

# Literacy in a Foreign Language: The Learning of French Pronouns by ESL Learners

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the French pronoun paradigm in the non-native grammars of adult university L1 (first language) Chinese speakers who have learnt English as a dominant L2 (second language) and French as a foreign language. Specifically the study seeks to identify the types of Interlanguage structures produced by L1 Chinese speakers in their learning of French pronouns.

A questionnaire was administered to obtain information about the learners' background and to select the sample for the study. The respondents selected for this study were twenty-three adult L1 Chinese speakers who were Bachelor of Arts (French) students at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication at Universiti Putra Malaysia. Three tasks were designed to collect the required data. The first was a Grammaticality Judgement Task where respondents judged and selected the correct pronouns in 75 French sentences. The second task which comprised 50 items required the respondents to replace noun phrases with the correct pronouns in French. This was a transformation task. The third task which comprised 50 items was a blank-filling task where respondents had to fill in each blank with the correct form of the pronoun in French. These tasks were administered over three sessions of about one hour each.

The data indicate that some French pronouns were more problematic than others for the learners. An explanation is provided as to why this might be the case and what the findings mean in terms of literacy in a foreign language.

## **Literacy and Linguistics**

Literacy is traditionally defined as the ability to read and write. In the modern context, the word means reading and writing at a level adequate for written communication and generally a level that enables one to successfully function at certain levels of a society (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literacy>). However, according to Downing et al., (1992: ix), '[i]n order to reach an understanding of what it means to be literate, we must first take care to discover those linguistic properties that distinguish written language from its spoken counterpart'. Linguistic traits mark a text as spoken and written. Both spoken and written

texts are subject to common semantic constraints, although the linguistic reflection of those constraints may differ in texts of the two types of modes (Ford, 1992: xx). And one of these properties in the written is the group of words known as pronouns.

Pronouns, a functional category, have important functions in language learning in that they refer to or replace nouns and noun phrases within a text or are used as direct reference to an outside situation (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999: 18). Pronouns may also be extended to refer to all classes, for example, humans, animals, objects, places and abstract notions. In other words, they can refer to notions beyond the basic objects.

In this respect, pronouns are crucial to literacy in that they contribute to not only cohesion but also coherence within a text. In fact, according to Liles (1993), children often have trouble using pronouns in appropriate ways (in Campbell, Brooks and Tomasello, 2000). In view of this, pronouns are very important in language development for a learner not only for the first language but also for the second language. Thus, knowledge of the pronoun paradigm is important to the acquisition of literacy in a language, be it the first language (L1), second language (L2) or foreign language (FL).

In the acquisition of an L2 or FL, we invoke the notion of a cut-off point or 'critical age' (Mitchell and Myles, 2004: 24). This view argues that there is a critical period for language acquisition during children's early development, and that adult L2 learners have to resort to other learning mechanisms (for e.g. Johnson and Newport, 1989). In other words, what was available to the L1 learners in terms of language acquisition would not be available to the L2 learners. We can draw a parallel between L2 learners and those L1 learners who have some sort of linguistic impairment. Foley claims that although there is a general agreement today that spoken and written language abilities are closely related to the development of literacy skills in the normal population, and that the mastery of language, in both its spoken and written forms, enables an individual to use language fluently for a variety of purposes, *linguistic ability*, as opposed to *mere* speech production ability, appears to be the more critical factor (1994: 184-186) among learners with some sort of linguistic impairment.

### **Pronouns**

English, Chinese and French basically have the subject-verb-object (SVO) word order. However, in French, object pronouns do not follow the normal word order (SVO) but SOV (subject-object-verb) order (Hawkins and Towell, 1996: 62-63; Lodge et al., 1997: 152). In English, the pronouns appear in the same positions as do the noun phrases, that is the SVO order. Chinese also does not exhibit the

same properties as French. As such, this difference in the said grammatical property poses problems for L2 and foreign learners of French (Towell and Hawkins, 1994).

Another characteristic that might pose problems for the L1 Chinese learners is the presence of different forms of pronouns in English and French on the one hand and Chinese on the other. Although pronouns in English and French are overtly marked for Case, the French pronoun forms are more varied, for example *les* 'them' (direct object), *leur* 'them' (indirect object) and *eux* or *elles* 'them' (stressed pronoun). On the other hand, Chinese pronouns are not overtly marked for case (Norman, 1988: 117–121). In addition, the use of pronouns is much less common in Chinese than in English and French (Li, 1981: 657 – 675). Additionally, Chinese allows for zero pronoun when the referent can be understood from the context. These grammatical facts would make this study an interesting one as we would be able to see if L1 Chinese speakers can acquire fully the French pronoun paradigm and what this means in terms of literacy in the FL classroom. The pronoun paradigms of English, Chinese and French are presented below to highlight the differences in the grammatical property of the three languages discussed here.

#### *Personal Pronouns in English*

The different types of pronouns in English include personal pronouns (*I, you, he, she, it, we, they*), reflexive pronouns (*myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, themselves*), possessive pronouns (*mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs*), and demonstrative pronouns (*this, that, these, those*). The forms within each category are distinguished by number, person (first, second, third), gender, and in the case of demonstratives, by number and proximity. The following table is an inventory of the subject and object personal pronouns of Modern English (Borjars and Burridge, 2001: 54).

**Table 1: Pronoun Paradigm in English**

Person	Number		Subject	Object
First	Singular		I	me
	Plural		we	us
Second	Singular		you	you
	Plural		you	you
Third	Singular	masculine	he	him
		feminine	she	her
		non-personal	it	it
	Plural		they	them

### *Personal Pronouns in Mandarin Chinese*

Mandarin Chinese is a language that is devoid of inflection. Compared to other languages, Chinese is relatively simple with words consisting of one or two morphemes. However, number can be expressed by suffixes but only for nouns indicating human beings. These suffixes are obligatory for personal pronouns (<http://www.lmp.ucla.edu/profiles/profmo2.htm>).

According to Li and Cheng (1988: 96 - 97), a pronoun in Mandarin Chinese is a word that can take the place of a noun, a verb, an adjective, a numeral or an adverb. To pluralize a pronoun, we add the suffix *men*. The form of a personal pronoun remains unchanged when it is used as an object. For example, *tā lǐ b* 's/he came looking for us' and *wǒmen zhǎo tā* 'we looked for them'. Another form of *t* refers to things. However, the characters are similar in pronunciation.

The following table summarizes the subject and object personal pronouns in Mandarin Chinese (adapted from Chan and Wong, 2001).

**Table 2: Pronoun Paradigm in Mandarin Chinese**

Person	Number		Subject	Object
First	Singular		wǒ	wǒ
	Plural		wǒmen	wǒmen
Second	Singular		nǐ/nín	nǐ/nín
	Plural		nǐmen	nǐmen
Third	Singular	masculine	tā	tā
		feminine	tā	tā
		non-personal	tā	tā
	Plural		tāmen	tāmen

### *Personal pronouns in French*

French, like English, has different categories of pronouns: personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and possessive pronouns relative and interrogative pronouns and a set of words loosely called indefinite pronouns (Judge and Healey, 1983: 52). The table below summarises the pronouns in French (Judge and Healy, 1983: 59).

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Table 3: Pronoun Paradigm in French

Unstressed forms				Stressed forms
Person	Subject	Direct object	Indirect object	
1 <sup>st</sup> sing.	je	me	me	moi
2 <sup>nd</sup> sing.	Tu	te	te	toi
3 <sup>rd</sup> sing.	il / elle	le / la	lui	lui / elle
1 <sup>st</sup> plur.	Nous	nous	nous	nous
2 <sup>nd</sup> plur.	Vous	vous	vous	vous
3 <sup>rd</sup> plur.	ils / elles	les	leur	eux / elles
3 <sup>rd</sup> pers reflexive		se	se	lui/elle soi
Indefinite 3 <sup>rd</sup> pers.	on			
'adverbial' or inanimate pronouns		y (= à + noun phrase) en (= de + noun phrase)		

### Subject Pronouns

Personal pronouns may refer to animates and inanimates. Generally they can be grouped into subject pronouns and object pronouns. The table below is a summary of French subject pronouns (from Hawkins and Towell, 1996: 46):

Table 4: Subject Pronouns in French

Person	Singular	Plural
First	je (I)	nous (we)
Second	tu (you)	vous (you)
Third (masculine)	il (he, it)	ils (they)
Third (feminine)	elle (she, it)	elles (they)
Third (neutral)	ce, cela, ça (it, that)	
Third (non specific)	on (one, we, people, they)	

### Position of Subject Pronouns

Subject pronouns are placed before the verb carrying the tense in declarative sentences:

1. *Il lit le journal*  
He is reading the newspaper
2. *Je veux aller au cinéma*  
I want to go to the cinema

In questions using inversion, the subject pronouns appear after the verb.

3. *Parlez-vous français?*  
(Speak-you French)  
Do you speak French?

The subject pronouns are separated from the verb by the *ne* negative particle and by other pre-verbal pronouns:

4. *Ils ne viennent pas.*  
(They neg are coming neg1)  
They are not coming.
5. *Nous l'avons mangé.*  
(We it have eaten)  
We have eaten it.

### Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns

The table below summarises the unstressed direct and indirect object forms and the stressed forms of French pronouns.

**Table 5: Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns in French**

Unstressed Forms		Stressed Forms
Direct object	Indirect object	
me	me	moi
te	te	toi
le / la	lui	lui / elle
nous	nous	nous
vous	vous	vous
les	leur	eux / elles
se	se	lui/elle soi

1 neg - negative

Direct and indirect object pronouns are linked with the verb to which they are closely related in various sentence types (declarative, negative, interrogative). When a verb is a main verb, they appear immediately before it:

6. *Elle me parle.*  
(She me speak)  
She speaks to me.
7. *Elle ne me regarde pas.*  
(She neg me look neg)  
She does not look at me.

When the verb is accompanied by the auxiliary verb, *avoir* or *être*, the pronouns appear immediately before the auxiliary.

8. *Je t'ai dit.*  
(I you have told)  
I have told you.

#### Position of Object Pronouns with Infinitives

When the verb governing the direct and indirect object pronouns is an infinitive, these objects usually come in front of the infinitive.

9. *Il peut leur téléphoner.*  
(He can them telephone)  
He can telephone them.

#### Position of Object Pronouns with Imperatives

In affirmative imperatives, direct and indirect object pronouns appear after the verb which governs them and the pronouns *me* and *te* take on the stressed forms *moi* and *toi* respectively.

10. *Prenez-le.*  
Take it.
11. *Écoutez-moi.*  
Listen to me.

However, in negative imperatives, these pronouns precede the verb.

12. *Ne le mange pas.*  
(neg it eat neg)  
Don't eat it.



### Order of Multiple Unstressed Object Pronouns

When two unstressed object pronouns precede a verb, their order usually follows the following pattern:

**Table 6: Order of Unstressed Object Pronouns (from Hawkins and Towell, 1996:73)**

Position				
First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
me				
te				
se	le			
nous	la	lui		
vous	les	leur	y	en

The following examples show the order of unstressed object pronouns in sentences.

13. *Je te l'ai donné.*  
(I you it have given)  
I have given it to you.
14. *Elles le lui ont donné.*  
(They it him have given)  
They have given it to him.
15. *Il les y a mis.*  
(He them there has put)  
He has put them there.
16. *Ne me les donnez pas.*  
(neg me them give neg)  
Don't give them to me.

### Order of Multiple Pronouns with Affirmative Imperatives

When two pronouns follow the verb in affirmative imperatives, the ordering of pronouns is slightly different in that pronouns from the first column (*me, te, se, etc.*) follow pronouns from the second column (*le, la, les*). Pronouns after imperatives are linked to the verbs by hyphens.

17. *Donnez-le-moi.*  
(Give it me)  
Give it to me.

18. *Parle-leur-en.*

(Speak them about it)

Speak to them about it.

Positions of Object Pronouns with *devoir*, *pouvoir*, (modal verbs) + Infinitives

Object pronouns come before the infinitive in a modal verb plus infinitive construction.

19. *Il doit le faire.*

He has to do it.

Stressed pronouns

A stressed pronoun can stand alone without a verb.

20. *Qui est là? Moi.*

Who's there? Me.

Stressed pronouns highlight or emphasize a subject pronoun.

21. *Toi tu le crois, mais lui, il ne le croit pas.*

You might believe that, but he doesn't.

Stressed pronouns are used as objects of a preposition other than *à*.

22. *Je viens avec lui.*

I'm coming with him.

23. *Il n'a rien contre eux.*

He has nothing against them.

Use of *y* and *en*

The pronoun *y* may function either as an indirect object or as an adverbial.

24. *Je pense souvent à la retraite.*

I often think about retirement.

*J'y pense souvent.*

(I it think often)

I often think about it.

25. *Je vais à Paris.*  
I'm going to Paris.  
*J'y vais.*  
(I there am going)  
I'm going there.

The pronoun *en* replaces phrases introduced by *de* (a preposition) which follows the verb. The prepositional phrase in (26) is *de ses vacances*.

26. *Il parle de ses vacances.*  
He talks about his holidays.  
*Il en parle.*  
(He about it talks)  
He talks about it.

*En* is also used when numerals and quantifiers are on their own after a verb.

27. *J'ai mangé deux pommes.*  
I have eaten two apples.  
*J'en ai mangé deux.*  
(I of them have eaten two)  
I have eaten two.

## The Study

This study investigates the French pronoun paradigm in the non-native grammars of Malaysian adult university L1 Chinese speakers who have learnt English as an L2 and French as a FL. The framework used to analyse the data is the Interlanguage hypothesis (Selinker, 1972, in James, 1998: 6-9) and the transfer analysis framework (James, 1990, in James, 1998: 5). In the former, the Interlanguage of the learners is described but a comparison between the L1 and L2 systems is not made, while in the latter, the Interlanguage of the learners is compared with the L1 of the learners. Following this framework, the data collected for this study were described and compared to the pronoun paradigms of the learners' L1 Chinese and L2 English to find out the areas of difficulty for the learners. These are the Interlanguage structures of the learners. The research questions posed in the study were:

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2 Malay is another L2 that the respondents had acquired from about the age of seven, the same time that they were exposed to the English language. However, Malay is more similar to Chinese in terms of the pronoun system, that is Malay does not make a distinction between the subject and object pronoun forms.

- a. To what extent are the L1 Chinese speakers able to judge and select the correct and appropriate French pronoun categories and forms in declarative affirmative and negative constructions?
- b. To what extent are the L1 Chinese speakers able to use the correct forms of pronouns in French declarative affirmative and negative constructions?
- c. To what extent are the L1 Chinese speakers able to use the correct forms of pronouns in an appropriate order in French declarative affirmative and negative constructions?
- d. What are the implications that these findings have for the foreign language classroom in terms of literacy?

## **Methodology**

Three tasks were designed to collect the required data. The first was a grammaticality judgement task where respondents judged and select the appropriate pronouns (subject, direct object, indirect object and stressed forms) in 75 French declarative affirmative and negative items. The second task, a transformation task, required the respondents to replace noun phrases with the correct pronouns (subject, direct object, indirect object and stressed forms) in French. There were 50 items in this task. The third was a blank-filling task where respondents filled in each blank with the correct form of the pronoun (subject, direct object, indirect object and stressed forms) in French. In total there were 50 items. (Refer to the appendix for sample items in each task).

These tasks were administered to two native speakers of French. Based on the feedback obtained, the tasks were refined. The final version of the tasks were administered to all the twenty-eight students in the Bachelor of Arts (French) programme at Universiti Putra Malaysia. These tasks were administered over three sessions of about one hour each. Since the study investigated the acquisition of French pronouns by L1 Chinese speakers, only the responses of the twenty-three L1 Chinese speakers were analysed.

## **Results and Discussion**

The findings are discussed in the light of the similarities and differences in the pronoun features which were culled from the comparative analysis of the three languages (Chinese, English and French).

**Table 7: Use of Subject Pronouns**

	Correct choice of pronoun category	Correct choice of pronoun
Task 1	99.6%	93.25%
Task 3	97.61%	82.14%
Average	98.60%	87.69%

Task 1 (Grammaticality Judgement Task) and Task 3 (Blank-filling Task) were used to gauge the respondents' ability to use the different category of pronouns, that is choice of pronouns. In Task 1 and Task 3, there were nine items in each task on the use of the subject pronouns. Table 7 summarises the results for the use of subject pronouns. 99.6% and 97% of the respondents chose the correct category, that is the subject pronouns in the respective tasks. 93.25% were able to choose the correct pronouns in Task 1 (Grammaticality Judgement Task) while in Task 3 the respondents scored 82.14%. The average score for using the correct category and correct pronoun are 98.60% and 87.69% respectively.

There were 14 and 10 items on stressed pronouns in Task 1 and Task 3 respectively (see table 8). In 91.07% of the cases in both tasks, respondents knew which category of pronouns to use. However 75% and 85% managed to give the acceptable or correct form. This made an average of 80.17% of correct choice of stressed pronouns.

**Table 8: Use of Stressed Pronouns**

	Correct choice of pronoun category	Correct choice of pronoun
Task 1	91.07%	75.00%
Task 3	91.07%	85.35%
Average	91.07%	80.17%

Table 9 presents the data on direct object pronouns. Task 1 and Task 3 contained 15 and 13 items on direct object pronouns respectively. Of these 82% of the answers given were correct in the choice of the category of pronouns that should be used and about 76 % were correct in the choice of pronoun.

**Table 9: Use of Direct Object Pronouns**

	Correct choice of pronoun category	Correct choice of pronoun
Task 1	83.80%	78.80%
Task 3	80.49%	73.9%
Average	82.14%	76.35%

On indirect object pronouns there were 9 and 10 items in Task 1 and Task 3 respectively. Respondents did not score as well in this category of pronouns as in the preceding direct object pronouns (see table 10). Of the 19 items tested about 68% of the answers given were correct for choice of category while about 56% were correct for choice of pronouns.

**Table 10: Use of Indirect Object Pronouns**

	Correct choice of pronoun category	Correct choice of pronoun
Task 1	78.57%	70.23%
Task 3	57.14%	42.14%
Average	67.85%	56.18%

Table 11 summarises the data for the use of *en* and *y*. In tasks 1 and 3 there were a total of 9 items on the use of *en* and 7 items on *y*. Only about 44.10% of the answers given were correct for the use of *en* while the use of *y* scored slightly less.

**Table 11: Use of *en* and *y***

	Correct choice of <i>EN</i>	Correct choice of <i>Y</i>
Task 1	54.28%	77.14%
Task 3	33.92%	50.00%
Average	44.10%	63.57%

## Word Order

The analysis of the word order was carried out for tasks 1 and 2: vis-à-vis on the single and double object pronouns and in relation to the other elements such as verbs and negative particles.

### Use of Unstressed Single Object Pronouns

Table 12 summarises the results for items with single object pronouns.

**Table 12: Use of Single object pronouns in Declarative Sentences**

Affirmative with simple tense	74.35%
Affirmative with auxiliary	48.221%
Negative with auxiliary	29.18%

The declarative sentences with simple tense and single object pronouns registered 74.35% correct answers.

e.g. *Elles les achètent tous les jours.*  
 (they them buy everyday)  
 They buy them everyday.

Declarative sentences using auxiliary with single object pronouns registered 48.21% correct answers.

e.g. *Je vais le faire.*  
 (I go it to do)  
 I am going to do it.

Negative declarative sentences using auxiliary with single object pronouns registered 29.18% correct answers

e.g. *Tu ne peux pas le faire.*  
 (you neg can neg it to do)  
 You cannot do it.

### Use of Multiple Unstressed Object Pronouns

Table 13 presents the data for the items with multiple object pronouns.

**Table 13: Use of Multiple Object Pronouns in Declarative Sentences**

Affirmative with simple tense	34.64%
Negative with simple tense	28.57%
Affirmative with compound past tense	40.17%
Negative with compound past tense	1.57%
Affirmative with auxiliary	28.5%
Negative with auxiliary	34.52%

In declarative sentences with simple tense, 10 items required the use of multiple object pronouns. Of these 34.64% of the answers had correct pronouns and word order.

e.g. *Il me le dit.*  
 (he me it tell)  
 He tells me about it.

There were 3 negative declarative sentences and of these, only 28.57% had the correct pronouns and the correct word order.

e.g. *Il ne m'en parle pas.*  
 (he neg me about it talk neg)  
 He does not talk to me about it.

In sentences using the compound past tense with multiple object pronouns, only 40.17% had correct pronouns and correct word order.

e.g. *Il te l'a racontée.*  
 (he you it has related)  
 He has told you about it.

In the negative sentences using compound past tense and double object pronouns, 1.57% had the correct forms and word order.

e.g. *Je ne la leur ai pas montrée.*  
 (I neg it to them have neg shown)  
 I did not show it to them.

Declarative sentences using auxiliary registered 28.5% correct answers while negative declarative sentences with auxiliary registered 34.52% correct answers.

e.g. *Il veut te les donner.*  
 (he wants you them to give)  
 He wants to give them to you.

e.g. *Il ne va pas le leur envoyer.*  
 (he neg goes neg it to them to send)  
 He is not going to send it to them.

Multiple pronouns used in imperative sentences; in the affirmative sentences, the score was 33.16% and in the negative form, it was 29.28% (correct answers).

e.g. *Donnez-le-moi.*  
 (Give it me)  
 Give it to me.  
*Ne me le donnez pas.*  
 (Neg me it give neg)  
 Don't give it to me.

## Discussion

The data indicate that the subject pronoun in French was the least problematic of all the personal pronouns for the L1 Chinese learners. Errors made in the choice



of subject pronouns were normally associated with gender feature (feminine versus masculine forms of the pronouns) rather than the category of the pronoun itself. The results also indicate that the object pronouns were more difficult than the subject pronoun for the L2 learners, particularly the indirect object pronouns. Multiple object pronouns (direct and indirect) also posed problems in the sense that the learners did not know which pronoun should come first. Negative structures and the *-en* and *-y* pronouns were difficult for the learners too. However, the most problematic aspect of the use of pronouns in French is the word order related to them.

The case of the lack of use or the use of the wrong gender feature can be explained as an L1 influence in that, unlike English or French, Chinese does not make a distinction between feminine and masculine personal pronouns, that is Chinese pronouns are devoid of gender features. With regard to the learners' difficulty in the object pronouns, this is probably due to the different forms of pronouns in French, English and Chinese respectively. There are fewer pronoun forms in the Chinese language and these are not overtly marked for Case. Although pronouns in English and French are overtly marked for Case, the French pronoun forms are more varied (for example *les* 'them' (direct object), *leur* 'them' (indirect object) and *eux* or *elles* 'them' (stressed form). Additionally, Chinese will take zero pronoun when the referent can be understood from the context. French does not have zero pronoun forms.

The structure of English and French verbs, even when they have similar meanings, is not necessarily the same. In a given sentence, it is essential to know whether the object is direct or indirect in relation to the French verb and not the English verb. Consider the following example:

They advised Steven to leave.  
 They advised **him** to leave.  
*Ils ont conseillé à Steven de partir.*

*Steven* in the above sentence is the indirect object of *conseiller*.... With a pronoun, the French sentence becomes:

*Ils lui ont conseillé de partir.*

Our discussion of the pronouns in Chinese (the L1 of the learners), and French (one of the second languages of the learners) has revealed differences in the two paradigms. There are fewer pronoun forms in the Chinese language and these are devoid of the case and gender features. Even though learners had learnt English as the other second language, it did not seem to aid in the acquisition of the French language. In this case, although English pronouns are marked with case, gender and number features, the forms are less varied. In the light of these differences among the three languages, it is not surprising that the learners did have problems with the more complex pronoun forms in French.

## Implications for Literacy in the Foreign Language Classroom

If we take the view that after a critical period, FL learners have no access to the mechanisms that L1 learners have for language acquisition, these learners can be said to be in a position where their language faculty is not in the 'mint' state. Thus, a parallel can be drawn between older FL learners with those L1 learners who have some sort of linguistic impairment. And we could say that *linguistic ability*, as opposed to *mere* speech and written production ability is important among these FL learners. In addition, the literature on pronouns tells us that this functional category is crucial to the cohesion and coherence of a text, whether spoken or written. In this respect, knowledge of such a functional category as pronouns contributes to literacy in a FL language.

Thus, when we talk about literacy in a FL classroom, instructors have to take into consideration more than just the ability to read and write in the FL. In fact, we need to address the issue of linguistic ability of the FL, especially those linguistic properties that contribute to literacy in the language. To achieve this, instructors would have to have some knowledge of the linguistic structure of the L1 and FL or any other languages learned or acquired by the learners before they embark on the task of FL learning. This would help the FL teachers understand the Interlanguage of the learners and aid in the explanation of the cross-linguistic differences should the difficulties become persistent among the FL learners. According to Hawkins (2005), teachers have to find ways to enhance the input learners get to maximize the triggering of unconscious development of the linguistic ability. This might mean not spending a lot of time teaching students about, or focussing on L2-L1 differences, but getting them to interact with samples of the target L2 which exemplify a wide range of structures, including a lot of examples of the target linguistic property – pronouns in this case. Enhancing awareness of the language specific properties of the L2 will allow the innate ability that we all have for acquiring language to operate freely.

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- UCLA Language Materials Mandarin Language Profile: <http://www.lmp.ucla.edu/profiles/profmo2.htm>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literacy>

## Appendix

## Sample Items

## Task 1

Choisissez la bonne réponse pour chaque trou.

1. – J'appelle Jean et Marie ?  
– Oui, appelle- \_\_\_\_\_ maintenant. (*eux / leur / les / ils*). Nous allons \_\_\_\_\_ annoncer la bonne nouvelle. (*eux / leur / les / ils*)
2. – Je donne la carte aux étudiants ?  
– Oui, donne- \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ !  
(*lui / la / leur / eux*)  
(*le / leur / à eux / eux*)
4. Voilà le facteur : apporte les lettres à ton père. Donne- \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ tout de suite.  
(*les / lui / leur / en*)  
(*les / lui / à lui / en*)
5. Je n'ai pas de dictionnaire. Achète- \_\_\_\_\_ un, s'il te plaît.  
(*m' / moi / en / le*)  
(*m' / à moi / en / le*)
6. Ma sœur pense à ses études. \_\_\_\_\_ pense tout le temps.  
(*il / Elle / On / Elles*)  
(*y / leur / en / les*)
7. – Vous avez regardé le match de football chez Joseph ?  
– Oui, \_\_\_\_\_ ai regardé chez \_\_\_\_\_  
(*je / on / nous / moi*)  
(*lui / l' / le / en*)  
(*lui / le / il / moi*)
26. Tu n'envoies pas de cartes postales à vos cousins ? \_\_\_\_\_ de temps en temps !  
(*Envoie-en-leur / Envoie-le-lui / Envoie-les-leur / Envoie-leur-en*)
27. – Vous avez montré la photo aux secrétaires ?  
– Non, je \_\_\_\_\_ (*ne la leur ai pas montrée / ne leur l'ai pas montrée. / ne l'ai pas montrée à elle. / ne l'ai pas leur montrée.*)

**Task 2****A. Remplacez les mots soulignés par un pronom.**

1. Ma sœur arrose les fleurs le soir.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Les robes plaisent à Catherine.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Nous parlons de notre projet.  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. Il va en France cet été.  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. Nous achetons des cadeaux pour Noël.  
\_\_\_\_\_
21. Elle met la voiture dans le garage tous les soirs.  
\_\_\_\_\_
22. Je parle à mon père de mon projet.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Répondez aux questions en utilisant des pronoms.**

1. Ces fleurs, c'est pour moi ?  
Oui, \_\_\_\_\_
4. Ils étaient avec toi et Paul ?  
Non, \_\_\_\_\_
7. Ils ont vu le film ?  
Non, \_\_\_\_\_
10. Elle t'invite à son mariage ?  
Oui, \_\_\_\_\_
11. Madame, il vous parle de ses voyages ?  
Non, \_\_\_\_\_
14. Il désire parler au directeur ?  
Non, \_\_\_\_\_

**Task 3**

**Complétez par les pronoms qui conviennent.**

2. Je vais à la plage. Tu veux venir avec \_\_\_\_\_ ?
6. Nous serons partis en vacances. Elle ne peut pas venir chez \_\_\_\_\_.
16. – Allô Céline, comment vas-\_\_\_\_\_ ?  
– Bien et \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
– Mal ! \_\_\_\_\_ suis à l'hôpital ! Viens \_\_\_\_\_ voir et apporte des livres !  
Je \_\_\_\_\_ attends.
17. – Tu connais ce jeu ?  
– J'\_\_\_\_\_ ai entendu parler mais je \_\_\_\_\_ connais pas.  
– Moi, je \_\_\_\_\_ adore. Je vais \_\_\_\_\_ expliquer la règle.
18. – Tu as parlé à ta sœur de la fête de ce soir ?  
– Non, pas encore. Je \_\_\_\_\_ ai téléphoné hier soir mais elle n'était pas  
chez \_\_\_\_\_.  
Je vais \_\_\_\_\_ rappeler tout à l'heure.

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