

MULTILINGUALISM:
Empowering Individuals
Transforming Societies

MULTILINGUALISM: EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS, TRANSFORMING SOCIETIES

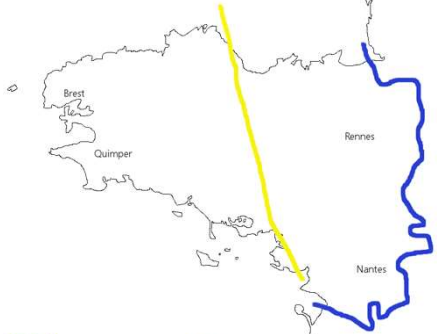
Facebook as a potential site for non-standard Breton

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Breton



- Around 200000 speakers (Broudic, 2013:10)
- Academic literature divides them into *new speakers* and *traditional speakers*




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New versus traditional speakers

New speakers	Traditional speakers
Younger, middle-class, mobile, and well-educated	Older, working class, usually farmers
Located in larger towns and cities	Located in rural hamlets
Live all over Brittany	Restricted to western Brittany
Acquire Breton as a second language	Acquire Breton through
Acquire Breton in formal education	intergenerational transmission
Use Breton as much as possible	Restrict use of Breton to intimate settings
Militant promotion of Breton	Speak Breton only because of linguistic ability
Proud of Breton identity	No strong sense of Breton identity

(See e.g. Jones, 1995; Hornsby, 2005; Timm, 2001; German, 2007)



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Aims of the present research

- Language associated with new speakers
 - In the media
- Three domains of media language
 - Magazines
 - Radio broadcasts
 - Facebook group posts
- Focusing on lexicon



Facebook e brezhoneg

- Largest of several Facebook groups dedicated to Breton, with around 10000 members
- 'Open group': anyone can read and search posts
- Associated with new speakers
- Specific bilingual site: competence in French expected but use of it discouraged

Kasit **ho kemenadennoù e brezhoneg** mar plij
Ha chomit dereat ha doujus
Merci de **rédiger vos messages en breton**
et de rester courtois et respectueux



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Overview of posts

- Recurrent subject matters
 - Language (translation requests, etc.)
 - Politics
 - Advertising events
- High level of linguistic self-awareness leading to ludic uses of language
- Sampling method
 - No linguistic subject matter in the original post
 - Main stimulus for conversation must be textual
 - Original post at least 50% in Breton, with a least one top-level response in Breton from a different user
- 12000 word sample involving 99 speakers



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Orthographic variation

- Different orthographic systems
- Dialectal spellings
 - *berman*, *berton* (standard: bremañ, breton)
 - *brezouneg* (standard: brezhoneg)
- Adoption versus adaption
 - *Skrabell/Scrabble*
- Abbreviations to mark colloquial language
 - *'z ar henta* (standard: deuz ar henta/deus ar c'hentañ)



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The lexicon of Breton

- Identified as prominent feature of new versus traditional speaker distinction

	TB	NB	French
'walk'	pourmenadenn	baleadenn	<i>promenade</i>
'reason'	rezen	abeg	<i>raison</i>
'bakery'	boulangerezh	baraerezh	<i>boulangerie</i>

adapted from Timm, 2001:456

- Now regulated by the Office public de la langue bretonne



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Lexical variation on Facebook

- Many non-‘official’ French borrowings

	Attested	Advised	French
‘cable-car’	teleferik	fungarr	téléphérique
‘sexist’	seksist	revelour	sexiste
‘reptiles’	reptilianed	stlejviled	reptiles
‘flag’	drapo	banniel	drapeau

- International borrowings: *organek*, *TV* (French *bio*, *télé*)
- Dialectal words: often prepositions
- Longer dialectal posts attract dialectal replies



Some more examples

	< French/ International	# Tokens	# Speakers	< Celtic	# Tokens	# Speakers
‘radio’	radio	4	3	skingomz	0	0
‘telephone’	telefon	0	0	pellgomz	5	3
‘internet’	internet	9	8	kenrouedad	2	2
‘television’	tele/TV	1	1	skinwel	1	1
‘thank you’	mersi	6	4	trugarez	6	6



Preliminary conclusions

- New speakers are not homogeneous in their lexicon or orthography
 - Celtic words and words of French origin coexist
 - Non-standard dialects continue to be used to some degree
- Respelling is often sufficient for a word used in French to be accepted in Breton
- Social media can enable bottom-up corpus planning, allowing direct access to usage



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