

# Social Network and second language usage

## An exploratory study of American students during a Study Abroad in France



Rozenn Gautier  
Université Grenoble Alpes [France]  
Laboratoire Lidilem  
Rozenn.Gautier@u-grenoble3.fr

Jean-Pierre Chevrot  
Université Grenoble Alpes [France]  
Laboratoire Lidilem  
Institut Universitaire de France  
Jean-Pierre.Chevrot@u-grenoble3.fr

# Summary

- Study abroad (SA) and sociolinguistic variables
- SA and social environment
- An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France
  - Follow-up study (7 learners)
  - Scaled-up questionnaire (128 subjects)

- Conclusions and perspectives
- Work in progress

## SA and sociolinguistic variables

- The acquisition of native speaker variation speech patterns
  - Effect of context on this process
  - The role of input and interaction in the acquisition of patterns of variation
- The context of SA and the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence
  - Greater access and exposure to sociolinguistic markers in the target language community
  - More opportunities for the use of variation speech patterns

# Social network and acquisition

- Social networks (DeGenne & Forsé, 2004) and their influences on second language usage ?
- Social integration to a community -> use of same phonological characteristics (Milroy, 1987)
  - Belonging to a particular social network : retention of linguistic patterns
- Recent studies have shown an impact of social network during SA
  - on the L2 pronunciation (Lybeck, 2002; Polat, 2007)
  - on the overall second language proficiency (Wiklund, 2002)

# An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France

- Amount of time of second language use and social networks developed in the native community
- Usage and acquisition of two sociolinguistic variables
  - L2 learners tend to overuse the standard form of sociolinguistic variables (Mougeon et al, 2002)
  - **Optional French liaison** (ex : *très [z] important*, « *very important* »)
    - > 10 % of optional liaison realisation by native speakers during informal conversation (Ahmad, 1993)
  - **Variable deletion of *ne*** (ex : *je (ne) sais pas*, « *I don't know* »)
    - > 85.6% of *ne* deletion in native speech of speakers from 35 to 50 years old (Hansen & Malderez, 2004)

An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France  
- Method -

Seven American students in Grenoble

SA of one year

Mean age : 21 years old

5 women and 2 men

Type of housing : French host family

Level of proficiency : B1/B2

Hours of French classes per week : 16 to 20 hours

- **Linguistic data**

- Optional French liaison and deletion of *ne*

- Two semi-directed interviews at two periods

- Time 1 (T1) : December, Time 2 (T2): March.

- Recordings :

- T1 : one hour per learner (total 7 hours), T2 : same as T1

- Total number of occurrences

- Optional liaison : T1 : 688 occurrences et T2 : 481

- Context of negation : T1 : 351 occurrences et T2 : 330

## An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France

### - Method -

- **Social data :**
- Daily logbook reporting every social contacts during one week :

Exemple of a page of one student's daily logbook :

PRÉNOM(S)	DURÉE	LANGUE	N./N.N.	U./H.U.	H.U. LIEU?	THÈME
Margaret	5 min	anglais	N.	U.	—	déjeuner
Theresa	2 min	français	N.N.	U.	—	déjeuner
Irina	2 hr	anglais	N.	les deux	au resto	dej, musique, amis
Erika	10 min	anglais	N.	U.	—	politique
N/A (inconnu)	1 min	français	N.	H.U.	tram	directions
Jeewon	20 min	anglais	N.	U.	—	T.P.
Yooling	20 min	français	N.N.	U.	—	travaux pratiques
<del>Cecilia</del> Cecilia	30 min	français	N.	U.	—	T.P.
Jack	10 min	français	N.N.	U.	—	T.P.
Hwajin	10 min	français	N.N.	U.	—	T.P.
Joseph		anglais	N.N.	H.U.	chez moi	le weekend
		français	N.	H.U.		
Ludo	10 min	français	N.	H.U.		la journée
Stephanie	10 min	anglais	N.	H.U.		
Anne	10 min	français	N.	H.U.		

=> Quantitative data

- Time of exposure to French language
- Names of every member of learners' social networks

An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France  
- Method -

- Questionnaire (based on the names written in the daily logbook)
  - Type of relationship (member of the host family, a friend, a colleague, a professor, etc.)
  - Overall frequency of interaction (never, once a month, several times in a month, once a week, several times in a week or almost everyday)
  - Type of activities and place of encounter
  - Length of time they have known each other
  - List of friends they have in common
  
- Structure of social network :
  - Size of the social network and number of ties
  - Density (number of real links between nodes divided by the number of possible links)

Social networks analysis : logiciel Ucinet (Borgatti et al, 1999)

Graphic representation of social networks : logiciel Netdraw (Borgatti et al, 1999) [<http://www.analytictech.com/ucinet/>].

# An exploratory study of American students during a SA in France - Results -

- Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad? And what is the amount of time of language use?
- Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and their use of these variables ?

**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?  
And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

## Two trends of social network

### Anglophone social networks

Less than 11 hours  
speaking French per week

(5 learners)



*Dense*  
Anglophone  
(2 learners)

*Composite*  
Anglophone  
(3 learners)

### Anglophone and Francophone social networks

More than 20 hours  
speaking French per week

(2 learners)



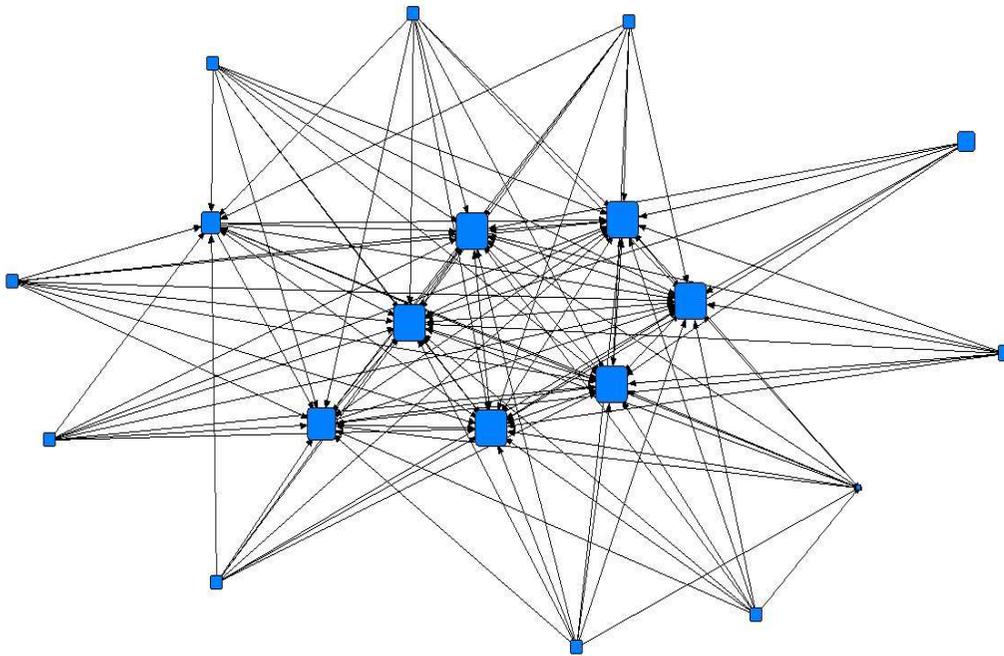
*Composite* Anglophone  
and Francophone  
(2 learners)

## Different typologies of social networks (Bidart et al, 2011)

**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?  
And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

- Dense anglophone social network : Neil and Cristina
  - Neil example



	Neil	Cristina
Type of network	Dense Anglophone	
Density (Pourcentage and occurrences)	33% (201/609)	32% (163/506)
Number of hours per week speaking French	4h45min	6h50min

**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?**

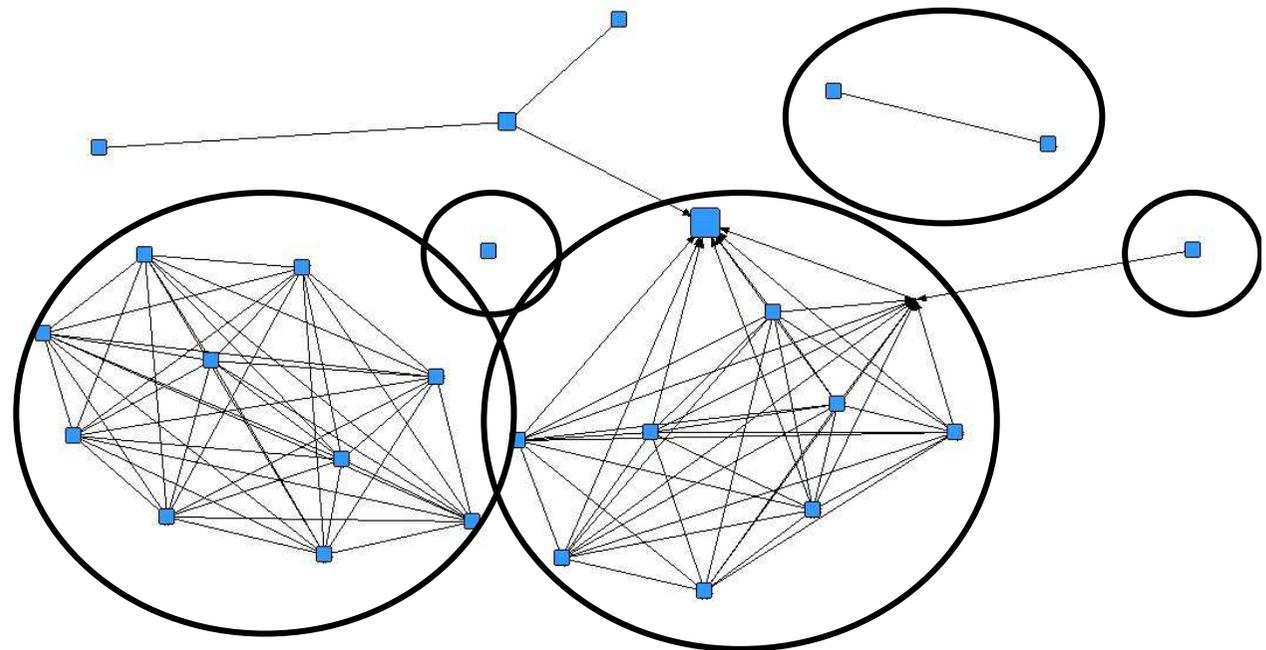
**And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

- **Composite Anglophone social network : Andrea, Shirley and April**

	April	Andrea	Shirley
Type of network	Composite Anglophone		
Density (Pourcentage et occurrences)	23% (221/930)	13% (126/930)	12% (134/1056)
Number of hours per week speaking French	5h33min	5h10min	10h57min

- April example



**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?**

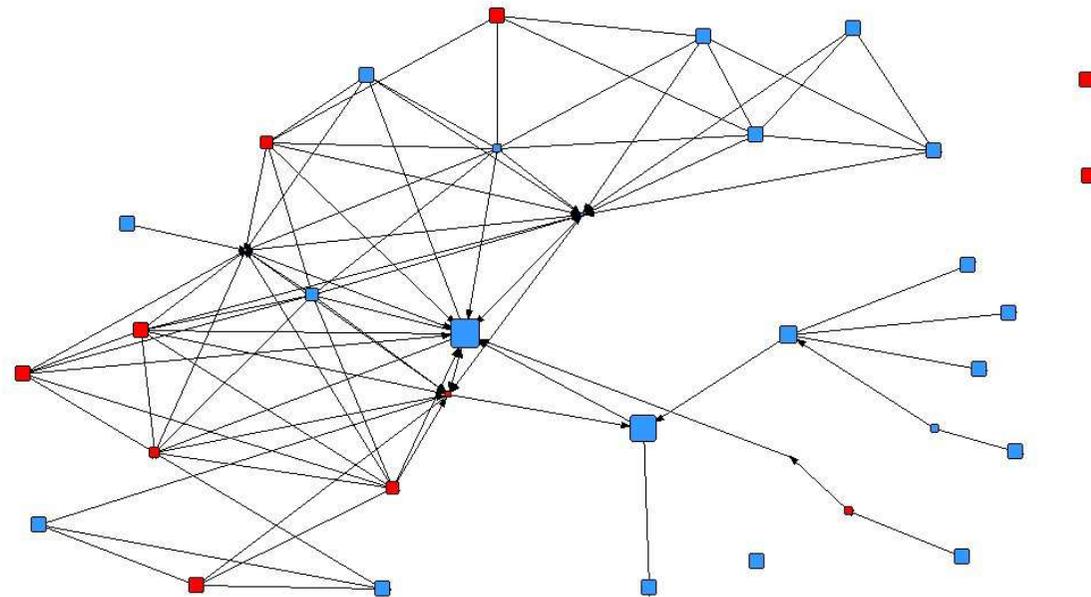
**And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

- Composite Anglophone and Francophone social network : Gary and Jenna

	Jenna	Gary
Type of network	Composite Anglophone and Francophone	
Density (Percentage and occurrences)	6% (87/1332)	12% (188/1560)
Number of hours per week speaking French	30h43min	23h03min

- Gary example



**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?**

**And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

- **Complementary data : Online questionnaire**

Addressed to American students who came to France for a SA (3 to 1 years ago)

- Survey sample
  - 128 respondents (average age 22 years old)
  - Paris (84) / *province* (44)
  - Type of housing
    - With native French speakers (70) / Without native French speakers (58)
- Questions
  - Number of hours speaking French per week
  - Number of native French relationships

**Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?**

**And what is the amount of time of second language use ?**

Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?

- **Online questionnaire**
- Number of hours per week speaking French while abroad

Number of hours per week speaking French	0 to 4h30min	4h30min to 17h30min	17h30min to 25h	25h to 35h
% and occurrences	24% (30/128)	24% (31/128)	27% (35/128)	25% (32/128)

- Number of native French relationships while abroad

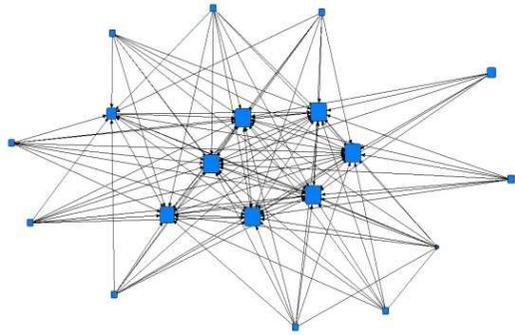
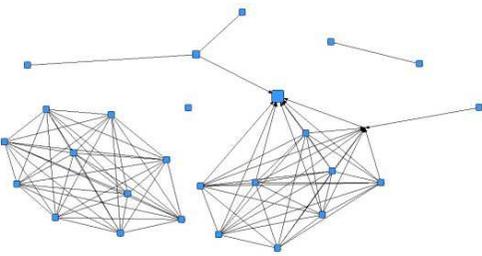
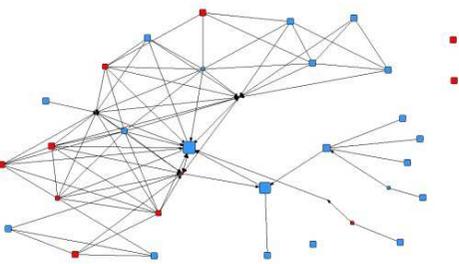
Number of native French relationships	0 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 14
% and occurrences	34% (43/125)	41% (51/125)	25% (31/125)

Question 1 : What type of sociability is developed by American students during a study abroad ?  
And what is the amount of time of second language use ?

**Question 2 : How does the use of two sociolinguistic variables by learners change over time? Is there a link between the type of social network they developed and the use of these variables ?**

	Neil	Cristina	April	Andrea	Shirley	Jenna	Gary
Type of network	Dense anglophone		Composite anglophone			Composite anglophone and francophone	
Density (% and occurrences)	33% (201/609)	32% (163/506)	23% (221/930)	13% (126/930)	12% (134/1056)	6% (87/1332)	12% (188/1560)
Number of hours per week speaking French	4h45min	6h50min	5h33min	5h10min	10h57min	30h43min	23h03min
Rate of realisation of optional liaison							
T1	26% (24/91)	27% (35/129)	51% (41/80)	23% (13/57)	21% (15/70)	24% (40/167)	9% (8/94)
T2	36% (28/78)	27% (25/91)	24% (9/38)	27% (6/22)	13% (7/56)	16% (18/111)	6% (5/85)
Rate of retention of <i>ne</i>							
T1	48% (15/31)	81% (48/59)	45% (23/51)	73% (22/30)	44% (12/27)	38% (38/100)	1.9% (1/53)
T2	64% (25/39)	80% (40/50)	29% (9/31)	41% (7/17)	47% (22/46)	35% (31/87)	1.7% (1/60)

## Conclusion of the exploratory study

Type of networks		Use of sociolinguistic variable
<p><b>Dense Anglophone social networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density &gt; 30 %</li> <li>• Amount of time speaking French from 4 to 7 hours per week</li> </ul>		<p>Learners tend to increase or maintain high rate of retention of <i>ne</i> or of realisation of optional liaison [standard usage]</p>
<p><b>Composite Anglophone social networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density &lt; 20 %</li> <li>• Amount of time speaking French from 5 to 10 hours per week</li> </ul>		<p>No regular pattern of use of sociolinguistic variables Learners tend to maintain a high rate of retention of <i>ne</i> or of realisation of optional liaison</p>
<p><b>Composite Anglophone and Francophone social networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density &lt; 15 %</li> <li>• Amount of time speaking French from 20 to 30 hours per week</li> </ul>		<p>Learners tend to decrease and reach a low rate of retention of <i>ne</i> or of realisation of optional liaison Rates approximate those of French native speakers [non standard usage]</p>

## Conclusion of the exploratory study

- **Limitations :**
  - Only 7 subjects
  - Time lap between T1 and T2 : 3 months
  - One time of observation of social networks
  
- **Additional factors :**
  - The evolution of social networks during SA ?
  - The role of overall proficiency in second language on the development of social networks and on the use of sociolinguistic variables?
  - The development of awareness of sociolinguistic variables ?
  - The evolution of learners' attitudes towards the native community ?

# Work in progress

- \*Larger study with **30** subjects
- \***Longitudinal study** following students for the entire SA (10 months) - Three periods of observation (beginning of SA, middle and end).
- \***Comparative study** of two different nationalities (United-States and China)

- Sociolinguistic variables
  - Judgement task
  - Repetition task
  - Semi-directed interviews

- Social Network
  - Exploration of social networks in the learners' countries (before SA)
  - Development of social networks during SA (3 times of observation)
- Oral second language development
  - Story retelling task based on a short silent film of 5 minutes
- Attitudes towards the native community
  - Implicit Association Test (Greenwald et al, 1998)
  - Semi-directed interviews

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