From Special Collections to Twitter: Library and Social Media as Laboratory for Becoming a Citizen of the World

Sophie Degât-Willis and Vickie Karasic
University of Pennsylvania
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Course Context

Learning objectives for FREN229 (*Le français dans le monde*):

- Understand how *societal change* influences the way we speak and the language we speak;
- Compare phenomena in French-speaking world with those observed in the English-speaking world and elsewhere;
- Draw links between *language and identity* in the French-speaking world;
- Compare attitudes toward *standard language*, or “good speech”, in different parts of the world;
- Provide concrete examples of how *French has evolved* across recent centuries;
- Grasp general *processes of language change* and the forces that accelerate or slow down such changes;
- Use proper *terminology* in French to discuss *political, social, and linguistic* changes and forces.
Idea for Twitter Project

- LOGISTICS: one unified platform
- LANGUAGE: express concise yet meaningful thoughts in French
- AGENCY: explore on their own, broaden their horizons, focus on specific aspects/facets, and share their findings/thoughts with the group
- CONNECTIONS: explore the French presence in the World but also locally in Philadelphia, and on campus.
- LIFELONG LEARNING: make meaningful connections & develop useful habits, that could live and perdure outside of class and beyond their time at Penn.
Inspirations for This Project

• Reyes Llopis-García “Twitter as a Window to Cultural Awareness”, NEALLT 2013!

• Numerous Twitter events during “La semaine de la francophonie” in March every year, #SLFF17
  o https://twitter.com/languesFR?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw
  o “L’expression qui vous fait voyager”

• The Madeleine Project
Library Intervention #1 - Technology

Learning objectives and tool choice
Twitter Tutorial

Tutorial for FREN 229 & 313: Twitter Basics and Networking

This tutorial is online at http://bit.ly/fren229

Contents

What is Twitter?
Twitter Basics: Setting up an account | Tweeting | Following
Twitter Best Practices
The Challenges of Tweeting in French
Further Resources

What is Twitter?

What's happening?

Twitter is a microblogging site where users can create profiles, issue short posts, and read the posts of other users. The professional possibilities with Twitter can be maximized by careful selection of other Twitter users to follow. In this sense, Twitter is not like Facebook. Quality of contacts is more important than quantity.

Twitter Basics

Setting up an account

Join Twitter today.
1. A francophone song (outside of France)* #chansonfrancophone
2. A picture of the oldest book you have found in French #livrerare #rarebooks (#Kislak)
3. Two articles pertaining to francophonie or the French language #francophonie #languefrançaise
4. “Citizen sociolinguistics”: a conversation (partly or fully in French) overheard (indicate in hashtag where you heard it) #entendu #conversation (#codeswitching #translanguaging)
5. An event attended in connection with linguistics, the French language or francophonie #langages
6. Two quotes from the readings #citation #nom de l'auteur (#linguistique #sociolinguistique #histoirefrançais)
7. A podcast about francophonie or the French language #podcast #francophonie #languefrançaise
8. One RT (retweet)
9. Several tweets during the Semaine de la Francophonie from March 18 to 26, 2017

#Fren229
I call speaking up about one’s own language Citizen Sociolinguistics. And that is what this blog is about. I explore what people say when they speak about language from an expert’s perspective: their own! I welcome your comments and stories as fellow Citizen Sociolinguists.

We don’t even need to be professionally or academically affiliated in any way. Many people out there listening to the freely available language samples are expert language analysts. Their expertise may differ from that of a PhD Linguist, Applied Linguist, Sociologist, or Linguistic Anthropologist—but those everyday language analysts (I call them Citizen Sociolinguists) are not necessarily any more or less responsible in their interpretation of other peoples’ speech than a trained academic researcher.

https://citizensociolinguistics.com
Library Intervention #2: Rare Books Session
A Librarian’s Approach

Kelly, McNutt, Roser, & Smith (2015)
Back to the Rare Books....

- Session led by David McKnight, Director of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library

- Sources included:
  - Roman de la Rose
  - Fables de La Fontaine
  - Discours de la méthode pour bien conduire sa raison, & chercher la vérité dans les sciences
  - Dictionnaire francoilatin, Robert Estienne
  - Les oeuvres de M. François Rabelais

*Fables de la Fontaine, 1898*
Nous nous amusons à la bibliothèque en #Fren229!@upennlib @SoDeWil
Student Activity

To make the session more inquiry-based and interactive.
Le Lendemain
Vive Louis
Vous m'avez donné
Je serai
Oisou-noiseaux

Les nombres de pages
sont doubles (seulement
au droit)
- le premier usage d'un
topographe « régulier »

\[ f = s \quad y = i \]

\[ y = u \]
\[ \delta \rightarrow \text{on} \]
Pas d'accent graves
1 \rightarrow j
x \rightarrow s \]
Library Intervention #3: Research Session
Your professor asks you to find an article in the journal *Travaux de linguistique*. Using Franklin, find out which years the library subscribes to and from which database you can access this journal.
Students’ Tweets

Logan Castrucci @loganfren229 · Feb 12
Entendu à Houston Hall: trois francophones qui font des projets pour les vacances de printemps #fren229 #conversation #entendue #houston

Vivian Dai @notgonnadaid · Feb 18
<<Gweta>> - une chanson de Toofan, un duo togolais! #Fren229 #chansonfrancophone

Capucine Le Meur @capucine_229 · Feb 21
On S’Prend Pas La Tête de BigO, un chanteur Haitien #Fren229 #chansonfrancophone

Toofan - "GWETA" (OFFICIAL HD)
Abonnez-vous à la chaîne officielle de Toofan :
http://bit.ly/toofan-cl...
youtube.com

Big O Ft. Top Adierman - On S’Prend Pas La Tête (...) Homme public que l’on ne voit qu’au travers de ses clips à succès dont le dernier en date avec Sean Paul... Olivier Martelly artiste haïtien bien né avec une...
youtube.com
J-2 avant notre rencontre avec Kevi Donat ! Nous avons hate 🤗🙌🏼😍🎈 #Fren229 #rencontresfrancophones @LeParisNoir

Souvenirs de ce très bon moment passé ac @LeParisNoir. Merci encore Kévi ! C'est Alicia qui l'a le plus joliment dit "Quelle chance!" #Fren229
Visibility in the Francophone Twittersphere

And stay in touch with important institutions and figures of the Francophone World
Take an Active Part in the French Language and Francophonie Week

• “Speakons français”: Create the most clever equivalents to 20 English words and anglicisms (KO, babyfoot, tie break, fan zone)

• “A vos plumes”: Contest of “twitterature”: tweet a poetic/creative response to Prevert’s quote
Unexpected Outcome of the Twitter Project

• Easier way to share information

• 229 (French in the World) and 313 (Advanced Business French) coming together
"I think this Twitter project is a great way of engaging more with French (whether it's the language, history, etc.) in our everyday surroundings."

"The Twitter project connects us not only with each other, but with the speakers we have had in class, and the world's resources. Twitter is a great way to access all types of posts such as links, pictures, videos, quotes/words, etc. It's also a great way to get you to think about the world around you and encourages you to explore more. Twitter's also a great way to research because you can use hashtags to see what people talk about most."

"It's an interesting way to get real life applications of what we're learning in class and being more engaged with the phenomenon."
Limitations

Most relevant:
- news articles
- songs
- conversations

Less relevant/interesting:
- Old book
- Quote from readings

Future Directions
“It was amazing to feel and look through such old and rare books that pertained to French history. I loved the way you could literally see how books, printmaking, and writing evolved.”

“It was interesting to note how the French written language has progressed over such a long period of history.”

“I did not realize how much French spelling varied throughout the years and how much the printing styles changed over time.”
Conclusions

• Endless possibilities of Twitter used as either a receptive or productive tool

• Strong ties & constant dialogue with librarians and library resources: enrich the course content and improve students’ productions

• Citizen of the world: Pushing students to actively engage with other French speakers and be part of the larger community
Questions?

Sophie: sdegat@sas.upenn.edu, @SoDeWil
Vickie: vkarasic@upenn.edu, @vmkarasic

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Slide 1: Twitter logo retrieved from https://dev.twitter.com/


Slides 23 & 25: Post-it images retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Postit_large.jpg

Slide 26: 5 C’s image from ACTFL, retrieved from https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/AAPPL/5cs.jpg

Slide 27: Picture from https://twitter.com/julienlepers/status/658261982060093441