Translingualism as an Open Educational Language Practice: Raising Critical Language Awareness on Facebook

Le translinguisme comme pratique langagière éducative libre – Développer une conscience critique de la langue sur Facebook

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1. Introduction

The Open Education movement that coalesced during the early part of the 21st century has focused on the production and dissemination of Open Educational Resources (OER) such as digital textbooks, online reference grammars and various tools for learning (Blyth, in press). As the movement began its second decade, however, open educators shifted their focus from OER to Open Educational Practices (OEP) (Open Educational Quality Initiative Report, 2011). The term OEP has typically been defined as any activity that contributes to the creation, use and repurposing of OER, such as searching for openly licensed content on the internet, combining several OER to create a remixed derivative, extending a copyrighted textbook with supplementary OER and so forth. In this study, however, we adopt the expanded definition of OEP as articulated in the Open Educational Quality Initiative's Report (2011: 13): "a set of activities around instructional design and implementation of events and processes intended to support learning." From this perspective, OEP are not limited to the use and creation of OER per se, but are extended to include the use of open technologies, open teaching practices and open learning environments such as Facebook or Twitter. In brief, we take OEP to include any practice that "opens up" any educational ecosystem by expanding social networks and by improving social dynamics through increased participation and autonomy.
This essay attempts to answer the question posed in Zourou (2016): "What affordances and constraints can be found in open educational practices in relation to social dynamics and language learning?" We focus on the case study of Français interactif, an OER designed to make the language learning affordances of translingualism, defined by Canagarajah (2015) as "the strategies of engaging with diverse codes," more perceivable by students and teachers. Our study is framed in terms of one of the OER Research Hub's guiding hypotheses: "OER leads to critical reflection by educators, with evidence of improvement in their practice." In this case, the improved practice refers to how French-language educators sought to overcome prescriptivist attitudes linked to the "monolingual orientation" of traditional classroom instruction by adopting a translingual paradigm in keeping with recent research in applied linguistics (Cook, 1992, 1999; Blyth, 1995; MLA Report, 2007; Kramsch, 2010; Levine, 2011, Canagarajah, 2015). While the users of the OER noticed the translingual practices featured in the materials, they failed to perceive them as pedagogical affordances. Consequently, the OER did not change the social dynamics of the classroom as originally intended by the developers. In response, the developers decided to circumvent the social constraints of the traditional classroom by creating a Facebook page to accompany the OER. It is shown that the social dynamics of an open affinity space helped students and teachers perceive the affordances of translingualism and adopt new communicative practices.

Our case study begins with the creation and implementation of Français interactif, an OER developed for beginning learners of French as a foreign language at the University of Texas at Austin (Blyth, 2009a, 2009b, 2012; Kelton et al., 2011). According to Blyth, language educators should be concerned by the lack of linguistic diversity in language textbooks:

> While there are encouraging signs of a multicultural trend in textbook publication, most foreign language textbooks depict foreign personages—real or imagined—as bearing a striking resemblance to Chomsky's ideal speaker-listener; they inhabit a homogeneous speech community and they know the language perfectly. In other words, the people populating textbooks are almost always monolingual native speakers (Blyth, 1995: 169).

In contrast to the native speaker ideology of foreign language education, the developers of Français interactif began to envision their learners as incipient English/French bilinguals rather than aspiring French monolinguals. Frustrated by the exclusive focus on monolingual native speakers found in most commercial textbooks, the developers decided to shift the pedagogical focus to proficient multilingual speakers as role models, including many who were non-native speakers, as advocated by Blyth:

> A Cambodian, a Senegalese, a Tunisian, or, for that matter, an American who speaks French well enough to be interviewed on television by a French journalist sends a more encouraging message to students than do a thousand Parisians whose flawless, monolingual French is simply their birthright. In other words, adopting a different set of language norms can have a felicitous effect on our students' motivation: bilingual norms encourage students to see their "competence glass" as half full whereas monolingual norms make them see their glass as half empty (Blyth, 1995: 170).

Upon finishing and implementing the OER, the developers conducted surveys and interviews to assess student and teacher reaction. The survey and interview results showed that students and teachers appreciated the diversity of language proficiencies showcased in the new materials. However, it was not clear whether the goal of helping learners to become more critically aware and less prescriptive regarding language.
performance was fully achieved. In fact, Blyth (2009a) discovered that teachers rarely drew attention to the speakers' mixed codes, something that was readily apparent to all the students. Furthermore, many teachers using Français interactif continued to forbid the use of languages other than French in the classroom, despite the fact that the OER represented lexical borrowing and code switching as normal behavior for multilingual speakers. Therefore, to circumvent the entrenched prescriptivism and monolingual bias of foreign language classrooms, the developers decided to create an accompanying Facebook page where translingual practices were not only accepted but explicitly encouraged by a moderator. In essence, the developers created an open affinity space (Gee, 2003, 2005) outside the boundaries of the classroom where francophile and francophone students and teachers could easily perceive and adopt the affordances of translingual practices such as code switching and code mixing.

It should be noted, however, that the term "code" is not limited to a discrete language such as French or English, but rather refers to a diversity of multimodal signs, such as words, images, and sounds. As such, the concept of translingualism refers to an individual’s repertoire of semiotic resources used to cross linguacultural boundaries. We view translingualism as an appropriate form of communication for an open affinity space such as Facebook, where learners are encouraged to interact with speakers from all over the world. More to the point, in an open learning environment such as Facebook, the traditional norms of classroom communication become untenable and are no longer acceptable. In brief, our case study demonstrates that open learning environments such as Facebook are "social media language contact zones" (Thorne & Ivkovic, 2015: 168) that require a new orientation for language studies. In attempts to describe the new patterns of language behavior in such contact zones, sociolinguists have coined a plethora of new terms: "hetero-graphy" (Blommaert 2010), "metrolinguistics" (Pennycook, 2010), "polylingual languaging" (Jørgensen 2008), and "plurilingualism" (Council of Europe, 2000), to name a few. However, in this study, we follow Canagarajah's use of the umbrella term "translingual practices" to refer to the many ways that speakers mix languages and semiotic resources in contact situations of linguistic and cultural diversity. Canagarajah further distinguishes "translingualism" from the common uses of the term "multilingualism":

The term "multilingual" typically conceives of the relationship between languages in an additive manner. This gives the picture of whole languages added one on top of the other to form multilingual competence. This orientation may lead to the misleading notion that we have separate cognitive compartments for separate languages with different types of competence for each (an assumption which has been critiqued by Cook, 1999, among others). Similarly, in society, multilingual often connotes different language groups occupying their niches in separation from others. What should be clear is that the term "multilingual" doesn't accommodate the dynamic interactions between languages and communities envisioned by "translingual" (Canagarajah, 2015: 7).

Our study contains four sections that follow the chronological phases of development and assessment of the evolving educational ecosystem. We begin by describing the creation of the Français interactif OER. We show that the developers’ main goal was to help learners and teachers overcome their prescriptivist attitudes and "monolingual orientation" in order to clear the way for translingual practices consonant with the sociolinguistic realities of the 21st century (Canagarajah, 2015). To achieve this goal, the developers recorded unscripted interactions with native and non-native speakers that elicited linguistic features common to informal, oral discourse but absent from most commercial
textbooks, such as non-standard grammar and lexis, code mixing and examples of language play. In the next section, we describe the implementation and impact of the OER on the classroom ecology. It is shown that despite a favorable reception from students and teachers, the OER did not have the intended effect on language attitudes and classroom behaviors. Next, we review the subsequent development of a Facebook page designed to accompany and amplify the OER. As part of this discussion, we exemplify various translingual practices found on the page. Finally, we explore what open educators can learn from our case study, namely, how to blend open and closed educational practices into a more coherent whole. We conclude with some remarks about the effectiveness of open social networks for promoting Critical Language Awareness (CLA) (Fairclough, 1992).

2. *Français interactif*: An OER for students of French

During the early 2000s, the beginning French program at the University of Texas at Austin conducted usability tests and attitudinal surveys to assess the efficacy of their curriculum and teaching methods. The surveys indicated that the students preferred a clear pedagogical sequence that began with decontextualized vocabulary and grammar and ended with contextualized discourse (Blyth & Davis, 2007). With this feedback in mind, a developmental team comprised of faculty and graduate students designed a new program based on the lexical approach as described by Lewis (1993). As its name implies, the lexical approach is characterized by a greater emphasis on vocabulary development. In contrast to most language curricula organized around the grammatical system, the lexical approach features a deliberate sequence of increasingly complex word collocations: from lexical phrases to sentences to extended discourse. In addition to adopting the lexical approach, the curriculum developers shifted the focus away from the native speaker towards the non-native speaker (see Blyth, 2009b, for a complete narrative of the process). This shift was based on two decades of applied linguistic research that questioned the exclusive use of monolingual native speakers as role models for learners trying to overcome their own monolingualism (Belz, 2002, 2003; Blyth, 1995, 2009a, 2009b; Kramsch, 1997; Levine, 2011). According to Belz (2002, 2003), the reliance on the idealized monolingual native speaker invariably frames the language learner as a "deficient communicator." Despite repeated objections from applied linguists, publishers continue to produce pedagogical materials based on the native speaker as the unquestioned norm. Therefore, the developers of *Français interactif* sought to deconstruct the monolingual frame by focusing on the experiences of a group of American students during a study abroad program in France. Blyth (2009b: 165) states that "these real-life study abroad students serve as virtual tour guides assisting students 'back home' who watch the videos in their classrooms and homes." In brief, the developers sought to create a vicarious exploration of the French language and culture based on the lived experiences of actual language learners.

The centerpiece of the material is unscripted videos of bilingual speakers who exhibit a wide range of proficiencies, for example, American students who live with host families in France and who communicate as best they can in a mixture of French and English, as well as French people who live in the US and who speak both languages fluently. No attempt was made to redact the videos for grammatical or lexical errors because the goal was to document multilingual proficiencies as accurately as possible. By juxtaposing videos of
"incipient" bilinguals (e.g., language learners) with fluent bilinguals, the developers hoped to raise learners’ and teachers’ awareness about the nature of translingual competence, the nature of language as communication, and the nature of second language learning. More specifically, the developers wanted learners and teachers to understand that multilingual speakers, whatever their proficiency level, use their linguistic resources according to situational need, and that the use of the L1 does not necessarily signal a deficiency but is simply a natural part of language learning (Levine, 2011).

This goal was inspired by work in the field of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) as articulated by Fairclough (1992). According to Fairclough (1992), efforts to raise students’ language awareness in educational settings are often limited by an overriding focus on accuracy and appropriateness, two concepts based on the native-speaker norm that promote conformity at the expense of criticality. In a sociolinguistic critique of the prevalent ideologies of foreign language teaching, Train (2003: 16) suggests educators turn to CLA to create "more inclusive conceptions and practices of language and culture." Train lists five features of a language program inspired by CLA:

1. The exploration (and ultimately the transformation) of speakers’ individual and collective beliefs (ideologies, attitudes, biases, prejudices) surrounding language.
2. An appreciation of variation as inherent in language and learning.
3. The questioning of dominant linguistic and cultural knowledge (e.g., native-standard language) and how it is constructed and represented.
4. Critical reflection on the tension and interplay that exist in language to institutionalized norms.
5. Insight into the sociocultural construction of speakers’ identities and "realities" in a multilingual and multicultural world (Train, 2003: 16-17).

By filming a range of French speakers engaged in spontaneous, informal interaction, the developers hoped to create materials that would provide their students with excellent linguistic input while also raising their critical language awareness. Traditionally, foreign language textbooks have been based on a standardized version of the prestige dialect. An emphasis on this variety leads authors to focus on formal, written genres. As a consequence, learners may not be exposed to common linguistic features of oral discourse, such as non-standard grammatical constructions, false starts and fillers. Thornbury and Slade (2006: 25) define conversation as "the informal, interactive talk between two or more people, which happens in real time, is spontaneous, has a largely interpersonal function, and in which participants share symmetrical rights." In (1), an unscripted interview, the informal register is readily apparent. While the register of most interviews tends to be formal due to the power differential between interviewer and interviewee, in (1), the interviewer (an American woman) and the interviewee (a French man) are married, which creates a more playful social dynamic.

(1)

Interviewer: Quelles sont les fêtes françaises ?
Franck: Ah, comme tout bon Français, il y a beaucoup de fêtes en France. Donc, on prend beaucoup de vacances. Forcément, il y a le...le jour de l’an...
Interviewer: Oui...
Franck: Ensuite, on a Pâques, on a la fête du travail le premier mai. On a le quatorze juillet, la fête nationale...
Interviewer: Oui...
Franck: On a le onze novembre, on a...
Interviewer: C’est quoi, le onze novembre ?
Franck: Ben, c'est la fin de la première guerre mondiale donc....
Interviewer: L'armistice !
Franck: L'armistice. Oui. Hé, c'est moi qui parle, c'est pas toi !
(Interviewer: What are the French holidays?
Franck: Ah, like all good Frenchmen, there are lots of holidays in France. So, we take a lot of holidays. Of course, New Year's Day...
Interviewer: Yes...
Franck: Then, there is Easter. We have Labor Day on May 1st. We have July 14th, the national holiday...
Interviewer: Yes...
Franck: Then there is November 11th...
Interviewer: What's that, November 11th?
Franck: Uhm, that's the end of World War One....
Interviewer: Armistice Day!
Franck: The Armistice. Yes. Hey, I'm the one who's doing the talking, not you!)
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12 Franck, the interviewee, responds to the interviewer's question with the use of the third person pronoun "on" (one, we) instead of the pronoun "nous" (we), a clear indication of an informal register. Several turns later, the interviewer employs an interrogative cleft construction that is typically restricted to informal oral discourse, "C'est quoi, le onze novembre ?" (What's that, November 11th?). When Franck begins to respond, the interviewer interrupts with the name of the holiday ("L'armistice !"). Franck replies to the interruption with mock anger by employing the contrastive cleft construction "C'est moi qui parle" (I'm the one who's supposed to be talking), as well as the omission of the negative particle "ne" in the phrase "C'est pas toi !" (Not you!).

13 Given that all the speakers who appear in the videos are proficient in English, including the native French speakers, Français interactif emphasizes French discourse as influenced by English, a highly controversial pedagogical move. In (2), Franck, a Frenchman who has spent the majority of his adult life in the United States, is asked to explain the baccalaureate exam that signals the end of high school studies in France. He vacillates between the masculine and feminine indefinite articles ("une... un... une") indicating a moment of linguistic indecision. Finally, he refers to the baccalaureate with an English calque—"une examination". However, in standard French, an examination is called "un examen". The inclusion of such non-standard usage may raise concerns among teachers, but it is important to note that the materials indicate and contextualize every instance of non-standard language use with a short parenthetical comment in the transcript.

(2)
Interviewer: Et le bac ? Qu'est-ce c'est ?
Franck: Le bac ? C'est le baccalauréat. C'est une... un... une examination (standard French: un examen) qui a lieu à la fin de l'année de terminale.
(Interviewer: And the bac? What's that?
Franck: The bac? It's the baccalauréat. It's an...a...an examination that takes place at end of the last year.)
http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/node/29120

14 Another controversial linguistic feature of Français interactif is the inclusion of frequent translingual mixes produced by the American students. In (3), an American student named Karen introduces the chapter on residential living by giving a brief, narrated tour of her apartment. Karen begins with a sentence in French, but in the next sentence, she switches to English. However, embedded in her English are isolated French vocabulary
items that reflect the chapter's theme, for example, "maison" (house) and "appartement" (apartment). This kind of linguistic admixture, an L1 matrix containing isolated L2 words, is common in the discourse of beginning language students whose proficiency is rather limited. Moreover, Karen's codeswitching is logical given that her target audience is English-speaking learners of French much like herself.

(3)

C'est Karen encore et aujourd'hui nous sommes au centre ville Lyon. That is... right in the middle of downtown Lyon. And today, we are going to learn about la maison. In this chapter you will learn how to talk about your appartement or maison.

(It's Karen again and today we are in downtown Lyon. That is... right in the middle of downtown Lyon. And today we are going to learn about the house. In this chapter you will learn how to talk about your apartment or house.)

http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/fivideo/chapitre-08-la-maison-introduction

In (4), Karen creates a different admixture–a French matrix with the occasional English word such as "check" (regarder, vérifier) or "spoiler", a kind of automotive part. Apparently, because the interviewer is also bilingual, Karen feels free to use English vocabulary as needed. However, her laughter after each English item indicates that she may be self-conscious about this translingual practice. In addition, Karen's pronunciation of the name "Honda" is notable. When she first mentions the name of the website, she says it with an English pronunciation. Not recognizing the name, the startled interviewer asks Karen to repeat it. Rather than renaming the website, she gives further details about the website. When the interviewer asks her again to repeat the name, Karen responds with the English pronunciation followed by the French pronunciation. However, when she pronounces the name "Honda" in French, she begins to laugh. This seemingly trivial behavior points to a translingual pattern found in the discourse of both the native French speakers and the American learners of French: speakers tend to pronounce the name of a referent according to their communicative experience. In (4), Karen playfully pronounces the name "Honda" à la française without ever having heard it pronounced as such. The point is that whenever the pronunciation of a name violates a speaker's lived communicative experience, it is likely to sound strange to the speaker, eliciting smiles and laughter.

(4)

Interviewer: Est-ce que tu aimes surfer l'internet ? Est-ce que tu surfs souvent ?
Karen: Je ne surfe pas souvent mais je check [laugh] mon email souvent. C'est ça. Oh, j'aime le site de Honda...
Interviewer: De quoi ?
Karen: jouer avec les voitures. On peut ajouter les couleurs et ajouter un "spoiler" quoi. [laughter]
Interviewer: Comment s'appelle le site ?
Karen: Honda. [English pronunciation]
Interviewer: Oh, ok.
Karen: Honda. [French pronunciation] [laughter]
(Interviewer: Do you like to surf the internet? Do you surf often?
Karen: I don't surf often but I do check my email often. That's it. Oh, I like the Honda site.
Interviewer: The what?
Karen: To play with cars. You can add the colors and add a spoiler, you know.
Interviewer: What's the name of the site?
Karen: Honda [English pronunciation]
Related to many of the translingual practices such as those found in (3) and (4) is the concept of language play, also known as speech play. Ethnographer of speaking, Joel Sherzer (2002: 1) defines the concept as

the manipulation of elements and components of language in relation to one another, in relation to the social and cultural contexts of language use, and against the backdrop of other verbal possibilities in which it is not foregrounded.

Sherzer (2002: 2) defines the word "play" as "freedom... within a set of rules", as exemplified by a window that sits loosely within its frame. In other words, the window's degree of freedom within its prescribed boundaries can be referred to metaphorically as its play. Sherzer points out that language play has been overlooked by anthropologists and linguists intent on describing the rules of linguistic behavior rather than the violations of the rules. Along similar lines, applied linguist Guy Cook (2000: 3) argues foreign language educators have traditionally ignored the importance of language play because they tend to reduce the basic function of language to the exchange of referential information, that is, true-or-false statements about the world. A good example of this view comes from an influential teaching methods textbook Making communicative language teaching happen, in which the authors make the following claims about the functions of language:

... the two most common purposes of communication can be described as psychosocial and informational-cognitive. The psychosocial purpose of language involves using language to bond socially or psychologically with someone or some group or to engage in social behavior in some way. Thus, asking someone "How's it going?" might be less a desire to know the actual details of someone's life than a means of exchanging pleasantries or letting someone know that you care. The informational-cognitive use of language involves communication for the purpose of obtaining information, generally for some other task...The classroom context typically does not promote the kind of interaction that requires language to be used psychosocially. The classroom, however, does lend itself exceptionally well to the use of communicative language for informational-cognitive purposes. The classroom is ideally suited to the development and implementation of activities in which learners exchange information for a common purpose (Lee & Van Patten, 1995: 150-151).

The developers of Français interactif challenged Lee and Van Patten's claims by including many examples of spontaneous language play produced by native speakers who transgress ordinary usage to break a social expectation. In (5), the native speaker Franck intentionally violates the collocational restraint of the French adjective "marron" (chestnut) when describing his physical appearance.

(5)

Interviewer: Alors, comment êtes-vous ? Décrivez votre portrait physique et moral.
Franck: Physique, je... j'ai les cheveux marron, les yeux marron, les oreilles marron [laughs]. Mmm... portrait physique, j'ai les cheveux bruns, les yeux marron, taille moyenne.

(Interviewer: So, what do you look like? Describe your appearance and personality.
Franck: Appearance, I... I have chestnut hair, chestnut eyes, chestnut ears [laughs]. Ummmm...physical appearance, I have brown hair, chestnut eyes, medium build.)
http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/node/28940
The humor of Franck's language play derives from the collocation of the French adjective "marron" with the French noun "oreille" (ear). A similar effect is achieved in English by combining the adjective "auburn" that normally refers to hair color with other parts of the body (eg, auburn ears). In contrast to Lee and Van Patten (1995) who trivialize the psychosocial function of language for instructional purposes, the developers of Français interactif maintain that language play motivates learners to comprehend the message in order to uncover the humor. Thus, language play frequently draws attention to grammatical rules. For example, the language play in (5) requires the learner to pay attention to French grammar but in an enjoyable way.

In (6), the same speaker responds to the interviewer's question about his opinion of French food by playing with the semantic ambiguity of the verb "trouver" (to find vs to think) and the noun "cuisine" ("food" vs "kitchen").

(6)

Interviewer: Comment trouvez-vous la cuisine française ?
Franck: Ben, comment je la trouve... ? Dans la cuisine bien sûr (rires). Comment je trouve la cuisine française ? Ben... la... la cuisine française est... est... est très bonne... avec des... des aliments très frais.

(Interviewer: How do you find French food?
Franck: Well, how do I find it? In the kitchen, of course (laughter). How do I find French cooking? Well, French cooking is... is... is very good... with... very fresh foods/ingredients.)

http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/node/28986

The above examples of non-standard grammar, translingual practice and language play are similar in that they all break frames of expectations for pedagogical materials. As noted, commercially published language materials tend to represent the target language in its most standardized, monolingual form while emphasizing the informational-cognitive function of language. The developers of the OER wanted to break with such a monolingual/monocultural representation of the French language. To accomplish this goal, the developers had no choice but to forgo commercial textbooks and to create their own OER that captured the playful, translingual practices grounded in their own students' linguistic experiences.

3. Assessing the impact of the OER on the classroom ecology

While pedagogical materials have long been accepted as an integral component of language classes, very little empirical research has examined their impact on the classroom. An exception to this rule is Guerrattz & Johnson (2013), a study that makes use of the concept of classroom ecology (Tudor, 2001; van Lier, 1996) to explore the interrelationships among materials and other classroom elements in an ESL (English as a Second Language) grammar class offered at an American university. Guerrattz and Johnson (2013: 779) contend that

the framework of ecology, with its emphasis on affordances and emergence, provides a compelling lens through which to study the ways in which materials are actually deployed in classrooms, and how teachers and students conceive of the work being done there.
The relational term "affordance", a central feature of ecological approaches to learning and human development, is defined as "relations of possibility between animals and their environment" (Neisser, 1987: 21). Following Gibson (1977, 1979), van Lier (2004) describes the concept for the L2 learning environment as "relationships that provide a 'match' between something in the environment (...) and the learner" (2004: 96) or "what is available to the person to do something with" (2004: 91). The main point is that pedagogical affordances are not inherent in materials but must be perceived by the learner or the teacher. In the case of the Français interactif OER, the question becomes whether students and teachers notice the OER's innovative content, and whether they perceive it as an affordance for language learning and language teaching.

Therefore, to assess how the OER impacted the classroom ecology and whether it promoted greater critical language awareness as intended, the developers reviewed course evaluations and conducted classroom observations (Blyth, 2009a). A review of course evaluations showed that both students and teachers gave the new materials high marks, especially for accessibility, ease of use, and pedagogical clarity. However, in their evaluations, neither students nor teachers paid much attention to the innovative linguistic content derived from unscripted interviews with native and non-native speakers. Moreover, classroom observations showed no evidence that teachers made use of the new materials to engage students in critical discussions about language use. Discussions with the teachers revealed that they were only marginally aware themselves of the non-standard content and unclear how to contextualize such linguistic phenomena for their students. In other words, it appeared that the teachers did not have the critical language awareness themselves to take full advantage of the OER. In brief, the developers found that the OER was well-liked by the majority of users, but that its innovative linguistic content was not perceived as an affordance and therefore did not significantly impact traditional classroom practices.

As a follow-up to the written evaluations and classroom observations, the developers conducted a qualitative study designed to determine whether the students and teachers noticed the translingual practices as presented in the materials. And, if they had noticed these practices, why did the students and teachers choose to ignore them? The study was framed in terms of four specific research questions:

1. Do beginning American students notice the use of English in videos of spontaneous French discourse?
2. Does the proficiency level of the speaker in the video affect whether students notice the use of English?
3. If students notice the use of English in the videos, how do they interpret such behavior?
4. How do students feel about the inclusion of non-native speakers in pedagogical materials? (Blyth, 2009a: 164)

The methodology for the study consisted of a recorded think aloud protocol based on a typical pedagogical task that required students to watch preselected videos and glean information from them. The think aloud task was followed by a guided interview to investigate learner awareness of code choice. Eleven students were selected at random from eleven different sections of the course. Throughout the protocol, the investigator reminded the students to verbalize what they were thinking and feeling. Because it is possible to notice but not comment on the targeted phenomena during a think aloud protocol, a summative interview immediately followed the protocols to establish
conclusively whether the phenomena had been noticed. In addition to determining whether participants noticed phenomena, the summative interviews indicated the participants’ evaluation of the targeted language behavior (see Blyth, 2009a, for a complete description of the methodology and results).

An analysis of the students’ metalinguistic comments made during the think aloud protocol confirmed that most of the students noticed some, but not all, of the translingual phenomena. Participants frequently compared the comprehensibility of both native and non-native speakers, and yet, they only mentioned the non-native speakers’ proficiency levels. Moreover, students also compared their own proficiency with those of the non-native speakers, e.g., “I think that Laila is probably the... one of the students with a higher level of French. (...)... Blake’s more, more around my level of French. He’s probably just starting out” (Blyth 2009: 172). In contrast to the frequent remarks about comprehensibility and proficiency, only two student protocols out of a total of 77 contained comments about translingual practices such as code switching and borrowing, e.g., “[Karen] doesn’t know a lot of the vocabulary so she’ll say it in English which makes it easy for us but defeats the purpose of the exercises cause it’s not supposed to be in English” (Blyth 2009a: 172). Blyth (2009a: 180) surmises that the students’ lack of commentary about the use of English was most likely an artifact of the pedagogical task that focused student attention on comprehension rather than code choice.

Despite the lack of direct evidence in the think aloud protocols for noticing the use of English, the summative interviews demonstrated general awareness of the phenomenon. All participants claimed to have noticed the use of English by the non-native speakers, however they typically interpreted the phenomenon as evidence for a lack of proficiency. In other words, questions about the use of English invariably prompted the participants to evaluate the non-native speakers as deficient in some respect. Furthermore, Blyth (2009a: 180) notes that the participants routinely explained the use of English as a compensatory strategy used by speakers with limited proficiency. When it was pointed out to the participants that the native French speakers also used English, the participants seemed genuinely puzzled and did not attempt an explanation. In fact, some participants denied that the French natives used English at all, even after watching interviews that clearly contained examples of code switching. The divergent patterns of noticing seemed to be explained by the common association of translingualism with “deficient communicators” as argued by Belz (2003).

In response to the final research question about the benefits of non-native speakers in pedagogical materials, the students overwhelmingly said that such an innovation was not only logical but helpful in a variety of ways. The most frequently cited benefits were a greater awareness of communication strategies, such as circumlocution and a greater awareness of common learner errors. One participant described the benefits this way:

I think it is instructive. [The non-native speakers] speak slower. And they get it right. And it also shows, uhm, because they are on the hot seat with the video camera so they have to negotiate around words they don’t know. So it is kinda like techniques that I may have to use or can learn from if I’m put in a similar situation. So even though [Karen] had to compensate by using "check," or she didn’t know the word “vérifier", she still was able to continue. I think that it is is important to point out to students where the mistake comes from or tell students this is how you would answer that question or that situation. But I also think that it is instructive to see that [the non-native speakers] move in and out of the language (Blyth, 2009a: 177).
In summary, the assessment studies showed that the OER had not achieved the developers' goal of promoting critical language awareness and translingual creativity. In fact, classroom observations revealed that the new materials had not changed teachers' classroom practices to any measurable degree. Despite the OER's pedagogical innovations, the teachers continued to focus exclusively on the standardized language and ignore linguistic features perceived as non-standard.

4. Promoting translingualism and critical language awareness on Facebook

The assessment of the OER's impact on the classroom proved that students noticed the translingual practices portrayed in the materials, but were unable to act on them as affordances because teachers either ignored or proscribed such practices. In particular, observations showed that teachers appeared unsure how to interpret the pedagogical significance of translingualism, let alone embrace it as a set of classroom practices. For example, during discussions following observations, some teachers noted that the very idea of translingualism seemed to contradict the program's unstated but implied policy of maximizing the use of French in the classroom. As described by Canagarajah (2015), a strict separation of languages is the defining feature of "the monolingual orientation" of many language educators. According to Van Compernolle (2015: 89), "received wisdom in L2 teaching maintains that for L2 development to occur, exclusive (or virtually) exclusive use of the L2 is necessary." However, a growing body of research demonstrates that the L1 can actually facilitate L2 learning (e.g., Turnbull & Dailey-O’Cain, 2009; Macaro, 2009; Levine, 2011). Nevertheless, teachers who participated in the assessment of the OER were either unaware of these findings or unable to overcome their own longstanding monolingual behaviors and attitudes.

4.1. Creating an Affinity Space

The developers concluded that pedagogical materials alone were unlikely to change the social dynamics of the foreign language classroom in ways that would promote translingualism. Rather than revising the OER itself, the developers decided to "open up" the classroom by creating an online space beyond the prescriptive reach of language educators and program administrators. In essence, the developers decided to create a space where teachers and students could engage with francophones and francophiles from around the world in an ongoing, critical dialogue about linguistic and cultural issues. In addition, the developers sought to provide participants with the freedom to play with the French language in new and creative ways usually forbidden in traditional classrooms.

Based on recent studies that tout the affordances of social networking for foreign and second language learning (Blake, 2008; Blattner & Fiori, 2009; Blattner & Fiori, 2011; Lomicka & Lord, 2009), the developers decided to add Facebook to their OER as an appropriate resource for building what they envisioned as an affinity space (Gee, 2003, 2005). Gee (2003: 67) defines an affinity space as "a place or set of places where people affiliate with others based primarily on shared activities, interests, and goals, not shared race, class culture, ethnicity, or gender." A key aspect of an affinity group is its
democratic ethos that privileges the value of openness; anyone may join an affinity group as long as they wish to participate in a common activity with like-minded others. However, participation does not necessarily lead to a sense of shared identity as typically entailed by the terms "community" or "culture." Thorne (2011) argues that many social scientists and language educators adopt the term "community" because of its positive connotations of collective support and mutual benefit. However, Gee (2005) purposefully contrasts the term "affinity space" with the closely related term "community of practice" as originally defined by the anthropologists Lave and Wenger (1991) who emphasized the role of shared practices in identity formation. A good example of an affinity space is the massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) World of Warcraft. Participants are not connected by a sense of belonging or membership based on shared social criteria such as gender or ethnicity, but rather by their interest in playing the game.

To moderate the Facebook discussions, the developers recruited a linguist from another university known for her bilingual fluency in French and English, as well as her high degree of translilingual play. The developers encouraged the moderator to select posts that reflected the five CLA-inspired goals as described by Train (2003): (1) to explore language ideologies; (2) to appreciate linguistic variation; (3) to question the dominant linguistic and cultural knowledge; (4) to reflect upon linguistic norms; and (5) to gain insight into the sociocultural construction of identity and reality. Furthermore, the developers asked the moderator to do more than simply post and discuss provocative media. Rather, the moderator would need to model translilingual practices herself in order to create a translilingual disposition among the participants. This belief was in keeping with Canagarajah’s view that the translilingual nature of global languages spoken as lingua francas such as English or French was best grasped in terms of dynamic meaning-making processes rather than static products:

... orientating to the global spread of English as a translilingual practice enables us to address the common processes underlying these diverse and emergent varieties. A focus on the products of these common underlying processes can be misleading. These models end up reifying each variety, limiting further changes, and preventing us from being open to studying further diversification. The focus on the product also takes our attention away from the processes of contact, mobility, and sedimentation that underlie these varieties. It also prevents us from understanding the dynamics of meaning-making practices, as we are made to focus on the superficial outward manifestations of the form (Canagarajah, 2015: 56).

Launched in May 2011, the Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/francais.interactif/?fref=ts) initially targeted users of the Français interactif OER. As a consequence, most of the early participants were students and teachers using the OER in North America and in Europe. However, the usage demographics changed quickly. By the end of the second year, analytics indicated rapid growth among L1 and L2 francophones from North Africa and the Middle East who knew little about the OER. Today, the Français interactif Facebook affinity group includes students and teachers of French, as well as people who mainly identify as French speakers and/or francophiles. As of August 2016, the top ten countries based on usage rates were Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Brazil, Mexico, France, US, Egypt, Spain and Italy. And the top ten languages used on the page were French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Italian, Vietnamese, Romanian, Turkish and Polish. In addition to these important usage metrics, the Facebook page had received a quarter million "likes" and was averaging three thousand visitors per day in August 2016. Finally, current Facebook "engagement metrics" (eg, clicks and shares) indicate that
posts are viewed by tens of thousands of users on a daily basis. In addition, hundreds of users "react" to the posts by commenting, liking or sharing them with others.

4.2. Social Dynamics of Français interactif Facebook

Herring (2007) classifies computer-mediated discourse according to two basic types of influence: medium (technological) and situation (social) influences. According to Herring (2007), these influences "are presented in an unordered, non-hierarchical relationship, on the further assumption that one cannot be assigned theoretical precedence over the other for [computer-mediated discourse] as a whole." Herring further subdivides these two categories into subgroups called facets. Technological facets include synchronicity, persistence of transcript and degree of anonymity among other things. Social facets include such things as participation structure (eg, one-to-one, one-to-many), participant characteristics (eg, demographics, language proficiency), tone (eg, serious, playful) and theme/topic (eg, politics, travel, popular culture). In brief, participant interaction on the Facebook page can be described as a form of written, asynchronous, one-to-many communication. The tone changes according to the topic. The moderator begins each interaction by posting a prompt on the Facebook "wall" for others to read and respond to. Subsequent responses are usually brief (a few words or sentences) and explicitly related to the prompt. On occasion, participants reply to each other by posting a comment or a media selection. The result is a complex, multilayered dialogue called a polylogue (Marcoccia, 2004), where multiple participants are engaged in nested conversations within the same global interaction.

In this section, we illustrate the role played by the social dynamics afforded to the participants within the parameters of the Facebook page. No attempt is made to give an exhaustive description of participant interaction, something that would be well beyond the scope of this article. Moreover, only a small sample of each lengthy discussion is examined. Rather, the goal of this section is to exemplify the most salient translingual practices of this particular affinity group.

4.2.1. Code mixing

In keeping with the translingual goals of the affinity space, the moderator posted many prompts that explicitly mix French with other languages. Since the page's inception in 2011, a post featuring an article entitled "Don't Read This Article Si T'es Pas Bilingue: Le World's Premier-Ever de Son Kind" (Don't read this article if you aren't bilingual: The world's first ever of its kind) (Hazan 2016), stands as the second most popular post in terms of participant engagement (2,697 participant "responses", and 96,000 participants "reached"). With this particular post, the moderator had hoped to provoke participants to express their feelings about the mixing of languages in journalistic publications. The original post came from a blog written by Montreal native Jeremy Hazan, who states that his goal was to write the first "mixed code" article about bilingualism. The prompt provoked an overwhelmingly positive response from the participants seen in Figure 1, who generally agreed that "franglais," a mixture of French and English, often employed by Canadian bilinguals, was a valid form of communication. In fact, many participants called for more postings along these lines. More importantly, the participants chose to demonstrate their agreement by mimicking the author's translingual practice. For example, one commenter, a native Spanish speaker, responds by mixing three languages,
Spanish, French and English: "J'adore this article! I would love lire mucho más comme ça!" (I love this article! I would love to read many more like it!). Another respondent answers with a similarly mixed post of French and English: "Funny! Je ne suis pas sûre que cet article has improved my cognitive processing power..." (Funny! I am not sure if this article has improved...). These mixed responses are followed by two non-mixed responses, one in Portuguese and one in English, that are then followed by two more mixed responses. Thus, the moderator's post succeeded in encouraging participants to embrace the translilingual practice of code mixing/switching.

Figure 1 – Mixing French and English on a blog about Montreal.

4.2.2. Modality mixing

In addition to posting about mixed codes, the moderator frequently posted content that emphasized orthographic creativity and the mixing of modalities, both hallmarks of computer-mediated language. A good example is a comic by the popular Belgian artist Frédéric Deligne that humorously illustrates the generational divide between language teachers and their digitally native students (Deligne, 2015). In it, the teacher asks the student to conjugate the verb "aimer" (to like) in the present indicative tense, a shibboleth of the foreign language classroom. The student conjugates the verb in an Internet-inspired vernacular that mixes French subject pronouns with the Facebook "thumbs up" icon. In her comment accompanying the image, the moderator playfully tweaks the student's usage. The moderator suggests that the "correct" usage should be "J'[thumbs up icon]" in keeping with the grammar rule that requires elision whenever a French verb begins with a vowel. Many commenters, whose responses are visualized in Figure 2, found this image humorous, and followed the moderator's lead by producing...
their own playful variants, such as "J'lol" (I'm laughing out loud) and "J'mdr", a well-known abbreviation for "mort de rire" (I'm dying from laughter). Moreover, most participants strongly agreed that such translingual practices indexed a new linguistic reality, despite what prescriptivists may tell us. For example, a French teacher respondent reacts to the post with the comment "ma vie quotidienne" (my daily life), while another suggests that the student's usage represents "la nouvelle grammaire française" (the new French grammar). In a display of solidarity with the imagined student, another respondent conjugates the verb with the addition of emoticons and emojis, another example of mixed modalities.

Figure 2 – Mixing linguistic signs and images in imagined classroom discourse.

4.2.3. Multilingual subjectivity

The post that yielded the discussion in Figure 3 was a reposted article by the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Language, originally published by Lewis Humphries (2016), writing for Lifehack about the phenomenology of multilingualism. The post provocatively claims that when multilingual speakers use their different languages, they experience a "personality change." According to the moderator, the intent of this post was to expose readers to the idea that language was deeply implicated in the construction of one's subjectivity. In fact, the moderator reveals what she finds to be different about her own personality when she speaks French, eg, "My francoself is a lot more impatient lol." Nearly all of the active commenters agree with the article's premise, many sharing instances of how their own personality changes whenever they move between languages. While most participants commented about their use of French and English, some people mentioned similar experiences related to the use of a variety of...
other languages: eg one respondent talks about her usage of Hindi, another her usage of Dutch, and two others of Spanish. In responding with their own personal testimonials, participants seem to agree that language use is closely related to the subjective experience of reality. Notably, one of the Spanish users' comments emphasizes that language learning itself is an emotionally-laden enterprise with affective consequences, eg, "I feel my tone in [English] comes off as angry because of my underlying frustrations."

Figure 3 – Experiencing different personalities when speaking different languages.

4.2.4. Linguistic variation

To expose followers firsthand to the linguistic variation of the francophone world, the moderator routinely posted video clips of francophones speaking their native dialects. One post featured a YouTube video published by Alex Décotte and posted on Facebook by bourlingue.net about French speakers in Louisiana (Décotte, 2010). In the clip, the filmmaker follows a group of Louisiana residents who discuss their French usage over the years, as they reunite as part of a weekly French conversation hour at a local café. The first commenter denounces the speakers in the clip for having a pronunciation that she characterizes as "terrible" and "appalling." Objecting to the dialect on purely aesthetic grounds, she suggests that these francophones would be better off speaking English because it would be "less harsh." This comment provokes strong objections. A respondent to the first commenter chastises her for being a linguistic snob. Another commenter, who identifies herself as a French teacher, explains that the Louisiana accent is the result of language contact between French-speaking settlers and speakers of indigenous languages. In the next interaction, another commenter claims that the French influence in Louisiana was minor compared to the Spanish influence. This claim is met with stiff
resistance from participants who contend, based on socio-historical evidence, that Louisiana French is a direct descendant of the variety spoken by the Acadian French settlers who immigrated to Louisiana and mixed with the native population. While the participants hold very different attitudes about varieties of French, most argue for the importance of linguistic tolerance. Nevertheless, this rather contentious discussion demonstrates why calling an affinity space a "community" is highly problematic. In the context of the Français interactif Facebook page, participants share only an affinity for the French language (however they may conceptualize it), while holding widely divergent beliefs and opinions. The goal is not to construct a "group think" that rejects all forms of prescriptivism, but rather to create a space that fosters the open sharing of diverse points of view.

Figure 4 – Commenting on the origins and aesthetics of Louisiana French.
5. Conclusion

The development and implementation of the Français interactif curriculum is a story of how a single university language program struggled to reconceptualize its goals to better prepare students for the realities of a rapidly changing world. The developers were initially concerned that commercial textbooks essentialized the French language by employing an outdated paradigm that focuses exclusively on a single, highly standardized national language (Dervin & Liddicoat, 2014; Kearney, 2015; Levine, 2011; Risager, 2007). The developers maintained that such an approach to language study would lead students and teachers to conceptualize language learning as the memorization of static knowledge, instead of the critical understanding of humanity's semiotic capacity for negotiating meaning among different social groups and cultures. The result of such a traditional language program, it was feared, would be the perpetuation of the very stereotypes that the study of languages and cultures seeks to dispel.

At its most fundamental level, the case study of curricular change recounted in this essay is ultimately about how we choose to react to social change. In a recent New York Times editorial, columnist Thomas Friedman (2016) distinguishes between "Wall People" and "Web People" to illustrate opposing reactions to the "violent winds" of global change. According to Friedman, Wall People are characterized by "a feeling that the things that anchor us in the world and provide meaning are being swept away." As a result, Wall People tend to build physical and metaphorical walls to protect themselves from change. In contrast, Web People view social change as inevitable and therefore "focus on empowering more people to be able to compete and collaborate in a world without walls." Despite the problems inherent in such a simplistic binary distinction, Friedman makes an
important point about the relationship of openness to social change: "Web People understand that in times of rapid change, open systems are always more flexible, resilient and propulsive; they offer the chance to feel and respond first to change" (italics added for emphasis). In an analogous fashion, the developers of the Français interactif curriculum explicitly rejected monolingual/monocultural and prescriptivist stances that wall off languages and cultures into discrete and static entities. In contrast, they viewed the French language as inherently dynamic and therefore encouraged students and teachers to adopt the translingual practices native to open social networks as a "chance to feel and respond first to change." In other words, the goal of the Français interactif curriculum was to help students and teachers conceptualize the French language as a complex, adaptive system that was constantly being changed by its users. As Diane Larsen-Freeman has claimed, all languages are inherently dynamic and emergent because they are themselves open systems: "Open systems continue to change and adapt as their dynamics are 'fed' by energy coming into the system, whereas closed systems reach a static state or equilibrium" (Larsen-Freeman, 2011: 510).

The metaphors of the wall and the web emphasize salient differences between closed and open systems. Blyth, paraphrasing the ideas of Open Education advocate David Wiley (Wiley 2009), contends that the adjectives "closed" and "open" are frequently used to describe opposing educational systems based on a set of prototypical features:

Closed educational systems are defined by a heavy reliance on analogue materials such as printed textbooks, a static meeting place such as a classroom that is "tethered" to the physical world, the isolation of knowledge into discrete units, a single path of learning institutionalized in syllabi and pedagogical best practices, and a conception of learning as the transmission of ready-made knowledge from a producer (the teacher) to a consumer (the learner). In contrast, open educational systems emphasize the use of digital materials that are easily edited and customizable, a virtual or mobile learning environment, the integration of knowledge with social networks that connect people to ideas, an effort to personalize instruction as much as possible, and a belief that knowledge is best understood as a creative process of co-constructed meaning within a community of practice (Blyth, 2012: 197).

However, such a contrast construes educational systems as a simple dichotomy. A more realistic and nuanced construal would be in terms of a continuum that allows for hybridity. In terms of a continuum, the developers of Français interactif sought to open up their curriculum by blending the linguistic behaviors found in closed, physical classrooms with the translingual behaviors common to open, online environments.

Such an interpretation of the events lends credence to the claim made in the OER Evidence Report 2013-2014 (OER Research Hub, 2014: 21) that

OER use and exposure leads to reflection on practice by educators. It causes them to incorporate a wider range of content, to consider different teaching approaches and to reflect upon their role as educator.

In other words, because the original OER failed to modify classroom behaviors, the developers were forced to create a Facebook page where translingual practices were not only promoted but rewarded. It was thus the difference between the standard practice objectives of the instructors and the non-standard practice objectives of the Facebook moderator that served as the conditioning factor for the variable across-group behavior. The end result of the curriculum development project was a diglossic compromise in which teachers and students made use of standard French in the classroom while employing non-standard varieties in the open environment of Facebook.
The compromise struck by the developers highlights the relationship of the social dynamics of language use with the concept of "degrees of openness." The developers came to realize that the desired changes in classroom practices would require significant changes to the teachers' professional education. However, changes to the teacher education program were beyond the control of the development team. Therefore, a simpler and more flexible solution was the addition of a moderated social network where students could engage in open discussions about language and culture without teacher supervision. Moreover, teachers, if interested, were also able to participate in the discussion that benefitted their own critical language awareness. The modular design that mixed open and closed elements appealed to both students and teachers (Conole, 2013). It is important to note that nothing prevents future users of the materials from modifying and adapting them. For example, teachers who wish to emphasize translingual practices in their own classrooms are free to create their own activities based on the OER's non-standard content.

Finally, this case study points out the apparent contradiction in any attempt to represent translingualism in pedagogical materials that ultimately constitute static products. Canagarajah (2015: 56) claims that it is difficult to grasp translingual practices, that is, the "processes of contact, mobility, and sedimentation," by focusing on its products. Despite the open nature of OER, which makes them more flexible and dynamic than traditional print materials, they are still undeniably products. As such, we argue that an open social network appears better designed to raise learners' awareness of the dynamic and emergent nature of translingualism. Therefore, if language teachers are to succeed in helping their students understand translingualism, they should engage them in an open environment where translingual practices are becoming the norm. This is what we mean when we refer to "translingualism as an open educational language practice."

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NOTES

1. Français interactif comprises a print-on-demand textbook and an accompanying website that includes audio and video recordings as well as a complete pedagogical grammar with self-correcting exercises. The OER carries a CC-BY 3.0 license that gives users the right to remix and repurpose the content. It is accessible online at http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/home

2. Français interactif has undergone multiple iterations of development and revision since it was launched in 2004. The original developmental team comprised three faculty members (Carl Blyth, Karen Kelton and Nancy Guilloteau), but many other faculty members and graduate students contributed over the years, including Amanda Dalola, the second author.

ABSTRACTS

The term Open Educational Practice (OEP) is often defined as the process of creating and adapting OER. However, in the context of this study, we take OEP to include any practice that "opens up" a "closed" educational ecosystem by expanding learners' social networks and by increasing learners' participation and autonomy. Our study is framed in terms of one of the OER Research Hub's guiding hypotheses: "OER leads to critical reflection by educators, with evidence of improvement in their practice." In this case, the improved practice refers to how French-language educators sought to overcome prescriptivist attitudes linked to the "monolingual orientation" of traditional classroom instruction by adopting a translingual paradigm in keeping with recent research in applied linguistics (Cook, 1992, 1999; Blyth, 1995; MLA Report, 2007; Kramsch, 2010; Levine, 2011; Canagarajah, 2015). More precisely, we examine how language educators extended an OER titled Français interactif (Blyth, 2009, 2012; Kelton, Guilloteau & Blyth, 2011) by creating an accompanying Facebook page as an online "affinity space" (Gee, 2005) where traditionally proscribed practices such as code switching and lexical borrowing were not only accepted but encouraged. Following Canagarajah (2015), we understand translingual practice as an umbrella term referring to a language learner's integrated repertoire of communicative strategies based on multiple languages and modalities. We examine the social dynamics of various translingual practices that routinely occur on the Français interactif Facebook page and conclude by arguing that open, translingual affinity spaces provide an ideal place for raising learners' critical language awareness.

Le terme "pratiques éducatives libres" (PEL) est souvent défini comme le processus de création et d'adaptation de ressources éducatives libres (REL). Dans cette étude, nous estimons qu'une PEL est toute pratique qui "ouvre" un écosystème éducatif fermé en élargissant les réseaux sociaux des apprenants et en augmentant leur participation et leur autonomie. Notre étude se base sur une des hypothèses de travail les plus importantes de l'OER Research Hub: "les REL entraînent une réflexion critique chez les enseignants, et on peut montrer qu'il y a un progrès dans leur pratique". Ici ce progrès fait référence à la manière dont les enseignants de français ont tenté de surmonter les attitudes prescriptives liées à "l'orientation monolingue" des méthodes d'enseignement traditionnelles, en adoptant un paradigme translinguistique conformément aux recherches récentes en linguistique appliquée (MLA Report, 2007 ; Kramsch, 2010 ; Canagarajah,
Cette étude suit le développement, l'évaluation et l'application d'une REL intitulée *Français interactif* (Blyth, 2009, 2012 ; Kelton, Guilloteau & Blyth, 2011) qui juxtapose les pratiques langagières standards et les pratiques langagières non standards pour les apprenants de français. Dans une première étape, la REL a été créée dans le but de faire remarquer les pratiques translinguistiques dans la salle de classe. Ensuite, la réussite de cette REL a été évaluée en examinant les commentaires des étudiants à propos de ces pratiques translinguistiques : la plupart d'entre eux les ont remarquées et les ont trouvées utiles, même si aucun des enseignants ne les a mentionnées pendant les cours. Suite à cette découverte, il a été décidé de tenter d'étendre l'objectif de la REL en créant une page Facebook accompagnatrice qui sert d'"espace d'affinité" en ligne (Gee, 2005). Dans ce milieu, ces pratiques langagières typiquement interdites, telles que le changement de code et les emprunts lexicaux, étaient non seulement présentes et tolérées mais encouragées. Suivant les traces de Canagarajah (2015), nous estimons que "pratique translinguistique" est un terme générique qui fait référence au répertoire intégré de stratégies communicatives chez l'apprenant en langues, lequel est basé sur plusieurs langues et modalités. Dans cette étude, nous examinons la dynamique sociale de diverses pratiques translinguistiques qui se produisent systématiquement sur la page Facebook du *Français interactif*, et nous concluons que les espaces d'affinité ouverts représentent un milieu idéal pour sensibiliser l'apprenant à une prise de conscience critique de la langue, confirmant ainsi que les langues sont des systèmes ouverts : dynamiques, émergents et complexes.

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**rubriques** Points de vue / échanges

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