

Factors Promoting French-English Tweets in France

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Abstract : Twitter has become a popular means of communication used in a variety of fields, such as politics, journalism, and academia. This widely used online platform has an impact on the way people express themselves and is changing language usage worldwide at an unprecedented pace. The language used online reflects the linguistic battle that has been going on for several decades in French society. This study enables a deeper understanding of users' linguistic behavior online. The implications are important and allow for a rise in awareness of intercultural and cross-language exchanges. This project investigates the mixing of French-English language usage among French users of Twitter using a topic analysis approach. This analysis draws on Gumperz's theory of conversational switching. In order to collect tweets at a large scale, the data was collected in R using the rtweet package to access and retrieve French tweets data through Twitter's REST and stream APIs (Application Program Interface) using the software RStudio, the integrated development environment for R. The dataset was filtered manually and certain repetitions of themes were observed. A total of nine topic categories were identified and analyzed in this study: entertainment, internet/social media, events/community, politics/news, sports, sex/pornography, innovation/technology, fashion/make up, and business. The study reveals that entertainment is the most frequent topic discussed on Twitter. Entertainment includes movies, music, games, and books. Anglicisms such as trailer, spoil, and live are identified in the data. Change in language usage is inevitable and is a natural result of linguistic interactions. The use of different languages online is just an example of what the real world would look like without linguistic regulations. Social media reveals a multicultural and multilingual richness which can deepen and expand our understanding of contemporary human attitudes.

Keywords : code-switching, French, sociolinguistics, Twitter

Conference Title : ICFL 2020 : International Conference on French Language and Linguistics

Conference Location : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Conference Dates : December 17-18, 2020