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What's a #Frenchgirl like you doing in a [digital] place like this? Multilingual practices at *Café de Flore* on Instagram

Introduction

Social media use has become increasingly prevalent over the last decade. The expansion of Web 2.0 has fueled the growth of computer-mediated discourse (CMD) and alongside it, social networking platforms. The first decade of the 21st century saw the creation of four the most notable social media platforms: Facebook in 2004, Youtube in 2005, Twitter in 2006 and Instagram in 2010. The same decade brought with it the first iPhone (released in 2007) and subsequently, the development of smartphone applications which have been instrumental in the proliferation of social media platforms worldwide. In calculating the twenty most visited websites in the world based on total web traffic, a 2021 study by SimilarWeb found Youtube.com, Facebook.com, Twitter.com, and Instagram.com to rank at 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively (Kemp *et. al* 2021: 50). Together, these four websites direct more web traffic than the fourteen websites below them combined (Kemp *et. al* 2021: 50).

As platforms have experienced facelifts, software updates and increasing competition, they have also succeeded in capturing the attention of younger generations. Whether being asked to tag someone in a photo, glancing at one's neighbor writing a lengthy Facebook post, or crossing the park while teenagers are recording a TikTok dance, for many, the influence of participatory culture has become palpable. While for many the inundation of the digital in the physical world may still seem somewhat out of place, the number of social media users is growing daily, so much that in the last three years alone, social media platforms[1] counted 1 billion new users (Kemp *et. al* 2021).

For these reasons alone, it is unsurprising that researchers have reached some consensus about the potential value that social media research can afford. Exploring social media use may offer scholars an opportunity to learn more about specific communities of users, their habits, and their motivations. It may also offer a glimpse into a participant's private and public life which would not otherwise come about in questionnaires, surveys or interviews. Sociologists may be interested in how the work of seminal thinkers could find new traction on social networks: such as Debord's society of the spectacle, Bakhtin's carnival and dialogic imagination and Oldenburg's third place. Particularly for linguists, social media research represents a new frontier of perspectives on morphological analysis, or more sociolinguistic questions of language contact, language practices and language acquisition. It has even prompted some scholars to promote a new strand of linguistics, such as David Crystal, who posited that in 2005 we were "at the beginning of an era of Applied Internet Linguistics".

Discussions centering on multilingualism online are often broached in two ways. A first approach provides a survey of which languages are used on the internet site or platform in question, while a second analyzes the practices of multilingual users of the internet (see Lenihan 2011 and Tagg and Seargeant 2014 for approaches one and two, respectively, and Leppänen and Peuronen 2012 for a more detailed overview). Particularly interesting in this ongoing discussion are the stipulations used to characterize a person as "multilingual", particularly given the often short replies or comments that may appear on internet threads. Potential competence in a given language cannot be excluded even if the author has used single words in that language, nor can linguistic

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[1] While an explicit definition for social media was not provided in the report, interested readers can consult Kemp et. al 2021: 90 for examples of what the report considers "social media platforms"

competence be assumed because of extended use of a language, particularly given the growing accessibility of online translators. This paper primarily draws upon the first approach to contribute to this conversation by asking how multilingualism can be qualified in users of social media. Through a discussion of the platform Instagram, the ties between language use and the Instagram "Places" functionality will be explored. More specifically, this paper will investigate how Instagram users make use of their linguistic repertoires on public posts tagged at the Café de Flore in Paris, France. Seventeen posts will be presented and the post owners' (PO) language use in captions, comments and hashtags compared. A secondary line of inquiry will seek to identify how language use in the PO's Instagram "bios" other posts reinforce or differ from the language used at Café de Flore, "a setting with no shared language" (Leppänen and Peuronen 2012: 389).

Ethical Practices and Social Media Research

One of the interests in pursuing work in an emerging research field is the number of disciplines which may be drawn to it in its early stages. While longstanding methodologies may be lacking, the potential for cross-disciplinary cooperation is an opportunity for researchers to compare best practices and benefit from the number of diverse approaches to problem solving. Particularly in the context of social media research, the sheer amount of data (notably big data) is often difficult to navigate, and researchers may find benefit in looking to their colleagues across other disciplines for new perspectives on methodological approaches to collecting data using new media.

It is generally held that ethical research practices serve as the foundation of any paper or study, allowing authors and readers alike to interpret results in good conscience or reference productive data in future work. Rather than serving as "regulatory hurdles to be jumped through at the beginning stages of research", ethical questions must be regularly assessed throughout the course of the study being done (Beninger 2016, p. 59). When collecting data through social media, it is all the more important that scholars work against the prevalent trope of hiding behind a screen and rather clearly adopt the posture of a researcher throughout the entirety of their data collection and analysis.

In the sphere of traditional face-to-face qualitative research endeavors, ethical inquiry is most often associated with obtaining informed consent, ensuring the anonymity of participants, and disclosing information relevant to the study's design, such as the type and purpose of research being conducted, the bodies funding the research, where and for how long the data will be stored, the intended use of research results and the potential consequences of participation in the research project. While these should be standard practice for any research endeavor, the number of logistical and legal questions associated with social media research differs somewhat from more traditional research methodologies. In the absence of formal criteria for social media research, the researcher should familiarize him or herself with the standards and guidelines for research ethics in their country of residence, and, if possible, in the country or countries from which data will be gathered. A variety possibilities come into play specifically when collecting geotagged data. For example, the post owner (PO) may reside in a different country from that of the researcher, in addition to that of the geotag and the country hosting the platform, each of which may have different laws concerning authors' rights.

A number of perspectives have been put forward about the public nature of data and more specifically, whether consent is required to include it or publish it in a research study. As what was arguably the first decade of social media came to a close, boyd (2010) called for researchers to pay attention to the "methodological danger zone" brought about by the Facebook age and personal

data mining: "*Just because data is accessible doesn't mean that using it is ethical.*"[2] This ethical dilemma is particularly salient because of the changing nature of what can be uploaded to social media platforms and still considered public content. It would therefore seem that the scope of the research project and the sensitivity of data shared is best evaluated on a case-by-case basis (see "guidelines, not recipes" in franzke *et. al* 2020: 6).

Perhaps in part due to the ethical and legal considerations mentioned above, Instagram has somewhat fallen to the wayside in research performed by linguists. It would seem that among researchers in linguistics and other social sciences, Twitter and Facebook have been more prominent sites for gathering data, despite the fact that Instagram was acquired by Facebook in 2012. Furthermore, neither company's policy on third-party data use is straightforward and, in practice, many of the same questions posed by researchers using Instagram should also be posed when gathering data on Twitter or Facebook (Beninger 2016, Moreno et. al 2013). It should be noted that the Terms and Conditions of social media platforms change regularly. Authors of studies discussing these terms at a certain point in time should note that the methods used in their paper may not be considered best practice, or even legal, some years down the road. Similarly, it is the job of researchers to continually reevaluate the methodologies that underline their current work and do their due diligence in ensuring that this work complies with international, national and ethical guidelines for research and data protection. In brief, just because someone did it in 2016 does not mean it can be done today. In a time when data is so often synonymous with currency, scholars committed to educational, not-for-profit research should also be aware that by rendering an unwitting or unwilling participant's data public, they also risk commodifying it.

Platform-Specific Affordances to Researchers: The Case of Instagram

Different platforms may be perceived by the user as having different purposes and may therefore draw different groups of users who engage differently with the various platforms to which they subscribe (Laestadius 2016). Put simply, just because a participant has multiple social media accounts does not mean he or she uses them in the same way or for the same length of time. Nevertheless, in the interest of gaining users' views about social media research, some studies have previously grouped participants by the frequency of their social media use, for example "low, medium and high users", wherein high users, for example, are defined as "Those who used social media websites several times a day." (Beninger et. al 2014, p. 9). It is important to note that while a social media user may hold an account with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, they may not consider themselves an active, or "high" user of each platform. It may be prudent for researchers to consider this when gathering participants or discussing participants' responses, particularly as making this distinction could also paint a clearer picture of who engages with which network, how and when.

As with any new form of research, a certain amount of skepticism may be present on the part of scholars and participants alike, as some new research practices in their beginning stages may not be seen as scientifically valid. A number of papers have commented on the benefits that social media research affords, including benefits that concern scholars across multiple disciplines and linguists more specifically (McCay-Peet and Quan-Haase 2016, Beninger 2016, Moreno 2014, Highfield and Leaver 2014, Seageant and Tagg 2014, Blackwood 2018, Deumert 2014, Gibbs et. al 2015). Broadly, it can be said that social media allows scholars to observe users as they curate their personal page/account, as they engage in shared spaces (such as geotagged locations), and as

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[2] Emphasis appears in original text

they enter spaces that belong to others (another user's page). Researchers may be able to observe decisions made by users as they attempt to represent themselves through language, videos and images. Additionally, researchers may be able to engage with users themselves, sometimes from across the world, to further inquire about these decisions and the multitude of processes that work together to produce a single post or comment.

Instagram offers some features that distinguish it from other, more frequently cited platforms, and that render it particularly useful for research. Laestadius (2016) interprets these as "persistence", "searchability" and "interpretability" (578). Unlike on Facebook but like on Twitter, users of Instagram can choose to create a "public" or "private" profile and connections between users are not always mutual. That is to say, while approving a friend request on Facebook links both the requesting and requested users as "friends", following a user on Twitter or Instagram does not ensure a "follow back". While Twitter is generally regarded as a text-centric platform, Instagram is more often associated with the sharing and posting of original visual content, notably photos and videos. On an Instagram user's profile, there are four potential areas where text may appear: in captions under the user's post, in the user's "bio", located at the top of their profile, in comments, which appear under the post and caption, and in hashtags, which may be featured in the caption or within comments. The secondary nature of text on Instagram is one aspect of the platform that may interest researchers concerned with motivations or metadiscourse linked to language use online. It should be mentioned that users' posts (photos) could include text, such as a screenshot of a Tweet, email, text message, or a picture of a handwritten note. However, text on photos do not behave in the same way as the four text areas outlined above, in that text on photos cannot be added to, changed or removed (for the latter to occur, the entire post would need to be removed). Text on photos cannot link users participating in the same conversation (as hashtags do), it cannot reply to or tag another user (as in comments), and it does not maintain a consistent place of prominence at the top of the page (like a bio). Therefore, it is considered that the use text in photos is best considered alongside other photos and visual content and cannot be interpreted with the same approach used to analyze the four primary areas of text.

As most ethical research practices gather data from publicly accessible spaces, and taking into consideration the ethical questions outlined above, researchers may be interested to know how platforms render them access to a large number of public posts. On Instagram, this can be accomplished through performing either of two search modes: a hashtag search and a "places" search. These are illustrated in Figures 1-4 below. In addition from retrieving photos associated with the particular hashtag or place in question, these two search modes provide additional information that researchers may find valuable. One useful aspect of Instagram its ability to report the number of posts associated with a particular hashtag. As illustrated in Figure 2, the hashtag #frenchbreakfast is currently associated with approximately 72.1 thousand posts. The hashtag search also returns relevant, possibly related hashtags, or multiple iterations of the same hashtag, allowing researchers to roughly surmise the number of posts that have engaged in the larger hashtag conversation. For example, #frenchbreakfast and #frenchbreakfast☐☐ (with the French flag emoji attached) are listed as two different hashtags, each with its own set of related posts. This feature is especially suitable for researchers whose work involves tracking a specific hashtag and its evolution over time (see also Highfield and Leaver, 2014).

Hashtag and Places searches sort the photos retrieved into "Top" and "Recent" categories. The "Recent" feature allows users to view posts chronologically, beginning with the latest post added to the hashtag or geotag. "Top" results are associated with the algorithm used by Instagram, and seem to show photos with a high number of 'likes', although these are not always displayed in

order by number of likes. For instance, the first photo under "Top" at the Café de Flore geotag as of June 3rd 2021, had 8,874 likes, while the fifth photo had 19,776 likes. The Instagram algorithm may therefore render the meaning of "top" results somewhat unclear, but researchers can surmise that these posts have reached a significant number of users on the platform, not only those who have consulted it because of its tag.
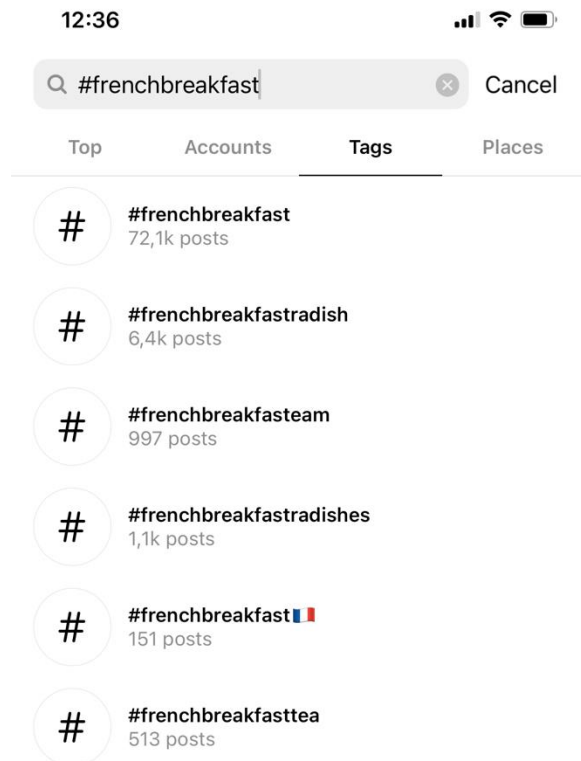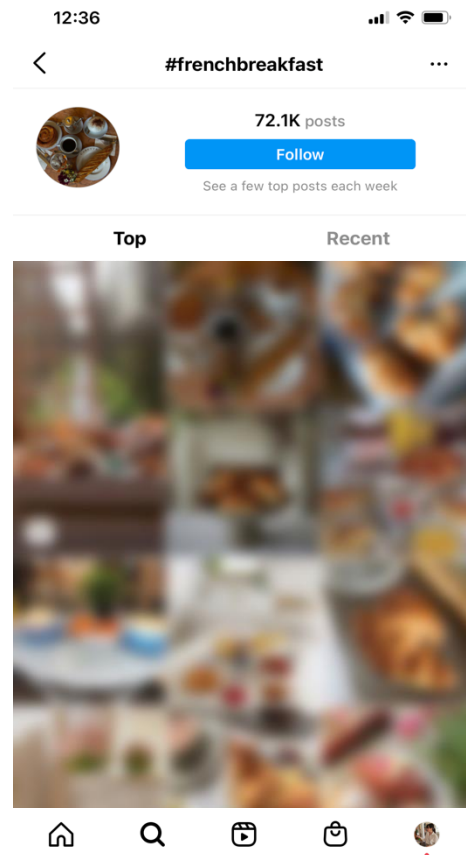

Figure 1: *A hashtag search*

Figure 2: *"Top" results of the search*

The second search feature, or "Places" tag is what concerns the present study, as it allows Instagram users to collectively gather in an area that is not tied to any particular account[3]- a truly shared space. More interesting is this space taking on the identity of a real and active business, depicting it, as well as those who inhabit it at a particular moment in time. By consulting recent posts at an Instagram place, researchers may be able to gather vignettes of Instagram users who wish to associate themselves with a specific place on a specific day and, furthermore, observe possible trends amongst users present in the same place.

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[3] For example, while Café de Flore has an official Instagram account, this account does not own, nor can it edit the content shown on the Café de Flore 'place' on Instagram.
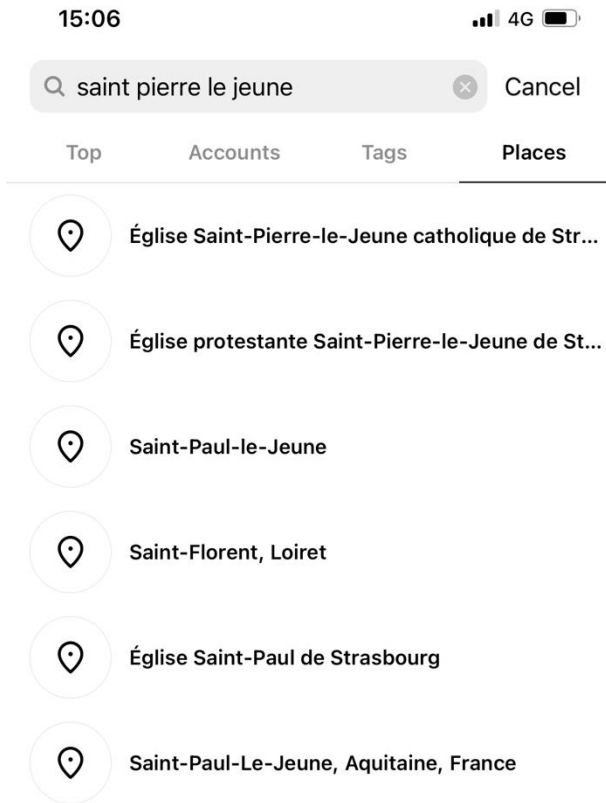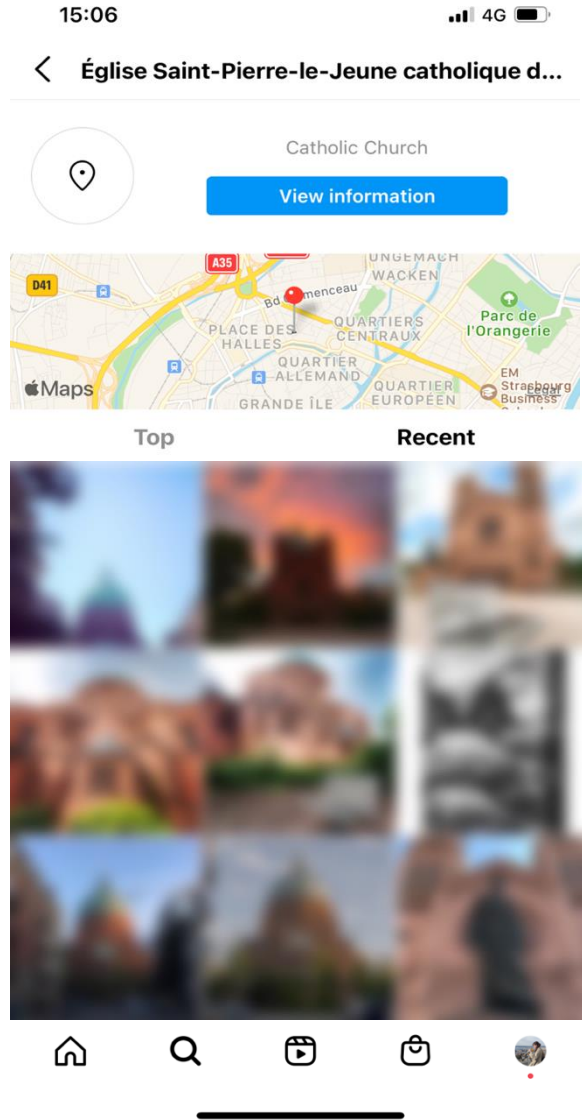
Figure 3: *A "Places" search*

Figure 4: *"Recent" results of the search*

Multilingualism and Place

The semantic ambiguity of the terms 'space' and 'place' have been the source of some debate among scholars of social science. Particularly in the context of linguistic landscape, there is are differing opinions about the nature of 'public spaces' and 'place'. It could be said that the notion of 'place' is more bound, somewhat specific, and may apply to areas accessible to both the public at large, small, restricted communities, or even a single person. Ownership of place is often less difficult to contest, while spaces, particularly public spaces, are often conceptualized as freely

accessible "levelers"[4] (see Oldenburg 1989: 23), with limited to no restrictions dictating who can enter them. For the purposes of the following discussion, I borrow from Stedman (2002) in which 'places' are defined as those which "include the physical setting, human activities, and human social and psychological processes rooted in the setting" (562).

In theory, a place can become multilingual when three or more languages are being used in that place simultaneously, meaning its designation as 'multilingual' could ebb and flow with those who populate it. This view, while sacrificing consistency as the multilingual nature of the place must be regularly renegotiated, is most interesting in that it is speaker-focused. Pujolar and O'Rourke (2016) note that "sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology should concern itself more centrally with the speaker as an object of study" and this line of reasoning is particularly relevant in elaborating the different facets of multilingualism (1). Nonetheless, a speaker-focused interpretation may lack somewhat in complexity if the place itself is removed entirely from its context. Another approach to qualifying the multilingual nature of places could be designating a specific place as multilingual as a product of the larger community in which it is embedded. Businesses in Luxembourg, for example, may be considered multilingual simply due to the fact that the country has three official languages. However, this seems to be somewhat of a misnomer, as "languages and language practices are not necessarily equated to national identity" (Martin-Jones *et. al*, 2012: 9). A business could choose to operate in one single language, particularly in countryside areas where linguistic diversity may be less prominent, or could be operated and owned by someone who is not a Luxembourg national, nonetheless making use of one of the national languages. Indeed, context is a notion whose value is somewhat disputed, as many contextual 'clues' are, in fact, pure conjecture and "predicated on positivist models of social science", leading to "reified definitions of context, which fail to capture how the participants themselves determine the ongoing social interaction, shape the setting and transform social relations" (Martin-Jones *et. al*, 2012: 11). However, considering the unprecedented nature of travel circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic, some amount of context was paramount to the nature of this study. For the purposes of this investigation, it therefore seemed most prudent to adopt a composite view of these two perspectives, particularly as the place in question marries the digital with the physical.

One question that concerns this study's line of inquiry is whether the term 'place' can reasonably be used to describe the digital incarnation of a bound physical entity. A commonly cited difference between the notions of space and place is the question of abstract versus tangible. Spaces can be characterized as conceptual and not tied to any singular location, although, as discussed above, spaces can also refer to areas of public or communal gathering. Place, however, is most often tangible; it is both something and somewhere. Much of this physical footing is lost in conceptualizing something digital as a place outright. And yet, much of a place is captured in its ability to be simultaneously fixed and ephemeral. Those who populate the place, and the interactions between place-goers are in constant shift; it empties and refills regularly, but never with exactly the same composition. It could be argued that by referring to digital place this paper is simply borrowing the term used by Instagram to describe one aspect of its interface. However, this seems to bypass the discussion entirely, when in fact the Places feature on Instagram does manage to recreate some facets of traditional places in ways that other interfaces have not managed

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[4] Oldenburg's notion of the Third Place will be discussed at this paper's conclusion. Here I nonetheless adopt Oldenburg's notion of "a leveler" to describe the theoretical ideals of public spaces, even if, in practice, some amount of celebrity may always supersede the capacity of a public space, or third place, to serve as "neutral ground" (1989: 23).

to do. Google Arts and Culture, for example, has rendered certain cultural sites visible to users via "Street View", which offers limited visits of a selection of museums on multiple continents. For the sake of comparison, the virtual rendering of the Palace of Versailles's Hall of Mirrors on Google is used alongside its geotag on Instagram Places to discuss how digital renderings of existing places may or may not meet the criteria of Stedman's (2002) definition of 'place'.

Criterion	Palais Garnier *Place de l'Opéra*, 75009 Paris **Place (Stedman 2002)**	Opéra Garnier[5] **Instagram *Places***	Opéra national de Paris[6] **Google**
Physical setting- Can be accessed physically	Yes	No	No
Physical setting- bound, unchanging location	Yes, at the physical address	Yes, on the places search and via a permalink	Yes, at the permalink
Human activity- Human activity can be observed, people are present in the setting	Yes	Yes	No, no people are present in the rending
Human social processes- People in the same setting can interact with one another	Yes, by speaking, writing or through gesture	Yes, through writing or signaling approval (likes)	No
Human psychological processes- One or more processes (sensation, perception, learning, memory, thinking) can take place within the setting	Yes Example: Touching the staircase	Yes Example: Ability to visually process photos tagged at the location and engage with them	Yes Example: Navigating the different rooms made available

While arguably an oversimplification of the nature of place and Stedman's definition, the table above gives some indication that Instagram places may provide a sense of place-ness to its users. Much like stepping into the place at its physical address, visiting a place on Instagram allows users to quickly gather a sense of the scene at one moment in time, in the understanding that a return to that place even hours later could render an entirely different picture. Just as visitors to a place can narrow in on conversation with one particular place-goer, or fix their gaze on one attribute present in the place, by clicking on a specific photo, users of an Instagram may "zoom in" on one particular

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[5] https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/1034827136/cafe-de-flore/?hl=en
[6] https://artsandculture.google.com/streetview/op%C3%A9ra-national-de-paris/MwFixmW5o_f5jw?sv_lng=2.33164708660783&sv_lat=48.87160254137327&sv_h=16.861466447701787&sv_p=-9.055065295585223&sv_pid=XBtCKIOMDRFKZOE77bBckg&sv_z=1.000000000000002

view of the place and enter into conversation with another place-goer. However, the nature of these places remains digital: comments will not always be returned immediately to produce true conversation, the tactile and sensory nature of the place remains limited to visual stimuli and fine motor skills. The question of place ownership could also be a source of dispute and ambiguity (if a hardware shop is owned by someone, what possession does the owner have over digital articulations of their business, particularly when these articulations are produced by others?). However, with these qualifications in mind, and to avoid confusion in reference to the name attributed to Instagram geotags, a 'digital place' seems to be the most accurate term to describe the phenomenon of a non-stagnant, interactive digital rendering of an existing place which captures both interior and exterior likenesses of the place and, to some extent, its regularly changing public.

The Café de Flore

Cafés have long been considered an archetype of French social culture, and the Café de Flore perhaps most clearly represents its transcendence into the 21st century. 20th century cafes were spaces of exchange which most often attracted individuals from nearby neighborhoods. However, as specific cafes garnered attention for the individuals who gathered there regularly, they began to take on disparate identities despite fulfilling the a similar overall purpose. The Café de Flore has since undergone another identity shift in the age of new media—attracting a younger crowd who flock to its famous façade for the sake of exchanges that will happen at the Café de Flore. This Café de Flore, however, fits in their pocket.

     "11 of the Most Instagrammable Cafés in Paris", "The 9 Most Instagrammable Cafés in Paris", "5 of the Most Instagrammable Cafes in Paris", "72 Most Instagrammable Places in Paris: A Photographer's Guide", "12 of the Cutest Cafes in Paris: The Most Instagrammable Parisian Cafes": a quick online search will tell you (in exactly .61 seconds) that Café de Flore has experienced an overturn in identity since the rise of Instagram. It would seem that, among at least some of its users, "Instagrammable" has entered the English lexicon. For these reasons alone, Café de Flore seemed to be emblematic of a placeless-placeness enigma, gathering people to exchange as it always has, but replacing four walls with four corners of a smartphone. Sociolinguistic studies on Instagram remain somewhat rare, and only one other study[7] has taken a sociolinguistic approach to discussing Instagram places. Robert Blackwood (2018) reviewed the multilingual practices and self-representation of French passport holders at the Paris Orly Airport, wherein he found that "The use of text to assert a specific identity is reinforced by a multilingual axis, where often – but not always – French speakers…use a range of languages, usually English, in their mises en scène in order to present themselves as mobile global citizens" (21). While the designation of mobile global citizens is somewhat synonymous with not only the context of international airports, but with the English language more broadly, multilingual performance on Instagram may be employed as a result of a variety of motivations: similar outcomes may not be indicative of similar internal processes. This study's primary line of inquiry was to compare multilingual practices at one digital place within the confines of a given day (24 hours) and, later, to situate these posts within the larger framework of the post owner's page, providing more context about how multilingual representations of self may differ by place. Lastly, the question of how place may motivate multilingual performance is broached. While English has been by and large considered the dominant language on social media, and use of it by new speakers as a kind of cultural capital, Café de Flore's intrinsic association with French and status as a historical Parisian café has also

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[7] To the knowledge of the author

been indicative of newfound commodification on Instagram, where a single post tagged at the café can amass thousands of likes. This paper therefore sought to determine how these factors might affect users' linguistic performance in their post captions specifically.

Methodology

In order to promote transparency regarding the purposes of potential interactions with Instagram users, a research-centered Instagram account was created by the author prior to data collection. This professional account provided details about the author, including a link to a University staff webpage and two posts describing the nature of the author's research. To render the account more reliable and to distinguish it from spam accounts, one post included a photo of the author.

Instagram posts tagged at the Café de Flore were then gathered over a randomly chosen 24-hour period following the reopening of France's cafés and restaurants on May 19th, 2021. A total of 28 photos were tagged during the time period in question. Posts were saved to an account created for the purposes of research using the Instagram "save" feature. Following collection, posts were sorted by type of account. As this paper was keen to focus on the multilingual practices of individuals, rather than businesses, four posts added by business or blog accounts without a clear author were removed from the corpus of this article. It was believed that another study centering only professional or business accounts would provide a better understanding of linguistic performance in the professional sphere and that overt motives of advertisement may have clouded this study's interpretation of data. Three posts had no caption, comments, or hashtags, and were also removed. Three other business accounts with an identifiable author were also removed in the interest of gathering data free of overt advertisements. Following these modifications, eighteen posts remained[8]. Eight[9] out of eighteen post authors were chosen based on the linguistic diversity represented in their post caption contacted by direct message on Instagram for approval to reproduce an anonymized version of their photo in this paper's discussion. Four out of eight people contacted agreed to have their photos used, while the other four messages were most likely not seen[10]. No negative responses were received. Any photos shared below have thus been obtained with explicit permission from the post authors. Textual excerpts and linguistic analysis was performed on the other eleven posts that are not featured visually below, including those who did not respond to direct messages. As it was considered that these excerpts did not obtain any personal information about the author, their analysis did not seem to violate any ethical principles outlined in this paper and by other scholars who have discussed social media research methodologies (Laestadius 2016, franzke *et. al* 2020).

Posts were then sorted by language use in the four primary areas of text previously discussed. No word limit was imposed to constitute "use" of a language. Particularly with the availability and prowess of modern digital translators, word limit seemed to be an arbitrary measure of what truly constitutes language use. More information surrounding the details of language use follows in this paper's discussion.

As this research served as a pilot study in a series of future articles regarding language use at the Café de Flore, the purpose of this paper was to inform readers about what languages had

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[8] During the process of writing this article, one post chosen for the corpus was removed from Instagram, leaving a total of seventeen posts. This post did not belong to one of the eight POs contacted for this study. To protect the interests of the PO, all comments related to the deleted post have been removed from this paper.

[9] CdF.01, CdF.04, CdF.10, CdF.12, CdF.13, CdF.14, CdF.16, CdF.17

[10] In its direct messaging platform, Instagram informs indicates when messages sent to other users have been read.

been used, where and by whom. Thematic analysis was not performed on findings as it was considered out of the scope of this article's purpose. The discussion therefore provides an overview of language use and some minor observations, rather than a formal analysis of language use in the selected posts.

Findings

Five languages were represented in the captions of the seventeen posts selected for this article. Three of the five languages, Korean, Czech and Portuguese, each figured on the caption of one post, written entirely in that language. The other captions were written in English, French, or a mixture of both languages. Three captions were slightly indiscernible: the language of captions which contained solely "Café de Flore" were considered to be in French, while one caption which read "Paris ❤" was counted as indiscernible. Following these considerations, nine captions were recorded as having been written in French, three in English, one in English-French and one indiscernible.

 Twelve of the eighteen posts contained comments, which featured use of English, French, Korean, Czech and Portuguese. However, considering the public nature of the posts selected, not all comments were made by the PO. As someone else's linguistic capacities do not necessarily reflect those of the post owner, it was considered important to make a distinction between the comments written by the author and the comments that appeared on the post. Therefore, for the purposes of this discussion, any reference to "comments" refers to those comments written by the author, unless otherwise specified. Additionally, comments consisting exclusively of emojis were not considered in the list of languages above (for more information on the language of emojis, see work by Gretchen McCulloch). Some comments were also not indicative of any particular language, such as "fff?□" and were therefore not included in the language count.

 Lastly, the languages used in the author's hashtags were gathered. Four languages (French, English, Czech and Spanish) appeared throughout the eleven posts containing hashtags. The table below provides an overview of total combined language use online at the Café de Flore over the selected 24-hour period.

Post Owner	Caption	Comments	Hashtags	Bio	Five most recent post captions	Nationality/L1
CdF.01	Portugese	Portugese	English	Portugese	Portugese	-
CdF.02	French	-	-	English	Spanish, English	-
CdF.03	Indiscernible	-	-	-	Italian, English	-
CdF.04	French	French	French, English	English	French	-
CdF.05	French	-	English, French	English	French	-
CdF.06	French	French	English	English, French	French, English	-

CdF.07	French	-	-	French, English	French, English	-
CdF.08	French	French	French, English	-	French	-
CdF.09	French	-	English	Italian	Italian, English	-
CdF.10	English	-	-	English	English	Poland (Polish)
CdF.11	French	-	-	English	No captions	-
CdF.12	English	English, Spanish, French	English, French	English, French	English	Mexico (Spanish)
CdF.13	English	English	English, French, Spanish	English	English, Spanish	Dominican Republic (Spanish)
CdF.14	Korean	-	Korean	Korean	Korean	-
CdF.15	French	French	English	English	French, English	-
CdF.16	French, English	French, English	French, English	French, English	English, French	France (French)
CdF.17	Czech	-	French, English, Czech	Czech, English	Czech	-

Table 2: Summary of language use at *Café de Flore* on Instagram Places

In the combined language practices of the POs at Café de Flore, a total of six languages were detected. Out of the seventeen individuals who tagged a post at Café de Flore on the day in question, ten used more than one language in some capacity on their post. French was the most popular language used in captions: nine out of seventeen post captions were written in French, while a tenth post employed both French and English. English, however, was used in only three other captions at Café de Flore. Conversely, English was featured prominently in the bios of post owners. Of fifteen POs whose profile included a bio, twelve made use of English: seven bios were written entirely in English, while placed English alongside one other language. When the combined language practices of each POs were assessed, it was found that English appeared in sixteen out of seventeen users' profiles.

The nationality and L1 of four users was additionally obtained through direct message. While few conclusions can be drawn from this information, it was nonetheless considered worthwhile to include alongside the users' linguistic practices, as the two did not necessarily correspond to one another. Interestingly, three out of four users did not make use of their L1 in the post caption and rather opted for English, while CdF.16 blended her L1 and English within the post caption. User CdF.10 did not make use of her L1 on any of the captions, hashtags or comments collected for this study. User CdF.12 only employed her L1, Spanish, in responding to comments that were addressed to her in Spanish. Users CdF.13 and CdF.16 made use of their L1 more frequently throughout the scope of data collected for this paper.

Figure 9: *Translanguaging in an original post by CdF.16*

Figure 10: *An English caption by CdF.1*

Discussion

Despite the qualitative nature of this study, the seventeen posts collected provided a relatively large amount of data for discussion. However, for the purposes of this paper, the discussion will take a case study approach, and limit itself to an exploration of the hashtag practices of users CdF.16, CdF.1, CdF.04, and Cd.F.17.

Even among post owners operating under the same language, there did not appear to be a uniform approach to drafting captions and hashtags. While some users opted not to include hashtags in the text body of their post, others included them within their caption or as a comment on their own post. Posts contained as few as one hashtag and as many as 24 hashtags in one comment. Interestingly, a number of hashtags unrelated to the immediacy of the surroundings reappeared on multiple posts, lending some indication about the users who seek out the opportunity to tag a post at Café de Flore, or of the currency that a photo at Café de Flore might afford its users. Multiple iterations of the word "Parisienne" were found in the hashtags of the four female users. Three of the four used the words "French girl" in their hashtags, including #frenchgirl #frenchgirlstyle and #frenchgirldaily. Other words that have become ubiquitous on social media,

such as "mood" and "vibes" made appearances #parismood #parisvibes and #parisanvibes on the posts created by users CdF.1-4[11], respectively. Particularly salient is the choice of these women to advertise themselves as French by way of English, notably as not all of the post owners could be clearly identified as French. The collection of hashtags added by these four post owners are illustrated below.

#cafedeflore #paris #parisvibes #parisstyle #ootd
#parisliving #parisienestylee #parisianlife #lookdujour
#parisiancafe #vogueliving #frenchbreakfast
#discoverunder1k #parismood #styledujour #frenchstyle
#frenchgirl #parisienne #frenchchic

Figure 5: *hashtags used by CdF.1*

██████████ #parisianvibe #frenchvibes
#parisianstyle #howtobeparisian
#toutesttemporaire #parislifestyle
#frenchmood #lavieparisienne
#lestylealafrancaise #frenchgirlstyle
#laparisienne #parisianchic #onparledemode
#andsave #vintagevibes #parisvibes
#alafrancaise #cafedeflore #parisiancafe
#parisenseptembre #discoverunder10k
#velvetdynasty #thenoisetier

Figure 6: *hashtags used by CdF.2*

#lestyleàlafrançaise #onparledemode
#frenchgirldaily #theparisianchic
#whowhatwearing #theparisianchique
#howtobeparisian #carnivala #neutraltones
#dailylook #parisianstyle #parismood
#minimalaesthetic #frenchvibes #parisienne
#details #discoverunder5k #parisianlifestyle
#lesfillesenrouje

Figure 7: *hashtags used by CdF.3*

#cafedeflore #onionsoup #parisfoodie #parisfoodguide
#saintgermaindespres #saintgermain #parisianvibes
#parisobviously #seemyparis #peoplewatching
#wheninparis #paryż #francja #zupacebulowa
#frenchbrasserie #lavieparisienne #foodielove

Figure 8: *hashtags used by CdF.4*

Hashtags by nature serve to link photos to a particular concept or theme and provide more opportunity for users to render their post or profile visible to a larger audience. While this idea may be indicative of the performative nature of identity on Instagram, it is worth considering whether the inclusion of certain types of hashtags, rather than the words of the hashtags themselves, provide an indicator of how certain users of Instagram use the platform as a means of self-expression. It would seem that users who employ the hashtag #Frenchgirl may not in fact be of French nationality, but may wish to associate themselves with a certain "vibe" that has become pervasive through the hashtag.

It is necessary to note that hashtags employed by posters do not necessarily reflect the content or language of the post owner's caption, nor an accurate depiction of users' linguistic repertoires. While posts A-D included a mix of French and English hashtags (and in the case of post D, three hashtags in Czech), only one post demonstrated use of two languages in the caption itself, while the other three post authors used one language for the entirety of the caption. While the data gathered is hardly representative of a majority of Instagram users, within the scope of the participants selected for this study, it could be concluded that users of Instagram may use multiple languages as a means of performative identity on Instagram but these languages may not always be indicative of true linguistic competence. Indeed, many users who appeared otherwise unable to speak French self-represented as French through hashtags while at the Café de Flore, but not regularly throughout their other recent posts. One may wonder what amount of cultural capital is communicated through a post at the Café de Flore, through the use of the #Frenchgirl hashtag Similarly, the sample gathered for this study indicated that English remains a powerful language

for visibility and multilingual performance on Instagram, implying a display of cultural capital for its users or those who can appear to use it.

Conclusion

The scope of this paper provided a qualitative introduction to the nature of online 'place' and the potential for users of this place to perform multilingually within it. Findings revealed that English can be employed online by users of Instagram alongside a multitude of other languages within the same space (the user's profile) and the same place (the Café de Flore geotag). Additionally, this paper has posed a number of questions for sociolinguists wishing to pursue further research on Instagram, such as "What constitutes the use of a language online?" and "To what extent ought researchers consider context to further supplement their findings?".

A number of limitations exist to pursuing research ethically on social media sites, particularly in so far as Instagram is concerned. One limitation of the Places feature is the inability to ascertain the number of photos geotagged to the location through the platform's functionality alone. Another limitation lies in the accessibility of data for the purposes of publication. Particularly as the use of users' images remains somewhat of a grey area, researchers may wish to opt for a method that poses the least risk to the (unwitting) participant through making contact via the platform. However, when contacting users through the platform's private message feature, scholars should be advised that messages are sorted into another, less obvious sector of the platform, entitled "message requests". Therefore, researchers may risk waiting weeks or months before their message is seen, let alone replied to. However, this paper has also demonstrated the possibility of observing multilingual performance within a short amount of time (24 hours) at one digital place.

Given the fairly small amount of research done to date on this platform, further work on Instagram by linguists and sociolinguists could center on the digital linguistic landscape of one Instagram place, further exploring the nature of multilingualism and place in regards to certain geotag, tracking the language practices of one user across multiple Instagram places, and finally, how the cultural capital afforded by photos taken at certain online places might intersect with the commodification of a certain language on social media.

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