
10:34:36 AM KB2: oh, est-ce que vous [VA] avez un comerade de chambre?
10:35:06 AM AB3: non je suis etre seul
10:36:01 AM LA1: oui je avec un comrade de chambre
10:36:29 AM AB3: c'est ton ami?
10:37:13 AM KB2: est-ce que vous vous [VA] entendez?
10:38:02 AM LA1: sorte de. Nous ne voyons pas l'autre exteieur de la salle.
10:40:15 AM KB2: mon comerade de chambre etait ma meilleure amie.
10:40:28 AM AB3: c'est un tres bien
10:40:58 AM LA1: d'accord
10:41:20 AM KB2: tu [TA] as habite seule le deux ans, ashley?
10:41:45 AM AB3: oui je ne habiter pas une camarade de chambre
10:42:56 AM KB2: est-ce que vous [VA] ainez Denton?
10:43:21 AM AB3: um non
10:43:34 AM AB3: je veux habiter en austin

Three of the five examples of SV interrogatives include periphrastic est-ce que\textsuperscript{12} (ECQ) (10:34:36 AM, 10:37:13 AM, and 10:42:56 AM). The two remaining interrogative

\textsuperscript{12}In French, "est-ce que" indicates that a question is being asked.
tokens (10:32:17 AM and 10:41:20 AM), are examples of the more informal, "simple" subject-verb question formations.\textsuperscript{13}

In addition to SV word order in interrogative sentences, declarative subject-verb tokens were of course identified, as illustrated in Excerpts 3.11 and 3.12.

\textit{Excerpt 3.11}

\begin{verbatim}
10:39:56 AM KB2: quelle autre films aime-tu [m]?
10:42:00 AM LA1: The morocyle Diaries.
10:42:12 AM KB2: oh, oui. c'est tres bien
10:42:29 AM LA1: J'adore Gael Garcia Bernal!
10:42:38 AM AB3: Je ne voir pas Motorcycle Diaries
10:42:41 AM LA1: Est tre beau
10:42:53 AM AB3: haha c'est amusante
10:43:10 AM LA1: vous [v] deviriez!
\end{verbatim}

\textit{Excerpt 3.12}

\begin{verbatim}
10:40:57 AM LA1: qu'est pantouflarde?
10:41:13 AM AB3: Je suis une "homebody"
10:42:07 AM LA1: Je aussi.
10:43:03 AM KB2: has entered the room.
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{13} Simple SV structure combined with rising intonation is considered an informal variant in European French, and it is the most often occurring structure for Yes/No questions in everyday speech (see Coveney, 1996, ch. 5). Such is not true in Canadian French, however, where est-ce que is a hyper-formal variant and subject-verb inversion is very common (see Elsig & Poplack, 2006). For a treatment of variation in the use of interrogative structures by learners of (European) French, see Dewaele (1999).
Excerpt 3.11 includes one example of a V subject-verb declarative token: LA tells AB that AB should see the film 'The Motorcycle Diaries' ("vous devriez"). Excerpt 3.12 includes one example of a T subject-verb declarative token: AB tells LA that they are similar to one another ("tu est similaire a moi") because they are both 'homebodies'.

**Verb-subject Syntax**

The verb-subject (VS) syntax category included tokens where the subject pronoun (tu or vous) followed the verb. All verb-subject tokens were interrogative (in French, subject-verb inversion is one way of forming an interrogative).

Excerpt 3.13.

10:02:09 AM BP1: Comment ca va?

10:02:13 AM AW1: has entered the room.

10:02:25 AM AW1: Salut

10:02:32 AM BP1: Bonjour

10:02:37 AM JT1: ca va, et vous [VA]?

10:03:13 AM BP1: Ca va bien

10:03:23 AM JT1: Ou habitez-vous [VA]?

10:04:07 AM AW1: J'habite a Denton. Et toi [M]?

10:04:22 AM BP1: Je habit a Denton.

10:05:34 AM JT1: j'habite a denton, aussi. ou habitez-vous, {AM} [VJ]?

10:06:42 AM AW1: J'habite a Denton

Excerpt 3.13 includes two V verb-subject interrogative tokens from JT (10:03:23 AM and 10:05:34 AM). In both examples, the verb ("habitez") comes before the subject ("vous").
3.4.5 Summary of Coding Procedures

All T/V tokens were identified and coded for sociolinguistic appropriateness (appropriate or inappropriate), Instructional Level (1010, 1020 or 2040), number of participants present in the chat room (two or three), and syntax (tags, subject-verb word order or verb-subject word order).

Since electronic discourse does not allow for the observation of non-verbal cues (e.g., facial expression and gaze; Gumperz, 1981), the number of participants present in a chat room was the main indication of T/V appropriateness. In a two-way chat, T use was considered appropriate, and V use was inappropriate. In a three-way chat, T use was considered inappropriate (unless it was clear that only one interlocutor was being addressed), and V use was appropriate. That is to say, in a three-way chat, all V tokens were—by default—coded as appropriate V plural tokens, since it was logical to assume that participants were addressing the other two group members (especially if both group members responded to the V address from).
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into two major sections: results and analysis. In section 4.1, frequency counts and statistical analyses are presented in tables. Section 4.2 provides an analysis of the major findings in this study, with specific focus on overall T/V appropriateness, effect of level and syntax, and the quantity and quality of peer-assisted performance.

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Overall Distribution of T and V Tokens

A total of 1,182 tokens of second-person pronouns were identified in the present corpus; 615 (52%) tokens of V and 567 (48%) tokens of T. All T/V tokens were subdivided into eight unit types (e.g., tag, in situ syntax question, declarative sentence, etc.); an example of each unit type is given in Table 4.1. The unit of interest appears in bold. No grammatical or orthographical errors were corrected or otherwise modified in any excerpts from the corpus provided as examples.

"Tag" included question tags and declarative tags. An in situ syntax question (subject-verb syntax: SVQ) is formed by keeping "la structure de la phrase déclarative . . . Dans ce cas, seules la ponctuation et l'intonation permettent d'identifier l'interrogative totale" (Gaillard & Colignon, 2005). The remaining interrogative unit types were est-ce que (ECQ) questions, clitic subject-verb inversion questions (verb-subject syntax: VSQ), and questions that included both inversion and est-ce que (ICQ). Non-interrogative unit types included declarative sentences, imperatives, and objects of
prepositions (e.g., *chez vous*, *avec vous*).

Table 4.1. Unit Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Type</th>
<th>Example from corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tag (question/ declarative)</strong></td>
<td>Question:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:02:00 AM AF: Bonjour {TC}, ça va?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:02:57 AM TC: ça va, <strong>et vous</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declarative</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:46:45 AM NS: Au revoir mon amies! Vous avez un bon été!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:46:57 AM AR: <strong>Et toi</strong> aussi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SVQ (in situ syntax question)</strong></td>
<td>10:04:30 AM TC: <strong>Tu etudes</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECQ (est-ce que question)</strong></td>
<td>10:33:24 AM SF: <em>qu’est-ce que</em> vous faites le weekend d’habitude?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VSQ (inversion question)</strong></td>
<td>10:15:54 AM SC: <strong>ou habitez-vous</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICQ(^1) (inversion &amp; est-ce que question)</strong></td>
<td>10:48:21 AM HH: <strong>Est-ce que habites-tu</strong> à la campus?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 provides the distribution of T/V tokens according to the eight unit types summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.2. Overall Distribution of T/V Tokens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Type</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tag</strong></td>
<td>214</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SVQ</strong></td>
<td>196</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECQ</strong></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VSQ</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICQ(^1)</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declarative</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperative</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object of preposition</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>615</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Learners of French sometimes combine inversion and *est-ce que* (which is grammatically incorrect).
Tag (i.e., question tag or declarative tag) was the most frequently occurring unit type overall, followed by SVQ, ECQ, and VSQ. With the exception of "ICQ" (i.e., inversion and est-ce que combined), non-interrogative unit types (i.e., declaratives sentences, objects of prepositions, and imperatives) were the least frequently occurring unit types overall.

The most frequently occurring T unit type was Tag, followed by SVQ, ECQ, and VSQ. A different pattern was observed for V interrogative unit types: VSQ occurred most frequently, followed by ECQ, Tag and SVQ. Non-interrogative T unit types (i.e., T declaratives, T objects of prepositions, and T imperatives) constituted only 6.8% of all T tokens. Non-interrogative V unit types, that is, V declaratives, V object of prepositions, and V imperatives, constituted only 9.1% of all V tokens.

4.1.2 Distribution of Appropriate and Inappropriate T/V Tokens

Table 4.3 shows the distribution of appropriate and inappropriate T and V tokens. Overall, students used the appropriate pronoun (i.e., either T or V) two thirds of the time, as shown in the last row of Table 4.3. The data also clearly indicate that T was more likely to be used appropriately than V (T appropriate = 88.1%; V appropriate = 43.2%). Statistical significance (i.e., T versus V) was confirmed by a traditional chi-square procedure: $\chi^2 (1, n = 1182) = 267.54, p \leq 0.05$.  

54
Table 4.3. Overall T and V Appropriateness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th></th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>1,182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.3 Kruskal-Wallis Analysis of T/V Appropriateness by Instructional Level

In order to determine whether any statistically significant differences in appropriate T and V use existed among groups across levels, a Kruskal-Wallis analysis was performed. This is the non-parametric equivalent of a one-way analysis of variance (i.e., one-way ANOVA), which is used when data are not normally distributed or when any of the other normal conditions for using a parametric procedure are not met. The use of a non-parametric procedure is also appropriate because frequencies have been converted to scores, and while this is not uncommon (when no other option is available), it is not an ideal way to analyze data originally produced as frequencies (since participants invariably produce a different total number of tokens), even when they meet the assumptions for a parametric analysis. The Kruskal-Wallis procedure converts scores into ranks, and the degree of significance between groups is determined by the difference in mean rank scores. The Kruskal-Wallis test does not calculate a probability score; rather, it indicates the degree to which differences in ranked data between groups are statistically significant.² Table 4.4 shows the Kruskal-

² For a general treatment of the assumptions underlying the Kruskal-Wallis test and other non-parametric
Wallis ranks, with Instructional Level as the independent variable and appropriateness as the dependant variable (i.e., a frequency converted into a score, which is a percentage based on the number of appropriate tokens over the number of total tokens produced).

Table 4.4. Appropriate T and V Use by Instructional Level (Kruskal-Wallis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1010</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1020</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest mean rank for appropriate T use was observed in 2040 students (42.10); the mean rank was slightly lower (36.83) for 1020 students, and the lowest mean rank was observed in 1010 students (32.38). The difference of mean ranks for appropriate T use was not statistically significant: $\chi^2 (2, n = 542) = 2.81, p > .05$.

The highest mean rank for appropriate V use was observed in 1020 students (43.20); 2040 students produced the middle mean rank score (35.88) and a slightly lower mean rank was observed for 1010 students (32.94). The difference of mean ranks for appropriate V use was not statistically significant: $\chi^2 (2, n = 245) = 2.96, p > .05$.

4.1.4 Distribution of Appropriate T/V Use by Number of Participants and by Unit Type

Table 4.5 shows the distribution of appropriate T/V use according to the number of participants present in a chat room. No statistical procedure could be performed for (or parametric) statistical procedures, see Hatch and Lazaraton (1991) or any other comprehensive statistics manual.
number of students in room since one cell (i.e., T inappropriate with two in room) was empty (i.e., 0 occurrences). Thus, only observed and relative frequencies can be provided.

Table 4.5. Appropriate T/V Use by Number of Participants Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. present</th>
<th>Appropriate T use</th>
<th>Appropriate V use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>271/271</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>271/344</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>542/615</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When two participants were present in a chat room, all T use (100%) was appropriate, whereas V use was appropriate only 2.4% of the time. When three or more participants were present in a chat room, an approximately equal proportion of appropriate T use (78.8%) and appropriate V use (74.5%) occurred.

Table 4.6 provides the overall distribution of appropriate T use and V use according to unit type. No statistical procedure could be performed for the overall set of unit type data, since several cells (i.e., ISQ T inappropriate, ISQ V appropriate, ISQ V inappropriate, and "object of preposition" T inappropriate) were empty (i.e., 0 occurrences). Thus, only observed and relative frequencies can be provided.

All T use was appropriate (100%) for ICQ and Object of Preposition unit types; this level of appropriateness, however, was relative to the extremely low frequencies observed for each unit type (n = 2 and 3 respectively). Low frequencies for these unit types make it difficult to draw any concrete conclusions, especially since, as Milroy and Gordon (2003) argued, a minimum of 10 tokens in a given category is required for determining conformity to the rule at the 90% level.
Table 4.6. Appropriate T/V Use by Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit type</th>
<th>Appropriate T use</th>
<th>Appropriate V use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tag</td>
<td>189/214</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVQ</td>
<td>170/196</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>103/120</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSQ</td>
<td>39/41</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICQ</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarative</td>
<td>35/37</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of Preposition</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>542/615</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All T use was appropriate (100%) for ICQ and Object of Preposition unit types; this level of appropriateness, however, was relative to the extremely low frequencies observed for each unit type ($n = 2$ and $3$ respectively). Low frequencies for these unit types make it difficult to draw any concrete conclusions, especially since, as Milroy and Gordon (2003) argued, a minimum of 10 tokens in a given category is required for determining conformity to the rule at the 90% level. Appropriate T use was approximately equal in VSQ (95.1%) and declarative (94.6%) unit types, which is again relative to low observed frequencies ($n = 39$ and $35$ respectively) for these unit types. Appropriate T use was approximately equal in Tag (88.3%), SVQ (86.7%) and ECQ (85.8%), all of which had high observed frequencies ($n = 189, 170, 103$). Finally, one of the two T imperative forms observed was used appropriately (50%).

A much different pattern of appropriate V use was observed for each unit type. Only Imperative (66.7%), SVQ (57.1%), and ECQ (55.5%) were used appropriately the majority of the time. Appropriate V use was equal in Declarative and Object of Preposition unit types (45.0%). As with T tokens, very low relative frequencies were
observed in appropriate non-interrogative V tokens (i.e., Declarative, Imperative and Object of Preposition; \( n = 9, 8, \) and 9 respectively). Appropriate V use was approximately equal in Tag (35.1%) and VSQ (30.3%) unit types.

4.1.5 VARBRUL Analysis of T/V Tokens in Interrogative Sentences

Although no statistical procedures could be used for the overall set of unit type frequencies (4.1.3), a multivariate analysis (i.e., variable rule or VARBRUL) was performed for tokens of T and V used in interrogative sentences (i.e., SVQ, ECQ and VSQ) using Goldvarb X (Sankoff, Tagliamonte & Smith, 2005). Interrogative T/V pronouns (i.e., SVQ, ECQ and VSQ) constituted 64% \(( n = 758)\) of the T/V pronoun tokens in the corpus. Although the unit type Tag \(( n = 328)\) included interrogatives, T/V question tags are disjunctive pronouns that are not "joined" to a verb group/sentence (e.g., "et toi?" and "et vous?"), whereas T/V sentential interrogatives (i.e., SVQ, ECQ, and VSQ) are each composed of a subject and a verb. Tags were therefore excluded from the multivariate analysis, since they cannot be directly compared to sentential interrogatives. ICQ interrogatives \(( n = 2)\) were excluded from the multivariate analysis because of the extremely low to nil frequencies observed for this unit type. Table 4.7 provides the distribution of T/V SVQ, ECQ, and VSQ interrogative tokens.

SVQ (in situ syntax question) was the most frequently occurring T interrogative structure \(( n = 196)\), followed by ECQ \(( n = 120)\) and then VSQ \(( n = 41)\). The opposite pattern was observed for V interrogatives: VSQ was the most commonly occurring V interrogative \(( n = 178)\), followed by ECQ \(( n = 125)\) and SVQ \(( n = 98)\). Different patterns of appropriateness also emerged for T and V interrogative pronouns (Table 4.8).
Table 4.7. Overall Distribution of Interrogative (SVQ, ECQ and VSQ) Tokens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Type</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVQ</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSQ</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8. T/V Appropriateness According to Question Syntax (i.e., SVQ, ECQ and VSQ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntax</th>
<th>Appropriate T use</th>
<th>Appropriate V use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVQ</td>
<td>170/196</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>103/120</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSQ</td>
<td>39/41</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For T interrogatives, VSQ (verb-subject syntax) had the highest proportion of appropriate tokens (95.1%), followed by SVQ (86.7%; subject-verb syntax), then ECQ (85.8%; est-ce que syntax). For V interrogatives, VSQ (verb-subject syntax) had the lowest proportion of appropriate tokens (30.3%), whereas SVQ (subject-verb syntax) had the highest proportion of appropriate tokens (57.1%), followed closely by ECQ (55.2%; est-ce que syntax). In order to determine the effect of syntax on T and V appropriate use, a multivariate analysis was performed using Goldvarb X.

Goldvarb X (X being the most recent version of the Goldvarb software package), is a program designed for analyzing linguistic variation. Goldvarb performs linear regression analyses in order to determine the probability that a rule will be applied in a particular context. In this thesis, the rule (dependent variable) is "appropriate pronoun use" and the context (independent variable) is syntactic environment (i.e., SVQ, ECQ or VSQ). Instructional Level (i.e., 1010, 1020, or 2040) was also included as a factor (i.e.,
independent variable) in the multivariate analysis, since the interrogative T/V pronoun appropriateness could potentially also be influenced by this "context." For a complete discussion of the analysis of variable rules, see Paolillo (2002) and Tagliamonte (2006). Goldvarb determines significance at the 5% level (i.e., p = .05), which is common practice in research in the social sciences.

The preliminary level of analysis performed by Goldvarb is called a "one-step analysis." In the one-step analysis, Goldvarb reports the probability that the rule (i.e., in this study, appropriate pronoun use) will apply irrespective of contextual factors (i.e., syntactic environment and level). The probability level reported in the one-step analysis is called the Input Level. The one-step analysis for T appropriateness reported an Input Level of 88.0%. There was a high probability (88.0%), therefore, that T would be used appropriately, irrespective of the syntactic environment in which it was produced (i.e., subject-verb (SVQ), est-ce que (ECQ), or verb-subject (VSQ)) and the level of the student (i.e., 1010, 1020, or 2040). The Input Level from the one-step analysis for V appropriateness was reported at 44.0%. There was a much lower probability (44.0%) that V would be used appropriately, irrespective of the syntactic environment in which it was produced (i.e., subject-verb (SVQ), est-ce que (ECQ), or verb-subject (VSQ)) and the level of the student (i.e., 1010, 1020, or 2040). These findings corroborate those reported in Table 4.3 when all tokens of T and V were included.

The one-step analysis also indicated Error scores below 2.0 and total chi-squares below the critical value at the .05 level, which indicates that the data fit well within theoretical expectations, as outlined in Tagliamonte (2006). (The one-step analysis print-out is provided in Appendix D.) In addition, the scattergrams produced by
Goldvarb X (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) indicated a very good fit to the model, shown here by the closeness of data points to the line.

Figure 4.1 shows the probability for T appropriateness. All values are clustered around the upper right hand corner of the scattergram, indicating a high probability of T interrogative token appropriateness. In other words, token appropriateness for T interrogatives is highly favored, which corresponds to the Input Level (88% probability) of the one-step analysis. There are two major clusters of data points close to the line, which indicates a good fit to the statistical model. The goodness-of-fit depicted in Figure 4.1 corresponds to the total chi-square and to the low Error scores (i.e., below 2.0) reported in the one-step analysis.

Figure 4.2 shows the probability for V appropriateness. The proximity of data points to the line again indicates a good fit to the statistical model. There are three
clusters of data points around the scattergram line. The first cluster of data points around the bottom left corner of the scattergram line indicates a low probability of V appropriateness – the appropriateness "rule" is disfavored. The second cluster of data points is located around the mid-point of the scattergram line, which indicates that V appropriateness is neither favored nor disfavored for these values. The third cluster of data points around the upper right side of the line indicates that V appropriateness is favored. The goodness of fit depicted in Figure 5 corresponds to the total chi-square and to the low Error scores (i.e., below 2.0) reported in the one-step analysis.

Table 4.9 provides the results of the VARBRUL analysis of Instructional Level and Syntax in T/V interrogatives.

Table 4.9. VARBRUL Analysis of Instructional Level and Syntax in T/V Interrogatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Appropriate T</th>
<th></th>
<th>Appropriate V</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>FW</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1010</td>
<td>72/91</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>46/117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1020</td>
<td>124/137</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>79/137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>116/129</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>54/147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Syntax</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVQ</td>
<td>170/196</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>56/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECQ</td>
<td>103/120</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>69/125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSQ</td>
<td>39/41</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>54/178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Brackets (i.e., [ ]) indicate that statistical significance was not found.

The VARBRUL analysis reported that Instructional Level (i.e., 1010, 1020, or 2040) significantly affected T appropriateness ($p<.05$). The factor weights (FWs) reported in the best stepping-up run were .34 (1010), .56 (1020) and .55 (2040). Students in 1020 and 2040 had almost identical T appropriate frequencies (90.5% and
89.9%), which were both slightly above the expected probability for T appropriateness according to the Input Level established in the one-step analysis (88.0%). The T appropriate frequency for 1010 students, however, was 79.9%, which is somewhat below the expected probability (i.e., Input Level) for T appropriateness, as established in the one-step analysis (88.0%). Syntax (i.e. subject-verb, est-ce que or verb-subject) did not significantly affect T appropriateness ($p > .05$) as a significant factor because the frequencies observed for SVQ (86.7%), ECQ (85.8%) and VSQ (95.1%) were not significantly different from the expected probability (i.e., Input Level) for T appropriateness (88.0%).

Instructional Level was also selected as significant for V appropriateness ($p < .01$). The FWs reported in the best stepping-up run were .44 (1010), .63 (1020) and .42 (2040). The almost identical FWs for 1010 (.44) and 2040 (.42) students indicates that both groups used V appropriately around the expected level (44.0%). 1020 students, however, used V appropriately much more frequently overall (FW = .63), and much more often than expected.

Syntax significantly affected V appropriateness ($p < .01$). The FWs reported in the best stepping-up run were .62 (SVQ), .62 (ECQ) and .35 (VSQ). SVQ and ECQ factor weights were identical (.62), and these FW scores indicate that SVQ and ECQ V tokens were used appropriately at a much higher level than expected (44.0%). The FW for VSQ tokens (.35), however, is much lower than the FWs for SVQ and ECQ tokens (.62). The FW for VSQ (.35) indicates that VSQ tokens were used appropriately at a lower level than expected (44.0%).
It has already been established that both Instructional Level and Syntax significantly affected V pronoun appropriateness. The good fit of the data indicates that there is no interaction between the two independent variables (i.e., Instructional Level and Syntax)—they each represent a main effect, independently influencing V appropriateness. In order to measure the strength of influence of each independent variable, it is useful to compare the ranges in FWs observed for Instructional Level and Syntax. (The range in FWs is calculated by subtracting the lowest FW value from the highest FW value.) The range in FWs for Instructional Level was .21 (.64-.42 = .22). The range in FWs for Syntax was .27 (.62-.35 = .27). The range in FWs for Syntax (.27) was therefore greater than the range in FW for Instructional Level (.21), indicating that Syntax had a slightly stronger influence on V appropriateness than Instructional Level.

The range in FWs for level in V appropriate tokens (.21) was almost identical to the range in FWs for level in T appropriate tokens (.22), indicating that Instructional Level was equally influential for both T and V appropriate tokens.

4.1.6 Frequencies for Questionnaire Items

Three questionnaires were administered throughout the study. In Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix B), students were asked to provide background information, such as age, gender, and academic level (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, super senior, and graduate). Questionnaire 2 was not used for any analysis, since its purpose was to elicit feedback about the WebCT chat tool. Questionnaire 3 (see Appendix C) included 12 five-point Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and three extended-response questions. Six of the 12 Likert-type items were
considered for analysis. Table 4.10 provides the mean, standard deviation (SD), and mode for the responses of 52 students to the six questions selected for analysis.

Table 4.10. Mean, SD and Mode for Selected Questions ($n = 52$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4c</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4d</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4e</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4i</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4k</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 provides the response score (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) frequencies of all 52 students for each of the selected questions (i.e. Questions 2, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4i, and 4k).

Response frequencies for each level of the scale are provided because mean and mode are not always the best indicators of central tendency when reporting results from individual Likert-type items (see Clason & Dormody, 1994).

Table 4.11. Response Score (1-5) Frequencies for Selected Questions ($n = 52$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4c</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4d</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4e</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4i</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4k</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2 aimed to evaluate students' overall experiences with chat tasks. The most commonly selected item ($n = 22$) was somewhat agree, which corresponded to a score of 4 ($M = 3.73, SD = 1.01$). Question 4c aimed to evaluate students' liking of chat
in general. Most students \((n = 21)\) agreed that they liked chat in general \((M = 3.60, SD = 1.03)\). Question 4d aimed to evaluate students liking of chat in French. The majority of students \((n = 25)\) agreed that they liked chat in French \((M = 3.65, SD = .91)\). Question 4e aimed to evaluate the degree to which participants liked chat in English. The majority of students \((n = 18)\) agreed that they liked chat in English \((M = 3.81, SD = .99)\). For question 4i, students evaluated the degree to which there was a link between the chat sessions and what they were learning in class. Most students \((n = 20)\) agreed that there was a link between the chat topics and what they had covered in class \((M = 3.40, SD = .1.11)\). Finally, for Question 4k, students rated their experience of the technology (WebCT) used in the chat sessions. Most students \((n = 31)\) rated the technology negatively \((M = 2.15, SD = .85)\), indicating that participants did experience technological problems when participating in the French chat sessions.

4.1.7 Summary of Results

Six hundred fifteen \(V\) tokens \((52\%)\) and 567 \(T\) tokens \((48\%)\) were identified in the present corpus. Tokens were subdivided into eight unit types, according to the linguistic context in which they were produced: tag (question or declarative), in situ syntax question, \(est-ce que\) question, inversion question, inversion/\(est-ce que\) question, declarative, imperative, and object of preposition. The most commonly produced unit types were tags \((n = 328; 28 \%)\) and sentential interrogatives \((n = 758; 64 \%)\).

Appropriate \(T\) use \((88.1\%)\) was found to be significantly higher than appropriate \(V\) use \((43.2\%)\) overall. The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis procedure found no statistically significant differences in \(T/V\) appropriateness according to level. When two
participants were present in a chat room, all T use (100%) was appropriate, whereas V use was appropriate only 2.4% of the time. When three or more participants were present in a chat room, an approximately equal proportion of appropriate T use (78.8%) and appropriate V use (74.5%) occurred. Different patterns of appropriate T and V use were observed according to unit type. For T tokens, every unit type with the exception of imperative was used appropriately over 85% of the time; for V tokens, only three unit types (i.e., imperatives, in situ syntax questions and est-ce que questions) were used appropriately the majority (i.e. over 50%) of the time.

The final level of analysis of T/V appropriateness involved a VARBRUL analysis of second-person subject pronouns in interrogative sentences. The VARBRUL analysis considered syntax (i.e., subject-verb syntax, est-ce que syntax or verb-subject syntax) and level (i.e., 1010, 1020, and 2040) as independent variables. Syntax was not a significant factor in T interrogative token appropriateness; syntax did, however, significantly affect V interrogative token appropriateness. Goldvarb selected level as a significant factor for appropriate use of both T and V in interrogative sentences.

Questionnaire data provided information about students' opinions of chat in general and of the specific chat assignments that they had completed throughout the semester. The majority of the 52 students who completed the questionnaire had a positive view of the chat sessions that they had participated in, chat in general (both English and French), chat in French, and chat in English. Most participants also agreed that there was a link between the chat sessions and what they were learning in class at the time the study was conducted. It does appear, however, that students encountered technology-related problems with WebCT during the chat sessions.
4.2 Analysis

4.2.1 Overall T/V Token Appropriateness

Overall, the second-person pronouns T and V were used appropriately by students in chat sessions two-thirds of the time (Table 4.3). T was used appropriately more than twice as frequently as V, and this difference in appropriateness according to pronoun type (ie. T versus V) was statistically significant: $\chi^2 (1, n = 1182) = 267.54, p \leq 0.05$ (p. 41). It would appear that students were better able to use T than V; however, one must consider the effects of the number of participants present in a given chat room on overall T/V token appropriateness levels, as explained in the next section.

4.2.2 Effect of Number of Participants Present in a Chat Room on T/V Appropriateness

Two-way Chats

In two-way chats, all tokens of T were considered appropriate (Table 4.5). This 100% level of T appropriateness cannot be considered an accurate reflection of students' actual pragmatic competence, given the high levels of overall pronoun instability observed in the chat data. Excerpts 4.1 and 4.2 are from two different two-way chats:

Excerpt 4.1

10:11:20 AM BP1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?

10:11:54 AM AW1: J'étudie anglais. Et toi [TA]?

10:12:18 AM AW1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?

10:14:08 AM BP1: has left the room.

10:14:57 AM BP1: has entered the room.

10:15:39 AM AW1: Tu es ici [TA]?
10:18:03 AM AW1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?
10:18:49 AM BP1: oui
10:19:39 AM BP1: les sciences politiques
10:20:07 AM AW1: Tu es a la maison [TA]?
10:20:49 AM BP1: oui
10:20:53 AM BP1: et toi [TA]?
10:21:57 AM AW1: Non, a la building de langues.
10:22:21 AM BP1: comment sont tes cours?
10:25:09 AM AW1: college algebra, french, poltical science 1040, and british literature
10:25:19 AM AW1: Et toi [TA]?
10:27:05 AM BP1: J'aime beacoup le cours de science economiques
10:27:59 AM BP1: Je n'amine pas la chimie
10:28:41 AM AW1: ha, i guess i should have said that in french...oh well
10:29:54 AM AW1: Est-ce que vous aimez [VI] ton course?
10:34:08 AM BP1: sciences politiques est mon amiez cours
10:35:07 AM AW1: Oui
10:36:16 AM AW1: Est-ce que vous aimez [VI] la musique?
10:36:38 AM BP1: oui
10:38:06 AM BP1: il est tres dynamique
10:39:40 AM AW1: Comment musique est-ce que vous [VI] aimez?
10:41:05 AM BP1: je prefer la music de hip hop et rock classique
10:41:29 AM BP1: et toi [TA]?
10:41:58 AM AW1: Oui, il est bien
10:44:00 AM BP1: comment musique est-ce que vous amiez [VI]?
In Excerpt 4.1, all T use is appropriate (i.e., demonstrating 100% appropriate T use), yet address pronoun choice is extremely unstable for both AW and BP. Both students appear to use T/V in free variation: BP uses three appropriate T forms, and two inappropriate V forms; AW uses five appropriate T forms, and five inappropriate V forms.

Excerpt 4.2

10:07:23 AM KS3: Ou habitez-vous [VI]?

10:08:26 AM DW3: J'habite à Denton non loin de l'université.

10:09:26 AM DW3: Et toi [TA], Ou habitez-vous [VI]?

[...]

10:21:03 AM KS3: ....Ou etes vous [VI] né?


In Excerpt 4.2, DW also appears to use T/V forms interchangeably: he switches from T to V in the same turn on two separate occasions (i.e: Et toi [TA], Ou habitez-vous [VI]? ; Et, toi [TA] ? Ou etes vous [VI] né?). Although students produced significantly more appropriate T forms than appropriate V forms overall, therefore, the intra-individual inconsistencies in pronoun choice indicate that pragmatic competence is limited in the use of either pronoun. Furthermore, if one considers the overall levels of appropriate pronoun choice in two-way chats (i.e. both T and V combined), one can get a clearer picture of the students' actual understanding of the address pronoun system. Table 4.5 shows that T was used appropriately 100% (271/271) of the time, and V was used
appropriately 2.4% (6/246) of the time,\(^3\) which means that students chose an appropriate pronoun just over half of the time (277/517; 53.6%). This overall level of appropriateness in two-way chats appears to reflect more closely the free variation observed, since, as Williams (2003) also found, appropriate pronoun choice did appear to occur more as a result of chance than as a result of sociolinguistic awareness.

**Three-way chats**

Table 4.5 indicates that when three or more people were present in a chat room, appropriate T and V use was approximately equal (78.8% and 74.5% respectively). Inappropriate T use became evident in three-way chats, since students had the opportunity to use T to address more than one person (i.e., an opportunity that was not available in a two-way chat). Nevertheless, appropriate T tokens did constitute a large portion (271/665; 40.8%) of all T/V tokens in three-way chats.

Although a much higher level of appropriate V use was observed in three-way chats (74.5%) than in two-way chats (2.4%), this level of appropriateness may be exaggerated, and again may not reflect actual pragmatic competence. V use in three-way chats was generally coded as appropriate, since students were supposed to be participating in group discussion (i.e. addressing *all* other group members in their discourse). It is again questionable, however, whether appropriate V use in three-way chats was based on deliberate, sociolinguistically informed choices:

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**Excerpt 4.3**

10:03:23 AM JT1: Ou habitez-vous ?

10:04:07 AM AW1: J’habite à Denton. Et toi ?

\(^3\) V use (singular/plural) was considered inappropriate in two-way chats, except in rare instances (6/246) where V plural was used to address an interlocutor as part of a group (usually of family or friends), for example: 10:09:13 AM MB2: *Vous êtes combien dans ta famille?*
JT's first question was coded as V appropriate, since she is presumably asking a question to both members of her group (i.e., AW and BP). JT then repeats her question, this time addressing AW only (apparently JT is not aware that AW has already responded). JT's second V token, therefore, was coded as inappropriate. Although she produces an appropriate V token, JT has apparently not mastered the use of V forms, since she uses V inappropriately in her very next turn. This overuse of the formal variant was common in the chat data, which suggests that we must exercise caution in the interpretation of the high V appropriate frequencies.

4.2.3 Rank-order Analysis of T/V Appropriateness by Instructional Level

The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis procedure was carried out to investigate the effects of Instructional Level (i.e., 1010, 1020, or 2040) on appropriate pronoun choice. While we might have expected students enrolled in more advanced levels to have a higher command of sociolinguistic features of discourse—specifically the use of T/V system of address—the results of the rank-order analysis did not confirm this hypothesis.

As shown in Table 4.4, the mean rankings for appropriate T use did differ numerically in the expected direction (i.e., 32.38, 36.38, and 42.10, respectively, for 1010, 1020, and 2040 students), however they did not differ statistically. The mean rankings for appropriate V use also differed numerically, in an unexpected direction,
since 1020 appropriateness scores were ranked the highest overall (43.20), followed by 2040 (35.88) and 1010 (32.94). The differences in mean rankings for appropriate V use were, like appropriate T use, not statistically significant.

It appears that 1010, 1020, and 2040 students displayed equal levels of sociopragmatic awareness. Students enrolled in more advanced levels did not outperform those in lower levels in terms of pragmatic competence. There are several possible explanations for this finding. Firstly, as Liddicoat (2006) points out, textbooks of French typically provide brief and simplified explanations of T/V use, and students generally only encounter explicit textbook treatments of T/V when they first begin to learn the language. This was precisely the case for the students in this study: in the first two pages of the preliminary chapter of *Horizons* (Manley et al., 2006), the 1010/1020 textbook, students are instructed to use V "to greet adult strangers and those to whom you show respect" (p. 6), and to use T "to greet or exchange names with classmates, friends, family members, or children" (p. 8). This treatment of T/V use is never expanded upon or even addressed in any of the following (ten) chapters of Horizons. There is no treatment of appropriate T/V use in 2040 textbook *Quant à moi* (Bragger and Rice, 2005), except from a brief note in instructions for an oral interview exercise in Chapter One, which advises students to use V "if the person that you are interviewing is a lot older than you"\(^4\) p.15). Although the third-semester textbook reviews and re-examines in closer detail much of the grammar from first- and second-semester levels, the T/V system of address is never revisited. It does not seem surprising, therefore, that we observed no linear progression in appropriate T/V use from one level to the next.

\(^4\) This quote has been translated from French.
Learner textbooks appear to neglect the concept of pragmatic development over time, as well as the complexity of the T/V system of address, presenting T/V use as a basic rule that beginners learn in the first week of French class.

It is also important to note that some 1020 and 2040 students may have been directly admitted to their respective levels without taking 1010/1020 courses, after completing a placement exam at the beginning of the semester. The placement exam is a written, multiple-choice test based on linguistic skills (i.e., knowledge of grammar and vocabulary) and does not evaluate discursive, sociolinguistic, or pragmatic competence. Furthermore, it is possible that students placing into 1020 and 2040 may not have had any formal instruction in French for several years (e.g., since high school), and therefore may be less advanced (i.e., proficient) than 1010 and 1020 students who have already studied French for one or two semesters at the university level. An informal review of the chat data revealed that some 1010 students were in fact found to be more proficient in communicating their ideas than their 1020/2040 peers. This could be also attributed to the "false beginner" phenomenon at the 1010 level. Although 1010 is a course designed for complete beginners of French, students enrolled in 1010 often have previous knowledge of the language (e.g., from high school courses) and occasionally demonstrate proficiency beyond the 1010 level.

4.2.4 Peer-assisted Performance

Since each chat group contained students of different levels, it may have been expected for some peer-assisted learning to occur. The peer assistance (Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988) observed was primarily based on lexical retrieval:
KP, a second semester student, aids AJ, a first semester student, by providing her with the French equivalent of the English word "seen". Most of the peer assistance observed in the data was of this nature (i.e., vocabulary based English to French translations). One student, for example, asked how to say "you plural" in French:

PS, a first-semester student, is aware that a "you plural" form exists in French, yet he is unable to produce the correct word, and asks his group for help. The peer assistance observed in this case (provided by DW, a second semester student) is again
lexical, therefore, since PS does not ask about the sociolinguistic aspect of vous (i.e. how or when vous is used).

In Excerpt 4.5 we can see several examples of disrupted turn adjacency (Herring, 1999), a common feature of electronic chat (see 3.4.1). Disrupted turn adjacency occurs when initiating turns and relevant responses are not temporally adjacent. Question-response pairs (i.e., a type of adjacency pair (AP)), which would generally be adjacent in spoken conversation, very often overlap in the chat transcripts.

For example, in the first adjacency pair [AP1], JS's question Où êtes-vous né (10:43:23 AM) is separated from DW's response je suis né dans Denton (10:44:37 AM) by the two messages submitted by JS (10:44:16 AM and 10:44:36 AM). Similarly, in the second adjacency pair [AP2], PS' question Comment dit-on "you (plural)" en français? (10:44:36 AM) is not followed directly by DW's response vous (10:44:43 AM), since it is disrupted by DW's response (10:44:37 AM) from the first adjacency pair [AP1].

Participants also translated items of vocabulary from French into English, particularly during Task 3, which was vocabulary based (see Appendix A). In Excerpt 4.6, a group is discussing Question 1 of Task 3, which involves establishing the "intrus" (i.e., odd one out, or "intruder") of the French words patinage, luge, and natation:

**Excerpt 4.6**

10:19:24 AM KB2: je ne comprend pas
10:19:50 AM KB2: la natation est swimming?
10:19:54 AM AB3: geant = giant
10:20:03 AM AB3: oui nataion est swimming
10:20:39 AM LA1: numero deux
KB, a second semester student, states first of all that she does not understand, and then asks her group if the English equivalent of the French word "natation" is "swimming". AB, a third semester student, adopts a didactic role in the exchange, confirming that "natation" is in fact "swimming", and also offers an English translation of the French words "géant" and "intrus".

A final example of lexical peer assistance provided by a third-semester student, which occurred during Task 1, is given in Excerpt 4.7.

Excerpt 4.7

10:40:57 AM LA1: qu'est pantouflarde?
10:41:13 AM AB3: Je suis une "homebody"

AB explains the meaning of the French word "pantouflarde" to LA, a first-semester student.

We have seen from excerpts 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 that peer-assistance did occur, that it was lexical in nature, and that it usually involved a more advanced student (i.e. second or third semester) helping a less advanced student (i.e. first or second semester), but this was not always the case. The data also indicate that there was a
general reliance on English to aid expression and comprehension during the chat sessions. If communication-related problems occurred, students tended to revert to English instead of attempting to get around the problem in the target language. Had these English native speakers (NSs) been conversing with French NS, as was the case in Belz and Kinginger's telecollaborative classroom, the peer assistance may have been based more on the pragmatic aspects of French, and less on translation to and from the American students' native language. It is also important to note that on several occasions, students used various forms of the French equivalent of "How do you say [X] in French? ("Comment dit-on [X] en français?"); however, since this question (asked in French) includes the English word (i.e., "X"), everyone in the chat room knew the meaning of the word since it was included, in English, in the question asked in French, and therefore no up-take (i.e., in the form of an answer/translation) occurred. This demonstrates that conveying meaning was often given priority over learning unknown or new lexical items. Nonetheless, it is very possible that in many cases no one in the room knew the French translation of the English word.

Although students mainly helped one another with vocabulary, a few instances of sociolinguistic/pragmatic peer assistance did occur. For example, in Excerpt 4.7 (underlining added), a third semester student (KP), comments on a group member's inappropriate use of V:

Excerpt 4.7

10:04:49 AM LM2: *Votre* groupe ne s'est pas montré {KP}?
[...]
10:07:51 AM LM2: Je habite en un apartement....et *vous*?
10:07:56 AM LM2: **vous**?  
10:07:56 AM KP2: *pourquoi tu dis "votre et vous"*  
10:08:09 AM KP2: **nous sommes etudiants**  
10:08:19 AM JK1: *J'habite a Gainesville!, loin del'universite!*  
10:08:21 AM KP2: nous pouvons dire ta ton  
[...]  
10:13:35 AM KP2: *tu prends l'autobus?*  
10:13:36 AM HL3: Ma maison sur Hillcrest  
10:13:55 AM LM2: Oui, je prends l'autobus tous les jours  
10:14:05 AM HL3: Mon quartier est tres calm  
10:14:20 AM KP2: moi aussi  
10:14:39 AM JK1: moi aussi  
10:15:03 AM HL3: {KP}, *votre residence n'est pas bruyant?*  
10:15:11 AM KP2: aunque j'habite dans le dorms  
10:15:17 AM KP2: non,  
10:15:19 AM LM2: **Tu as de la chance!**  
[...]  
10:24:19 AM LM2: *has left the room.*  
[...]  
10:26:48 AM KP2: je regarde the pirates of the carribean  
10:28:00 AM HL3: *tu regarde le film maintenet?*  
10:28:08 AM KP2: oh oui  
10:28:16 AM HL3: **Tu parle francais et espange et regarde le film en angalis!**  

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5 Students (and non-students) often use an asterisk to indicate that a word has been re-typed because there was a problem with it in a previous turn; however, this is not the only way in which the asterisk is used in electronic discourse.
10:28:26 AM KP2: oui oui
10:28:28 AM JK1: pirates of the caribbean est interesante
10:28:35 AM HL3: Tu est tres intellegent je pense
10:28:48 AM KP2: pourquoi tu pense?
10:28:50 AM JK1: tres intelligent, indeed!
10:29:36 AM JK1: tu regare une film, tu parles francais et espagne?

KP firstly questions LM's inappropriate V use (Votre groupe ne s'est pas montré KP?), asking her: Why do you say votre and vous? We are students. We can say ta ton. KP then addresses LM with an appropriate T form a few minutes later: tu prends l'autobus?. LM does not respond directly to KP's comments, but she does switch to using T with KP later on in the exchange (Tu as de la chance!), suggesting that KP assisted her sociolinguistic/pragmatic performance. During the first half of this particular chat session, most of the exchange takes place between KP and LM, and JK and HL adopt a more passive role. Initially, HL does not seem to have acknowledged or understood KP's remarks on T/V use, as she subsequently addresses KP with an inappropriate V form: {KP}, votre residence n'est pas bruyant? However, later on in the chat, after LM leaves the room, HL begins to participate more and consistently addresses KP using T (see 10:28:00 AM, 10:28:16 AM, and 10:28:35 AM). Even JK, whose overall participation remains minimal, addresses KP using T (see 10:29:36 AM). It appears that KP has positively influenced the sociopragmatic competence of his other group members, firstly through his remarks on inappropriate V use at the beginning of the chat session, and secondly through his own appropriate T use when addressing individual group members throughout the chat.
KP's commentary in Excerpt 4.7 was the only example in the data of a student explicitly raising the issue of T/V appropriateness. Two more implicit examples of peer assistance occurred during Task 7 (see Appendix A) when groups were asked to translate ten sentences from English to French:

*Excerpt 4.8*

10:24:47 AM DW3: 4: Did you [singular, informal] work during the winter break?
10:25:49 AM SC2: Est-ce que vous travaillez pendant l'hiver holidays???
10:26:11 AM SG3: Qu'est ce que travaillais...
10:26:26 AM SC2: oui
10:26:31 AM SE1: Tu as fait travaille pendant des vacances d'hiver?
10:26:33 AM SG3: i mean est-ce que tu travaillais...
10:26:56 AM SE1: Oui, est-ce que travailles....
10:27:12 AM SG3: oui
10:27:18 AM SE1: I mean est-ce que tu travailles
10:27:18 AM DW3: ou: est-ce que tu travaille pendant les vacances d'hiver?
10:27:56 AM DW3: est-ce que tu as travaille pendant....d'hiver"
10:28:44 AM DW3: tu as travaillé pendant les vacances d'hiver?
10:28:56 AM SE1: Oui

SC is the first student to attempt a translation of the sentence: *Did you [singular, informal] work during the winter break?* SC incorrectly translates you [singular, informal] as *vous*. The V form is subsequently corrected to a T by both SE and SG (at 10:26:31 AM and 10:26:33 AM respectively). DW remains passive throughout the exchange, and only intervenes to perfect SC, SE and SG's efforts.
In Excerpt 4.9, a group is translating the sentence: *When did you [singular, formal] take the exam?*

**Excerpt 4.9**

10:25:23 AM KS2: *Est-ce que tu a pris l'examen?*

10:25:43 AM AR1: quand vous avez des garçons et des filles...on met "ILS"

10:26:35 AM AR1: *Quand est-ce que vous avez pris l'examen?*

KS wrongly translates *you [singular, formal] as tu*, and this is corrected by AR, who provides an appropriate V form. Although the question of T/V appropriateness is never explicitly discussed in Excerpts 4.8 and 4.9, the corrected translation, containing appropriate T/V forms, is accepted by all group members.

4.2.5 Analysis of Variation of Question Syntax

Interrogative T/V tokens (i.e., SVQ, ECQ and VSQ) constituted 64% (*n* = 758) of the corpus. In Table 4.8, which provides the overall distribution of appropriate T and V tokens according to Question Syntax (i.e. SVQ, ECQ, and VSQ), we can see different patterns of appropriateness emerge for interrogative T tokens versus interrogative V tokens.

For interrogative T tokens, VSQ (verb-subject syntax) had the highest level of appropriateness (95.1%), followed by SVQ (86.7%; subject-verb syntax) and ECQ (85.8%; *est-ce que* syntax). A VARBRUL analysis reported that Syntax did not significantly affect appropriateness for interrogative T tokens.

For interrogative V tokens, SVQ (subject-verb syntax) had the highest level of appropriateness (57.1%), followed closely by ECQ (55.2%; *est-ce que* syntax). VSQ
(verb-subject syntax) had the lowest level of appropriateness (30.3%). A VARBRUL analysis confirmed that Syntax significantly affected V appropriateness, specifically that V interrogative tokens were less likely to be appropriate when Question Syntax was verb-subject, as opposed to subject-verb or est-ce que.

Although a Kruskal-Wallis analysis of variance performed on all T/V tokens (i.e. on tokens of all eight unit types) found that Instructional Level did not significantly affect T/V appropriateness, the VARBRUL analysis reported that Instructional Level did significantly affect appropriateness for both T and V interrogative tokens. For T interrogatives, 1010 students had significantly lower appropriate use than both 1020 and 2040 students. For V interrogatives, 1020 students had a significantly higher appropriate use than 1010 and 2040 students.

The VARBRUL results for Instructional Level confirmed the expectation that 1010 students would show a comparatively lower level of pragmatic awareness/performance than 1020 and 2040 students. Students in 1020, however, performed just as well as 2040 students for T interrogatives, and performed significantly better than 1010 and 2040 students for V interrogatives. Although they were found to provide grammatical and lexical peer assistance, it would appear that the 2040 students did not display superior levels of sociopragmatic competence. This could be due to the lack of textbook instruction in the T/V system of address beyond the 1010 level (see 4.2.3). Another possibility is that learners in Beginning (i.e., 1010 and 1020) and Intermediate (i.e., 2040) French may not have noticeably different levels of proficiency, given that 2040 students have only been studying French for (a maximum of) 15 weeks more than 1020 students. We must also take individual differences between students into account:
there may have been several high performing 1020 students participating in this study, who were in fact more advanced than their 2040 peers.

Since the VARBRUL analysis considered the effect of Syntax from the perspective of the group as a whole, it is helpful to also consider specific examples from the corpus. Excerpts 4.10 and 4.11 illustrate the influence of Question Syntax on four students’ pronoun choice:

Excerpt 4.10 (2 students present)

10:11:20 AM BP1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?
10:11:54 AM AW1: J'etudie anglais. Et toi [TA]?
10:12:18 AM AW1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?
10:14:08 AM BP1: has left the room.
10:14:57 AM BP1: has entered the room.
10:15:39 AM AW1: Tu es ici [TA]?
[...]
10:18:03 AM AW1: Qu'est-ce que vous etudiez [VI]?
10:18:49 AM BP1: oui
10:19:39 AM BP1: les sciences politiques
10:20:07 AM AW1: Tu es a la maison [TA]?
10:20:49 AM BP1: oui
10:20:53 AM BP1: et toi [TA]?
10:21:57 AM AW1: Non, a la building de langues.
10:22:21 AM BP1: comment sont tes cours?
10:25:09 AM AW1: college algebra, french, poltical science 1040, and british literature
10:25:19 AM AW1: Et toi [TA]?
In Excerpt 4.10, BP and AW, two first-semester students, are asking one another questions about their studies and music tastes. All inappropriate V forms used by both AW and BP are preceded by *est-ce que*, and all appropriate T forms for both interlocutors are contained in either tag questions or in SVQ structures.

The influence of syntactic environment on T/V pronoun choice was observed in students of all levels. Excerpt 4.11 provides a sample of discourse that occurred during a chat between two third-semester students:

*Excerpt 4.11 (2 students present)*

10:07:23 AM KS3: *Ou habitez-vous?*

10:08:26 AM DW3: J'habite à Denton non loin de l'université.
10:09:26 AM DW3: Et toi [TA], Ou habitez-vous [VI]?

[...]

10:21:03 AM KS3: ....Ou etes vous [VI] ne?


All of the V inappropriate tokens produced by DW and KS, who are alone in their chat room, are contained in subject verb inversion (VSQ) questions. This inappropriate V use corresponds to the VARBRUL results which established that V was significantly less likely to be used appropriately in subject-verb inversion (VSQ) questions. It is interesting to note that DW switches to using V for subject-verb inversion questions on two separate occasions (i.e., 10:09:26 AM and 10:21:53 AM), even though he begins each turn with an appropriate T tag.

Inappropriate V use in VSQ tokens could be attributed to the treatment of these particular interrogative forms in student textbooks. An analysis of VSQ question forms presented in two chapters of Horizons (Manley et al., 2006) and in one chapter of Quant à moi (Bragger and Rice, 2005) revealed that students are presented with many more VSQ V forms than VSQ T forms.6

Table 4.12. Frequency of T/V VSQ Question Forms Presented in 1010/1020 (Horizons) and 2040 (Quant à moi) Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horizons: 1010 Preliminary Chapter</th>
<th>Horizons: 1020 Chapter Six</th>
<th>Quant à moi: 2040 Chapter One</th>
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6 Chapters 1-5 of Horizons are covered in 1010, and chapters 6-10 are covered in 1020. In 2040, students cover chapters 1-3 of Quant à moi.
We can see that V VSQ question forms are more than twice as common as T question forms overall. In the preliminary chapter of Horizons, 20 V VSQ forms are presented,\(^7\) as opposed to zero T VSQ forms. Since students encounter more V than T VSQ forms in their textbook, it does not seem surprising that they produced many more V than T VSQ forms overall (81.3%; 178/219) in this study. The students’ familiarity with V VSQ forms could also explain the significantly higher levels of V VSQ token inappropriateness identified by GOLDVARB.

4.2.6 Summary of Analysis

The sociopragmatic competence of participants in this study regarding the French second-person pronoun system of address does appear to be somewhat limited. Overall, students chose an appropriate T/V pronoun two thirds of the time, and a substantial amount of free variation in pronoun choice was observed. Although we may have expected more advanced students to demonstrate greater sociopragmatic awareness, a Kruskal-Wallis procedure revealed that Instructional Level did not significantly affect T/V appropriateness overall. One possible reason for this lack of sociopragmatic development is the scant treatment of the system of address in learner textbooks, which tend to focus on grammatical and lexical competences primarily. This could also explain why most of the peer assistance observed in the corpus of data was lexical, not sociopragmatic. Although third- and second-semester students may have had a greater vocabulary range and more grammatical proficiency, they were just as likely to use T/V inappropriately as their peers enrolled in less advanced levels. All of

\(^7\) The V VSQ forms in the preliminary chapter were personal greetings, for example, *comment allez-vous?* and *comment vous appelez-vous?*
these findings (the free variation in pronoun choice, the null effect of level, and the type of peer assistance observed) support those of Williams (2003).

Although much pronoun instability was observed in the data for both T and V, pronoun choice was not, in fact, completely random. In a qualitative analysis of selected excerpts, T/V use in questions appeared to be influenced by syntactic environment. A Goldvarb analysis of T/V interrogative tokens confirmed that V interrogatives were less likely to be appropriate when Question Syntax was verb-subject, as opposed to subject-verb or est-ce que. It appears that students used T/V forms that they were most familiar with (i.e. that they had encountered time and again in their textbook), rather than pronouns that were appropriate to the sociopragmatic parameters of the system of address.
5.1 Summary of Results

This study has shown that the French second-person address system presents many difficulties for language learners at three instructional levels (i.e., first-, second-, and third-semester, U.S. university level). Although the rate of appropriate second-person pronoun use was relatively high (66.6%) when all students are considered together, the intra-individual inconsistencies in pronoun choice indicated that T/V forms were often used interchangeably, in what (at first) appeared to be a random manner.

Overall differences in T/V appropriateness were observed between levels. For appropriate T tokens, third-semester students performed better than second-semester students, who in turn performed better than first-semester students. This trend is in the expected direction, given that it was hypothesized that as students progress through instructional levels they should (at least as a group) demonstrate a better command of the linguistic system in French. However unexpected differences were observed between levels for appropriate V tokens, since second-semester students performed better than both first- and third-semester students. Despite these observed differences, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test, which considered the effect of level on T use and V use in separate analyses, did not indicate level to be a statistically significant factor.

Thus, it is argued that the development of sociopragmatic competence, as shown through T/V use, may operate independently of other areas of language learning, most notably, more lexical and grammatical knowledge.
This study also found no evidence that inter-learner chat discussions provide an environment in which the inappropriate use of address pronouns leads to negative social consequences, linguistic ambiguity, or at the very least a questioning of the pronoun chosen. Although students engaged in many episodes of "peer-assisted performance" (Tharpe & Gallimore, 1988), such assistance was primarily limited to lexical retrieval. Despite the considerable level of apparent "free" variation in the use of T/V, only one instance of explicit peer assistance with regard to address pronoun use was observed in the entire corpus of 27 groups of two or three students chatting over a period of 15 weeks. The lack of questioning (inappropriate) pronoun choice in this corpus also indicates that these learners are unaware of the social conflict that could (potentially) arise in other (non-educational) contexts.

The originality of the study lies in its consideration of selected internal linguistic factors that were suspected to contribute to learners' variation in the use of T and V after several close readings of the transcripts. First, it was found that nearly two thirds of all T/V tokens were produced in sentential interrogative sentences. Very few tokens were found in declarative sentences and other types of utterances. This finding suggests that students do not use T and V in other pragmatic categories, such as, for example, giving advice and joking; rather, the extremely high rate of T/V use in direct interrogatives indicates that students use these address pronouns primarily as a means of completing the activity (e.g., repeating or rewording the questions for the task), which is very similar to the standard use of these pronouns in their textbooks.

Second, a quantitative analysis of T/V variation in direct interrogation revealed that instructional level and interrogative structure were statistically significant factors.
For T interrogatives, second-semester and third-semester students performed almost equally well, and both groups performed better than first-semester students. For V interrogatives, second-semester students performed significantly better than first-semester students, who in turn performed marginally better than third semester students. Thus, although there appeared to be a linear progression in appropriate second-person pronoun use from the first- to the second-semester level, third-semester students failed to outperform students in lower levels (a finding which supports the Kruskal-Wallis analysis of overall T/V token appropriateness by level). Regarding interrogative structure, V interrogatives were used appropriately at a significantly lower rate when the question syntax was verb-subject, as opposed to subject-verb or est-ce que.

A review of learner textbooks used by participants in this study revealed that V verb-subject interrogatives were presented more than twice as often as T verb-subject forms. Students' familiarity with V VSQ forms may have led to their overuse of V in this particular syntactic environment. It is argued, therefore, that pronoun choice was not as random as it initially appeared; students seem to reproduce V subject-verb inversion question forms regularly presented in learner textbooks without consideration of sociopragmatic appropriateness.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

It is obvious that learners need more opportunities to develop sociopragmatic competence, since they lack awareness of the social significance and consequences of appropriate versus inappropriate second-person pronoun use. In addition to presenting
grammar and vocabulary, learner textbooks could include more detailed explanations of T/V use in a variety of different social situations. These treatments could include reference to, for example, reciprocal versus non-reciprocal T/V use between speakers, or implicit versus explicit T/V switching.

The promotion of language socialization in the foreign language classroom could be supplemented by exposure to a variety of discourse options within authentic cultural contexts. This ought to include analysis of authentic discourse, such as electronic discourse (for example, chat, email, and forums), transcripts of scenes from films, newspaper and magazine articles, excerpts from literary texts, and advertisements. Tasks could involve what the New London Group’s (1996) pedagogical theory of multiliteracies labels as "overt instruction" and "critical framing" (pp. 86-87), both of which involve observing and discussing how T/V is used in authentic contexts (as opposed to engaging in communication with native speakers).

Telecollaboration exchanges between native speakers and learners such as the one conducted by Belz and Kinginger (2002), although more difficult to incorporate into foreign language programs, can greatly facilitate language socialization by allowing learners to experience the direct social consequences of producing inappropriate forms of speech. Learners’ electronic discourse could also be incorporated into post-activity tasks in which students analyze and reflect upon their own discourse and its social appropriateness (e.g., Kinginger, 1998).
5.3 Directions for Future Research

The influence of syntactic environment on T/V use merits further investigation. Although many studies have documented L2 learners’ free variation in second-person pronoun choice, learner T/V use has not been attributed to specific structural factors. A future study may focus solely on addressing appropriateness in interrogative forms, and/or investigate patterns based on lexical factors, such as verb type. Since learner discourse appears to be strongly influenced by textbook structures, familiarity with T/V forms of certain verbs may influence second-person pronoun choice. Verbs used to give instructions or ask questions to students (for example, vouloir, préférer, aimer, discuter), for instance, are commonly presented as V forms, and this may influence learner use of these verbs.

Although the current study was designed to investigate the influence of Instructional Level, learners in Beginning (i.e., 1010 and 1020) and Intermediate (i.e., 2040) French did not have significantly different levels of sociopragmatic proficiency overall, and third-semester students did not outperform their lower-level counterparts. It is possible that the one-semester difference between levels meant that second- and third-semester students did not consider themselves considerably more expert than students of lower levels, which could have influenced the types of peer-assistance offered. Moreover, one could not consider a 2040 student an ‘expert’ in the linguistic system of French or an advanced L2 learner. A future study could replicate the inter-level design, but include participants from more advanced levels, such as those in their third or fourth year of instruction, or graduate students. More peer-assistance might emerge in chat sessions between, for example, first-semester students, fourth-semester
students, and graduate students. Future studies of CMC exchanges between native
speakers and learners or learners and other learners could investigate other aspects of
sociopragmatic competence, such as turn-taking, uptake, and requests (e.g.,
questions), as well as other sociolinguistic features of discourse, such as the variable
use of the pronouns *nous* and *on* and negative particles. Such studies would have the
potential to informal scholarship on the acquisition, development, and use of
sociolinguistic features of discourse by learners of French.

Four of the five tasks included in this study were communicative tasks (see
Appendix A). A more extensive use of metalinguistic tasks, such as the translation
activity (Task 7) in the current study, might reveal more about students’ understanding
of second-person pronouns. Although students did not always use T/V appropriately or
offer T/V peer-assistance, this did not prevent successful communication, and pronoun
instability, although inappropriate, was not considered important enough to mention in
most of the tasks. In the metalinguistic task, however, some implicit T/V peer-assistance
was offered, since learners’ attention was directed to specific linguistic forms.

Finally, the current study, although encouraging more informal communication
between students, was nonetheless conducted within a formal learning environment.
Learners participated in chat sessions within regular class hours, were assigned to
specific chat groups, and were given specific tasks to complete. Although it is difficult
for students to have access to ‘natural’ settings, this would be the most effective way to
assist language socialization.
APPENDIX A

WEB CT CHAT TOPICS
Chat Topics (topics were provided in both English and French.)

**Topic 1: All About You**

Who are you?
Where do you live?
Where were you born?
What are you studying at UNT?
What do you normally do during the weekend?

**Topic 2: Friends & Family:**

- Describe someone in your family and a friend at UNT or elsewhere.
- Ask the people in your group some questions in order to find out how they spend time with friends at UNT and what they do when they go back home on the weekend or during vacation periods.

**Topic 3: Cherchez l'intrus**

In each group of words, you need to find the word that doesn't belong (*l'intrus*, which is the French word for *intruder*).

In some cases, you are given a clue in parentheses before the list of choices. You should probably print this page so that you have access to the list during the on-line discussion. (A link to WebCT is at the end of the list.)

The goal of this chat topic is to give you the opportunity to discuss (in French) some of the items given in these lists. Please do not limit your on-line communication to guessing which one doesn't belong in each list. You should use these items and groups and the basis for today's discussion. Feel free to discuss, elaborate, disagree, etc. Don't worry if you don't make it through the entire list by the end of the period. Bonne discussion!

1. a. le patinage  b. la luge  c. la natation
2. a. l'équitation  b. le tennis de table  c. le slalom géant
3. (jeux d'hiver) a. Turin  b. Vancouver  c. Londres
4. a. Paris  b. Nantes  c. la capitale
5. a. le Mont-Blanc  b. le Rhin  c. la Seine
6. a. les Pyrénées  b. le Himalaya  c. les Alpes
7. a. la Provence  b. l'Alsace  c. Le Havre
8. a. une carotte  b. une poire  c. une framboise
9. a. le camembert  b. le porto  c. le roquefort
12. a. boulevard  b. boulanger  c. avenue
13. a. boulangerie  b. charcuterie  c. pâtisserie
14. a. un diabolo menthe  b. une pression  c. un Orangina
15. a. Juliette Binoche  b. Isabella Rossellini  c. Emanuelle Béart
16. a. l'Arc de Triomphe  b. La Tour Eiffel  c. le Pont du Gard
17. a. bleu  b. blanc  c. jaune  d. rouge
20. a. le Maroc  b. l'Egypte  c. l'Algérie

**Topic 4 : Your Housing and Neighborhood**

What kinds of things do you have at your place? Describe the place where you live. What is in your neighborhood? Is the neighborhood quiet or noisy? Do you want to move? Generally speaking, do students prefer living in the dorms or having an off-campus apartment? Explain your answer. Do you get along with your neighbors? What are your neighbors like?

**Topic 7 : Translation Exercises:** During the first part of the chat session, work on translating the sentences provided below, then you can talk about your plans for the summer (in French, of course).

[Information in brackets is provided to help you figure out grammatical structures and forms related to the subject and the verb. You do not need to translate this information.]

1. Last semester, David took a history class, a biology class, and an Italian class.
3. Did you [singular, informal] work during the winter break?
4. Has Janine ever visited the Grand Canyon?
5. What time did your neighbors [masculine and feminine] get home yesterday evening?
6. When did you [singular, formal] take the exam?
7. Why did Nicolas' sister buy a new car?
8. We [masculine and feminine] stopped by Nicole's place yesterday evening around 8 o'clock.
9. My cousin [feminine] woke up rather late this morning.
10. She [my cousin from #9] arrived at work late.
APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE 1: PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Beginning of Semester Questionnaire

Title of Study: The Discourse of Electronic French: Orthographic and Sociopragmatic Variation

Principal Investigator: Lawrence Williams, University of North Texas (UNT) Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

Thank you for participating in this study. Filling out this questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes of your time.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. First name: ______________________ Last name: ___________________________

2. EUID: __________
   (This is needed to add you to the list of chat participants in WebCT. Your EUID should be two or three letters and a number. For example, mine is lw0045.)

3. Age: ______ years and ______ months

4. Student status: (circle one)
   freshman – sophomore – junior – senior – senior +1 or more – graduate student

5. Gender: male or female

6. Current French course(s) you are enrolled in:
   __________________________________________

COMPUTER USE INFORMATION

7. Do you own a computer? (circle one) yes or no

8. Do you have easy access to a computer at your place of residence (i.e., where you live during the school year)? (circle one) yes or no

9. How often do you use a computer in a campus computer lab? (circle one)
   never – 1 to 5 times during the semester – 6 to 10 times during the semester
   1 or 2 times every week – 3 or more times every week

10. How often do you use a laptop computer to connect to the wireless network on campus? (circle one)
    never – 1 to 5 times during the semester – 6 to 10 times during the semester
        1 or 2 times every week – 3 or more times every week
11. How often do you use Instant Messaging (MSN, Yahoo, AOL, ICQ, etc.) to chat? (circle one)

   never – 1 to 5 times during the semester – 6 to 10 times during the semester
   1 or 2 times every week – 3 or more times every week

12. How often do you chat online without using MSN, Yahoo, AOL, ICQ, etc.? (circle one)

   never – 1 to 5 times during the semester – 6 to 10 times during the semester
   1 or 2 times every week – 3 or more times every week

13. How do you rate yourself as an online chatter? (circle one)

   very experienced – somewhat experienced – average – not very experienced – not experienced at all

14. How many times have you chatted online in English? (circle one)

   never – 1 or 2 times – 3 to 5 times – 6 to 10 times – more than 10 times

15. In your opinion, what types of skills and knowledge are necessary for a person to be a good chatter?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

16. How many times have you chatted online in French? (circle one)

   never – 1 or 2 times – 3 to 5 times – 6 to 10 times – more than 10 times

17. How many times have you participated in a chat assignment for a class other than French? (circle one)

   never – 1 or 2 times – 3 to 5 times – 6 to 10 times – more than 10 times

18. How many times have you participated in a chat assignment for a French class? (circle one)

   never – 1 or 2 times – 3 to 5 times – 6 to 10 times – more than 10 times
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE 3: PARTICIPANT OPINIONS OF TASKS AND CHAT SESSIONS
End of Semester Questionnaire

Title of Study: The Discourse of Electronic French: Orthographic and Sociopragmatic Variation

Principal Investigator: Lawrence Williams, University of North Texas (UNT) Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

Thank you for participating in this study. Your comments will help the instructors of French at UNT create better chat assignments for students. We would appreciate both positive and negative feedback in order to have a good understanding of what worked and what could be changed in the future.

Filling out this questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes of your time.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. First name: ______________________ Last name: ___________________________

EVALUATION OF FRENCH CLASS CHAT SESSIONS

2. What is your overall rating of the chat sessions that you participated in for French class this semester? (circle one)
   - very negative
   - somewhat negative
   - neutral
   - somewhat positive
   - very positive

3. Please explain briefly the rating you provided in Question 2 above.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

4. Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

   4a. I am more comfortable chatting on line in French now than at the beginning of the semester.
       - strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

   4b. Chatting in French has helped me with learning the language.
       - strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

   4c. I dislike chat in general (both English and French).
       - strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

   4d. I dislike chat in French.
       - strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree
4e. I dislike chat in English.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4f. The other people in my chat rooms contributed to keeping the discussion flowing.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4g. Chat discussions can/could be used at any level of learning French (i.e., for all levels of students).

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4h. Chat discussions should be incorporated into the syllabus when possible.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4i. There was a link between the chat sessions and what we were learning in class.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4j. The chat room function of WebCT was technologically user-friendly.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

4k. There were no major technological problems related to the French class chat sessions.

   strongly disagree – disagree – neutral – agree – strongly agree

5. Please explain briefly the positive aspects of your participation in the French class chat sessions.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

6. Please explain briefly the negative aspects of your participation in the French class chat sessions.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX D

GOLDBARB X RESULTS: ONE-STEP ANALYSIS
Goldvarb X results for question structures only:
q (SV); s (est-ce que); n (inversion)
j (FREN 1010); k (FREN 1020); l (FREN 2040)

I. T analysis

• CELL CREATION • 10/4/2007 3:38:32 PM

Name of token file: TandVall.tkn
Name of condition file: Untitled.cnd

(1 (NIL (COL 5 3))
 (NIL (COL 4 o))
 (NIL (COL 4 p))
 (NIL (COL 4 u))
 (NIL (COL 4 d))
 (NIL (COL 4 g)))

(2)
(4)
)

Number of cells: 9
Application value(s): ai
Total no. of factors: 6

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<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
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| 2 (4) |   |   |       |     |
| q     | N | 170| 26    | 196 | 54.9|
|       | % | 86.7| 13.3 |     |
| s     | N | 103| 17    | 120 | 33.6|
|       | % | 85.8| 14.2 |     |
| n     | N | 39 | 2     | 41  | 11.5|
|       | % | 95.1| 4.9  |     |
| Total | N | 312| 45    | 357 |     |
%  87.4  12.6
--------------------------------------
TOTAL N  312  45  357
%  87.4  12.6

Name of new cell file: .cel

• BINOMIAL VARBRUL, 1 step • 10/4/2007 3:38:50 PM

Averaging by weighting factors.
One-level binomial analysis...

Run # 1, 9 cells:
Convergence at Iteration 5
Input 0.884

Group Factor Weight App/Total Input&Weight

1:  l  0.553  0.90  0.90
    k  0.554  0.91  0.90
    j  0.348  0.79  0.80

2:  q  0.473  0.87  0.87
    s  0.468  0.86  0.87
    n  0.710  0.95  0.95

Cell  Total  App'ns  Expected  Error
ls   45    42  40.166  0.780
lq   73    64  65.276  0.236
ln   11    10  10.543  0.672
ks   38    32  33.927  1.021
kq   75    68  67.083  0.119
kn   24    24  23.004  1.039
js   37    29  28.909  0.001
jq   48    38  37.643  0.016
jn   6     5  5.450   0.406

Total Chi-square = 4.2884
Chi-square/cell = 0.4765
Log likelihood = -130.572

• BINOMIAL VARBRUL • 10/4/2007 3:42:58 PM

Averaging by weighting factors.
Threshold, step-up/down: 0.050001

Run # 2, 3 cells:
Convergence at Iteration 4
Input 0.880
Group # 1 -- l: 0.548, k: 0.564, j: 0.340
Log likelihood = -131.757  Significance = 0.034

All remaining groups significant

Groups eliminated while stepping down: 2 (This indicates that Group 2 is not significant.)
Best stepping up run: #2
Best stepping down run: #7

II. V analysis

• CELL CREATION • 10/4/2007 3:58:22 PM

Name of token file: TandVall.tkn
Name of condition file: Untitled.cnd

(1 (NIL (COL 4 o))
 (NIL (COL 4 p))
 (NIL (COL 4 u))
 (NIL (COL 4 d))
 (NIL (COL 4 g))
 (NIL (COL 5 2)))

(2)
(4)

Number of cells: 9
Application value(s): ai
Total no. of factors: 6

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<td>k</td>
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<p>| 2 (4) |   |   |       |    |
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| %     |   | 57.1| 42.9 |    |
| n     | N | 54| 124   | 178| 44.4|</p>
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<td>222</td>
<td>401</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL N</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>401</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Name of new cell file: .cel

• BINOMIAL VARBRUL, 1 step • 10/4/2007 3:59:46 PM

Averaging by weighting factors. One-level binomial analysis...
Run # 1, 9 cells:
Convergence at Iteration 5
Input 0.440

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Group Factor</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>App/Total Input&amp;Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0.441</td>
<td>0.39 0.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>0.417</td>
<td>0.37 0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>0.637</td>
<td>0.58 0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: q</td>
<td>0.620</td>
<td>0.57 0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>0.351</td>
<td>0.30 0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.55 0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cell</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>App'ns</th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>lq</td>
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<td>jn</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.796</td>
<td>0.337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Chi-square = 1.7773**
Chi-square/cell = 0.1975
Log likelihood = -254.621

• BINOMIAL VARBRUL • 10/4/2007 4:06:03 PM

Run # 4, 9 cells:
Convergence at Iteration 5
Input 0.440
Group # 1 -- j: 0.441, l: 0.417, k: 0.637
Group # 2 -- q: 0.620, n: 0.351, s: 0.621
Log likelihood = -254.621  Significance = 0.001

All remaining groups significant

Groups eliminated while stepping down: None (This means that both groups are significant.)
Best stepping up run: #4
Best stepping down run: #5
REFERENCES


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¹ The year of completion of the study, 2003—not the year of publication in Dissertation Abstracts International, 2004—is used in this thesis to refer to this study by Sax.


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2 The year of completion of the study, 2003—not the year of publication in Dissertation Abstracts International, 2004—is used in this thesis to refer to this study by Williams.