

INFORMED CONSENT

Project title: QuEST - Quebec English Survey on Twitter

Tenured researcher, scientific coordinator of the project:

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Place of research: Online.

Goal of the research project:

This research project aims to identify the characteristics of the English spoken in Quebec. In order to do so, it first looked at a random sample of publicly available tweets posted by Twitter users from Montreal. By analyzing all those tweets together (without distinguishing between individual users), we were able to identify some characteristics that seem to distinguish the English spoken in Quebec from that spoken in other Canadian regions. We would now like to check if these observations are correct, and if the characteristics we identified on Twitter are also present in face-to-face communication.

What we expect of you (methodology):

We have contacted you because your Twitter account is among those that we randomly identified at the beginning of our research project. We would now like to ask you to participate in the remainder of our study.

If you agree to do so, you will take part in an interview focusing on your use of English. You will be asked to read aloud a list of words and a short text, to briefly answer some questions and discuss your use of languages in Montreal, and to describe the meaning of a series of sentences. (This will take around 50 minutes.) You will then be asked to participate in a brief conversation on a topic of your choice with somebody you know. (This should take around 10 minutes.)

The interview will be conducted online using secure videoconferencing software. You will be asked to record yourself using an audio recording device you have (for example, your smartphone) and to send the audio recording to the researcher at the end of the interview using a secure online form.

Your right to withdraw from the research programme at any time:

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

You are free to decline participation in this study or to withdraw from it at any point. Your decision to participate in this study, not participate in it, or withdraw from it will in no way affect any existing or future relationship you may have with the CLLE laboratory or Toulouse Jean Jaurès University.

Your right to confidentiality and respect for privacy:

The data collected during this study will be kept strictly confidential. The audio recordings you provide will be identified using a random alphanumeric code. This code will also be used to identify the tweets from your account, so that we can compare the way you use English on Twitter and in face-to-face communication. The same code will be associated with any personally identifiable information you provide, but this information will be stored separately from the audio recordings and the tweets.

No information that can reveal your identity – including both your social media information and the information provided in the interview – will be publicly disclosed. All collected data will be stored in a secure location, and will only be accessible to the principal investigator and other specifically designated researchers. The collected data will be stored for an indefinite amount of time, and in any case for at least 20 years. You may request that the information you provided in the interview be destroyed in its entirety – including specifically the recordings and any associated personally identifiable information – at any time by contacting the principal investigator using the contact details provided above.

Benefits:

This study will help us better understand the way in which the English spoken in Quebec is different from the English spoken in other Canadian regions. This may in turn provide more information about how certain ways of speaking should be addressed in school or in language-related products such as dictionaries. This study also compares the way people communicate on Twitter to how they communicate in real life. This is important because it helps us understand if publicly available data from social media can provide reliable information to scientists who study language differences between regions.

Possible risks:

To the best of our knowledge, this study presents no risks other than those associated with regular day-to-day activities.

Publication:

The audio recordings are made for scientific and teaching purposes and the results (including the recordings) may be made available in publications (including CDs or other audio formats), shared with other researchers and made available on the Internet. For the purposes of research and in the event of publication or Internet use, all names and information concerning the recorded speakers will be fully anonymized.

Your right to ask questions at any time:

If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, please contact the principal investigator, Prof. Anne Przewozny, at this email address: anne.przewozny@univ-tlse2.fr

Consent prior to participation:

By signing the consent form, you certify that you have read and understood the information above, that we have provided satisfactory answers to your questions and duly informed you that you are free to withdraw your consent or withdraw from the research at any time, without prejudice.

To be filled in by the participant:

I have read and understood the information above and I freely agree to participate in this research study.

Last name, first name	Date	Signature

You will be given a copy of this document; another copy will be kept in the file.