

Dr. Sathya Rao*, Dr. Martine Cavanagh**, Sarah Fedoration, Emmanuelle Smith**, Dr. Eleni Stroulia***, Dr. Laurent Cammarata**
MLCS*, Campus Saint-Jean (Education)**, Computing Science***, Edmonton Catholic Schools

Conclusion & Future Developments

Conclusion:

- FP can positively contribute to the teaching and learning of French language and culture (Cavanagh et al., 2020).
- Its success depends greatly on the involvement of instructors and community partners.
- Instructors acknowledged the benefits of FP and recommended that the app be part of the regular classwork.
- FP is now technically viable and has almost 450 users to date.
- For the FP to reach its full potential, all stakeholders will have to play their part.

Future developments

- A new funded research project in collaboration with a local school board is under way to investigate the benefits of FP as a tool of professional development for French immersion and FSL teachers.
- Workshops on FP will be made available to teachers through the Alberta French Language Consortium (AFLEC)
- We hope to deploy the FP in French Immersion programs and Francophone schools throughout Edmonton, and beyond (Rao et al., 2021)

Background

- Language learners are often reluctant to practice their second language outside the classroom for a variety of reasons (e.g., they are not comfortable enough, lack information, etc.).
- With 86,705 Francophones, Alberta is one of the fastest-growing French-speaking communities in Canada. Edmonton offers a wide range of French-speaking activities throughout the year.
- Ample research has demonstrated that practising a language in authentic and immersive settings has countless benefits.
- To encourage students to practice French outside the classroom, the Department of Modern Languages & Cultural Studies (MLCS) and Campus Saint Jean (CSJ) launched in 2012 a first version of Le Francopass as a downloadable pdf social passport. However, there were limitations with the paper format.

Le Francopass Web App (FP)

- As an improvement to the paper version, a beta version of FP was developed in the summer of 2019 using *Django* high-level Python Web framework. New features have been added over time (e.g., bilingual interface).
- FP is based on the *SU perks* application developed by Computing Science students to encourage participation in Students' Union-led events.
- FP uses various gaming strategies to motivate students to attend French-speaking events on campus and in the local francophone community. Gamification has been used successfully in the area of second language teaching and learning (cf., Reinhardt 2019).

Users can:



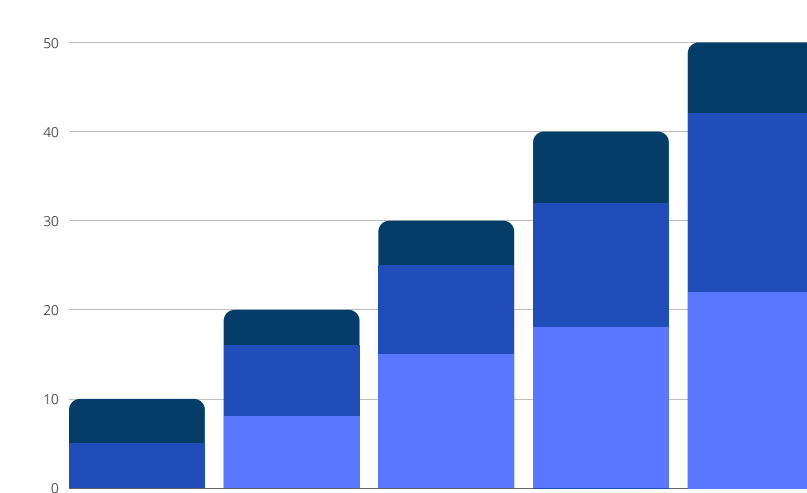
- FP relies on a network of French community partners (e.g., Alliance française of Edmonton, FRAP-PASE, and L'Unité Théâtre) who use the app to advertise their events and contribute with donations.



Results

The results are those of the small-scale test as the large-scale test had to be cancelled due to the COVID 19:

- Students who attended French immersion programs and Francophone were less engaged with FP than French learners.
- Most students reported that:
 - attending events increased their motivation to learn French.
 - their perception of the French community had increased.
 - their knowledge of francophone culture had improved.
 - responded positively to the gamification component.
 - indicated that they would recommend FP to their peers (Ashley et al. p. 246-7).



1. Scan the QR code and sign up;
2. Look up for "Affiche FP" in the Events list;
3. Click on "scan QR code" and scroll down
4. Enter the code:

FPp0stEr

Research Hypotheses & Methods

Some research hypotheses:

1. FP can increase users' motivation to learn about French language and culture.
2. FP can improve users' perception of the French community.
3. FP can increase users' perceived competence in French.
4. Gamification features (e.g., the leaderboard) makes FP appealing to users.

Methods:

1. The research was divided into a small-scale (September-December 2019) and a large-scale (January 2020-) test.
 - a. The small-scale test included a limited number of students from the Department of MLCS and CSJ (Education), and allowed us to fix technical issues.
 - b. The large-scale test was open to any UofA students with an interest for French language and culture.
2. Pre- and post-trial questionnaires were administered to participants before and after they used FP to determine qualitative changes.
3. Participants included UofA students and instructors (mostly from MLCS and CSJ).

References

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