



Final Evaluation Report:

Year Three of the “French for the Workforce” Program

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Executive Summary

This report presents the results of a seven-month-long evaluation of Youth Employment Services' (YES) French for the Workforce (FFTWF) program, conducted by the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT). The program aims to help participants improve their French-language competencies and confidence, and to apply these skills in a job-seeking or workplace context. This is the third evaluation PERT has completed of this program, the previous two of which took place from 2021-2022 (Year 1) and 2022-2023 (Year 2).

The program and evaluation changed significantly between Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 1, the program was solely oriented toward job seekers in the Montréal area. In Year 2, the program was expanded to include employed individuals and individuals from the regions of Québec.

Evaluators collected quantitative and qualitative data to assess the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and scalability of the FSL employment program. The quantitative data was collected through pre- and post-course surveys that enabled evaluators to track the self-assessed progress of participants. Evaluators collected qualitative data through open-ended survey questions, course observation, participant interviews, and activity reports produced by program staff.

Key findings:

- The majority of participants surveyed (82.6%) indicated that the FFTWF course met their needs.
- The majority of participants experienced improvement in their basic French-language competencies. Participants experienced the most growth in their basic written communication. Prior to the course, only 18.4% of respondents indicated that their written skills were “strong” or “good,” compared to 60.8% of participants following the completion of the program.
- Participants also experienced growth in their French-language confidence. Confidence in writing was where participants saw the most improvement; 78.2% indicated that they either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt confident writing a cover letter or business email following the course, compared to the 15.8% who agreed prior.
- Participants expressed interest in further learning, either through the extension of the class or through additional practice sessions for competencies such as spoken French.
- One program is unable to meet the diverse needs of different participants. Multiple program formats, such as daytime and evening courses, intensive courses and regular/weekly courses, were identified as options that would better meet different participants' needs. Similarly, additional program content, such as industry-specific vocabulary, was also identified by participants as an offering that would better meet their needs.

Evaluators utilized this feedback to develop four key recommendations that could be implemented in future programming.



Recommendations:

- Maintain small class sizes
- Introduce different program formats and/or contents
- Increase opportunities to practice spoken French
- Create an online platform for participants to connect

Introduction

The Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT) is a not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to address the employment and employability challenges facing the English-speaking communities in Québec. PERT has partnered with Youth Employment Services (YES), an employment service delivery organization, to assess their French-as-a-second-language (FSL) program, which involves FSL training courses for English-speaking participants from Québec. These courses aim to better integrate English-speaking participants into the labour market by offering them practical language training and support to improve their employment prospects. The program, entitled “French for the Workforce” (FFTWF), is offered in partnership with the Regional Development Network (RDN).

The main research questions are as follows:

1. What are the main promotion and recruitment methods put into place? How are these tailored to specific user groups? Are these methods effective in reaching diverse user groups?
2. What is the impact of the FFTWF program on participants who follow and have completed the course? What is the program’s impact on competencies such as written communication, comprehension, verbal communication, cultural barriers, confidence, and application of learnings?
3. What are the specific programming needs of the participants, particularly participants from the regions? Can these be met within the context of a general, or “unadapted” course? Do these participants experience the same impacts from the program?
4. What are the main mechanisms put in place to achieve the program's objectives and to what extent do they influence its effectiveness? Is this type of intervention sustainable and scalable in other communities? In which contexts and environments is the program most and least successful?
5. In what ways can the programming be modified to accommodate different levels of language learners or different employment contexts and to improve uptake and impacts? When modifications are implemented between cohorts, what have been the effects of the modifications?

PERT evaluators conducted an iterative evaluation of the FFTWF program over its three-year run, aiming to test and improve the program throughout its duration. As such, the evaluation context and research questions have shifted considerably over the last three years. Year 2 saw the addition of RDN as a partner to facilitate the recruitment and participation of English speakers from the regions of Québec and to understand the ability of the program to meet their needs. Therefore, the Year 2 and Year 3 evaluations explicitly considered this audience's experiences and needs in their research questions and methodology.

The Year 1 final evaluation report also recommended increased promotion and marketing efforts. For this reason, promotion and recruitment efforts were included among the research questions in the Year 2 and Year 3 evaluations.

Third, the Year 2 FFTWF program expanded its target audience to include individuals who were already employed, in addition to job seekers. The program's content and scope of the evaluation research questions in Year 2 and Year 3 were modified to reflect this.

Finally, the Year 2 final evaluation report recommended modifications including smaller class sizes, increased written assignments, and increased opportunities for networking and casual exchange among participants. For this reason, the content of the program, as well as the research questions for Year 3, were revised to consider these modifications.

Following these modifications, the main objectives of the Year 3 evaluation were to:

- Acquire insights and assemble knowledge about the participants' experiences and assess the effectiveness and relevance of the program for various English-speaking participants across Québec
- Assess the impact of program modifications on participants' experience and French-language learning

Program Overview

In Year 3 of the FFTWF program (June 2023-December 2023), three sessions were offered:

1. June: June 7th 2023 - July 14th 2023
2. September: Sept. 13th 2023 - Oct 18th 2023
3. November: Nov. 8th 2023 - Dec. 8th 2023

Each session spanned five weeks, covering the following themes:

1. WEEK 1: Introducing the Course Plan, Comprehension and Communication: Job Posting
2. WEEK 2: Comprehension and Communication: Interview Questions
3. WEEK 3: Written Communication: Cover Letter
4. WEEK 4: CV Preparation and Course Review
5. WEEK 5: The Experiential Learning Week

Each week, there were two classes that mixed theory and exercises. These classes took place online and were facilitated by the course instructor. The class participants were also mixed: they included individuals with different French-language proficiency levels and individuals with different employment situations.

There was also a guest speaker for each session.

Evaluation Methodology

To gain insights into the research questions outlined above, the PERT evaluators used quantitative and qualitative research methods in the form of:

- Social media and marketing analytics assessment of program outreach
- Pre- and post-course online surveys of participants (using Survey Monkey)
- In-class observation (six observations)
- Post-course, semi-structured interviews with program participants (nine interviews)
- Activity reports produced by program staff

The evaluation team conducted the survey, observations, and interviews. The evaluation team analyzed the data, and the results are presented in the Findings section.

The social media and marketing analytics and activity reports were externally prepared by the program partners and summarized their outreach efforts and insights on operating the program. The outreach efforts and insights are included in the Findings section.

Survey Methodology

Two surveys were administered to program participants: the pre-course survey and post-course survey. The pre-course survey was distributed to each program cohort prior to the start date of the program. In total, the pre-course survey received 39 responses.

The post-course survey was shared with program participants during the final class. Participants were given 10-15 minutes during class to complete the survey. The post-course survey received a total of 23 responses.

Some quotations from open-ended survey responses have been used in this report. Quotes have been lightly edited for clarity¹ without changing the meaning or intent of the speaker.

In-class Observations

We conducted two in-class observations during each cohort, for a total of six observations. The evaluator joined the class Zoom and attended with cameras off. The evaluator took notes regarding the class activities, instructor's approach, interactions between instructor and participant, participant engagement, online and Zoom tools, etc. These observations provided insights into the day-to-day functioning of the FFTWF program and the ways in which participants engaged with the program.

¹ Examples of editing are: removing repeated words; omitting filler words; removing identifying information; and shortening long quotes.

Interviews

We conducted interviews with three participants from each cohort, for a total of nine interviews. Interviews took place from August 2023 to January 2024. Interviewees were contacted via email following the completion of the course; emails were sent to all course participants, and interviewees were selected randomly and compensated with a \$25 gift card.

Interviewees were diverse, including individuals who spoke English as their mother tongue as well as those who spoke a language other than English or French as their mother tongue, men, women, individuals of diverse ages, and both employed and unemployed individuals across different industries.

We utilized a semi-structured interviewee approach, querying interviewees about their French-language learning history, career path, experience in the FFTWF program, and specific changes made to the program between Year 2 and Year 3. Evaluation Timeline

Session	Evaluation Action	Date
	Program provider and stakeholder meeting (PERT, YES, and RDN)	April 27th, 2023
Session 1 June 7th 2023 - July 14th 2023 (not including the dates June 23rd nor June 30th)	Meeting (YES, PERT)	June 15th, 2023
	In-Class Observation: regular lesson	June 28th, 2023
	In-Class Observation: last lesson	July 14th, 2023
	Meeting (YES, PERT)	August 3rd, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
Session 2 Sept. 13th 2023 - Oct 18th 2023 (Oct. 18th was a make up day)	In-Class Observation: regular lesson	September 20th, 2023
	In-Class Observation: regular lesson	October 6th, 2023
Session 3 Nov. 8th 2023 - Dec. 8th 2023	Participant Interview (Session 2)	November 21st, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 2)	November 28th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 2)	November 29th, 2023

Session	Evaluation Action	Date
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	In-Class Observation: last lesson	July 14th, 2023
	Meeting (YES, PERT)	August 3rd, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 1)	August 15th, 2023
	In-Class Observation: regular lesson	November 29th, 2023
	In-Class Observation: last lesson	December 8th, 2023
	Meeting (PERT, RDN)	December 11th, 2023
	Participant Interview (Session 3)	January 4th, 2024
	Participant Interview (Session 3)	January 8th, 2024
	Participant Interview (Session 3)	January 8th, 2024
	Meeting, (PERT, RDN, YES)	January 12th, 2024
	Meeting (PERT, RDN)	February 15th, 2024
Final Evaluation Report Submitted		February 16th, 2024

Findings

Recruitment and Enrolment

Participant recruitment was a joint effort between YES and RDN. YES promoted the program through sponsored social media ads, email blasts to subscribers to their newsletter (more than 1000 individuals), word of mouth in other offerings, and client referrals.

RDN promoted the program through social media posts.

In Year 3, the enrolment targets for the course were decreased to 12 participants following the recommendation to limit class size that came out of the Year 2 evaluation. Previously, class size was between approximately 15 to 20 people, which participants expressed was too large to enable them to practice their spoken French.

Initial enrolment numbers in Year 3:

- Session 1: 17 participants
- Session 2: 13 participants
- Session 3: 12 participants

Final enrolment numbers in Year 3:

- Session 1: 12 participants
- Session 2: 10 participants
- Session 3: 10 participants

Across the three sessions, 42 participants initially enrolled. Throughout the three sessions, 10 participants dropped out, generally for reasons unrelated to the course (e.g. changing work schedule or illness).

Marketing

Below is the schedule of outreach and marketing activities undertaken by YES:

Date	Platform	Details
15-May-23	Facebook	Session 13 Paid Promo
17-May-23	Email #1	
18-May-23	Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn	Social Media Post #1
23-May-23	Email #2	
1-Jun-23	Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn	Social Media Post #2
2-Jun-23	Facebook/Instagram	Session 13 Paid Promo (Weekend boost)
5-Jun-23	Email #3	
23-Aug-23	Facebook	Session 1 Paid Promo
23-Aug-23	Facebook/Instagram	Session 1 Paid Promo (boost)
23-Aug-23	Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn	Social Media Post #1
24-Aug-23	Email #1	
6-Sep-23	Email #2	
7-Sep-23	September Newsletter	Featured blurb
11-Sep-23	Email #3	
8-Oct-23	October Newsletter	Featured blurb
20-Oct-23	Facebook	Session 2 Paid Promo
20-Oct-23	Facebook/Instagram	Session 2 Paid Promo (boost)
20-Oct-23	Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn	Social Media Post #1
20-Oct-23	Email #1	
31-Oct-23	Email #2	
3-Nov-23	November newsletter	Featured blurb
7-Nov-23	Email #3	

Emails were sent to YES' email list of approximately 1100 individuals.

YES also completed offline marketing, recommending the program through word of mouth to existing clients utilizing other services offered by the organization.

Below are the outreach activities undertaken by RDN:

Date	Platform
4 Apr 2023	Facebook
5 Apr 2023	RDN LinkedIn
19 Apr 2023	RDN LinkedIn
20 Apr 2023	RDN Facebook
4 Aug 2023	RDN Facebook
7 Aug 2023	RDN LinkedIn
15 Aug 2023	RDN Facebook
30 Aug 2023	RDN Facebook
31 Aug 2023	RDN LinkedIn
5 Sept 2023	RDN Facebook
6 Sept 2023	RDN LinkedIn
10 Sept 2023	RDN Facebook
11 Sept 2023	RDN LinkedIn
26 Sept 2023	RDN Facebook
27 Sept 2023	RDN LinkedIn
9 Oct 2023	RDN Facebook
11 Oct 2023	RDN LinkedIn
19 Oct 2023	RDN Facebook
6 Nov 2023	RDN LinkedIn
22 Nov 2023	RDN LinkedIn
23 Nov 2023	RDN Facebook
4 Dec 2023	RDN LinkedIn
4 Dec 2023	RDN Facebook
12 Dec 2023	RDN Facebook
13 Dec 2023	RDN LinkedIn
5 Jan 2024	RDN Facebook
8 Jan 2024	RDN LinkedIn
10 Jan 2024	RDN Facebook
17 Jan 2024	RDN LinkedIn
18 Jan 2024	RDN Facebook

Program Format and Content

For the full course curriculum, see Appendix A.

Classes took place twice a week, from 9:30-12:30 on Zoom. Classes were largely instructor-led and were conducted solely in French. They generally involved different activities, exercises, and subjects using a variety of formats. For example, the teacher would provide time to fill out a worksheet and use call-and-answer to review the responses, or pose questions to the class to be answered by each participant, one by one. Participants often asked questions, either verbally or in the Zoom chatbox. This feature was also used to clarify spelling and grammar and to announce assignments or breaks (e.g. “pause jusqu'à 11h30.”)

Notably, exercises were adapted based on the participants' employment situation. For example, in an exercise where participants were asked to draft a professional email, job seekers were given the prompt to write to an employer enquiring about job opportunities, while employed participants were directed to write to a client or partner.

Participant Bio Data

Biodata was collected from participants at enrolment. Initially, 42 participants enrolled, but three participants dropped out between the biodata collection and the pre-course survey administration, which led to a slight variance in the numbers.

Gender Identity

Gender	Percent - Year 2 (n=49)	Percent - Year 3 (n=42)
Women	77.6%	73.8%
Men	22.4%	23.8%
Non-binary	0	2.4%
Total	100%	100%

The majority of participants in both Years 2 and 3 identified as women.

Age

Age	Percent - Year 2 (n=49)	Percent - Year 3 (n=42)
24 or younger	2.0%	7.1%
25-34	59.2%	40.5%
35-44	20.4%	35.7%
45-54	12.2%	7.1%
55-64	2.0%	4.8%
65-74	4.1%	2.4%
74 or older	0%	2.4%
Total	100%	100%

In Years 2 and 3, the largest share of participants was aged 25-34, and the second largest was aged 35-44. There was greater distribution across these age groups in Year 3.

Highest Level of Education

Education	Percent - Year 2 (n=49)	Percent - Year 3 (n=42)
High school diploma	2.0%	7.1%
Some postsecondary (had not graduated)	2.0%	4.8%
College or university certification	93.9%	73.8%
Other	2.0%	4.8%
Unspecified	0	9.5%
Total	100%	100%

Year 3 saw slightly more diversity across participants' education levels as compared to Year 2, although in both cases, the majority had a college or university certification as their highest level of education.

Mother Tongue

Mother Tongue	Percent - Year 2 (n=49)	Percent - Year 3 (n=42)
English	63.3%	92.9%
Spanish	12.2%	2.4%
Tamil	4.1%	0%
Chinese	4.1%	0%
Russian	2.0%	0%
Cantonese	2.0%	0%
French	2.0%	4.8%
Arabic	2.0%	0%
Romanian	2.0%	0%
Bengali	2.0%	0%
German	2.0%	0%
Korean	2.0%	0%
Total	100%	100%

Participants in Year 3 had significantly less diversity in their mother tongues than in Year 2, although in both years, most participants spoke English as their mother tongue.

Region

In addition to the data collected through course registration, course participants were also asked to complete a pre-course survey that provided additional biodata. 39 participants completed the pre-course survey.

Region	Percent - Year 2 (n=47)	Percent - Year 3 (n=39)
Montréal	61.7%	76.9%
Regions total	38.3%	20.5%
Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine	8.5%	0%
Capitale-National	8.5%	12.8%
Montérégie	6.4%	0%
Bas-Saint-Laurent	6.4%	0%

Laval	2.3%	2.6%
Lanaudière	2.1%	0%
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	2.1%	0%
Outaouais	0%	2.6%
Chaudière-Appalaches	0%	5.1%
Total	100%	100%

In Years 2 and 3, most participants were from Montréal. In Year 3, enrolment among participants from the region dropped significantly - they made up approximately one-fifth of program participants in Year 3, compared to two-fifths in Year 2.

Employment Status

Employment Status	Percent - Year 2 (n=47)	Percent - Year 3 (n=39)
Employed	53.2%	35.9%
Unemployed	44.7%	61.5%
N/A	2.1%	2.6%
Total	100%	100%

Year 3 saw an inversion from Year 2: the majority of participants in Year 3 were unemployed, whereas the majority in Year 2 were employed.

Competencies and Confidence Pre-course Survey for FFTWF Program Participants

Participants were asked to complete a pre-course survey, which was used to assess their pre-course competencies and linguistic confidence. In the survey, participants were asked to self-assess five different French-language competencies and their confidence level when performing specific tasks in French. This provided a baseline to compare their post-course survey results, which asked for self-assessments in the same areas following the completion of the course.

Basic Competencies²

Competency	Strong	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	N/A	Total (n=38)
Basic Written Communication	2.6%	15.8%	60.5%	18.4%	2.6%	0.0%	100%
Basic Comprehension	13.2%	50.0%	31.6%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Basic Verbal Communication	0.0%	23.7%	57.9%	18.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Basic Cultural Understanding	7.9%	52.6%	28.9%	7.9%	0.0%	2.6%	100%
Confidence in speaking French	0.0%	13.2%	52.6%	23.7%	10.5%	0.0%	100%

Participants came to the FFTWF program with a range of different French-language competencies. Across all competencies, the majority of participants indicated that their pre-existing French skills were either “good” or “fair.”

Basic comprehension and basic cultural understanding were the two competencies in which participants scored themselves the highest. The majority of participants (63.2%) indicated that their basic comprehension was either “strong” or “good,” and most participants (60.5%) also indicated that their basic cultural understanding was “strong” or “good.”

Confidence in speaking French was the lowest-scored competency for participants: 23.7% of participants indicated that their confidence was “poor.” Following this, 18.4% of participants reported that their basic written and verbal communication skills were “poor.”

² 39 participants completed the pre-course survey for the 2023 FFTWF program cohorts. However, one participant skipped several questions, so there are only 38 respondents in to some questions

Confidence

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total (n=38)
I feel confident when answering questions in French during an interview or work meeting.	0.0%	7.9%	31.6%	55.3%	5.3%	100.0%

Confidence

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total (n=39)
I feel confident making small talk in French.	0.0%	30.8%	30.8%	28.2%	10.3%	100.0%
I feel confident enough to participate in French professional networking events/conferences.	0.0%	7.7%	28.2%	48.7%	12.8%	100.0%
I feel confident writing a good cover/business letter in French.	0.0%	15.4%	17.9%	41.0%	25.6%	100.0%

When prompted to indicate their agreement with specific statements about their French-language confidence, most participants did not express high levels of self-confidence. No participants “strongly agreed” that they felt confident in any situations described in the survey.

Participants expressed the least confidence in their writing skills: when asked if they felt confident writing a cover or business letter in French, two-thirds of participants (66.6%) either “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed.”

Participants were most confident in their French small talk: 30.8% of participants “agreed” that they felt confident making small talk in French.

Competencies and Confidence Post-course Survey for FFTWF Program Participants

A total of 23 participants (out of the 32 who completed the FFTWF program) completed the post-course survey.

Basic Competencies

Competency	Strong	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Total (n=23)
Basic Written Communication	13.0%	47.8%	30.4%	4.3%	4.3%	100.0%
Basic Comprehension	47.8%	30.4%	13.0%	8.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Basic Verbal Communication	8.7%	47.8%	34.8%	4.3%	4.3%	100.0%
Basic Cultural Understanding	17.4%	47.8%	34.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Confidence in speaking French	13.0%	34.8%	43.5%	4.3%	4.3%	100.0%

Participants' responses to the post-course survey reveal several areas of improvement in their French-language competencies when compared to their responses to the pre-course survey. Across all competencies, the largest share of participants tended to indicate that their French-language skills were either "good" or "fair." This is similar to the pre-course survey findings, but in the post-course survey, a larger proportion of respondents indicated that their skills were "good" as opposed to "fair," while the inverse was true in the pre-course survey. Additionally, a large minority of respondents to the post-course survey indicated that their French skills were "strong;" the proportion of participants who responded that their French skills were "strong" increased across all competencies.

Basic comprehension was the competency in which participants scored themselves the highest; 78.2% of respondents to the post-course survey reported that their basic comprehension was "strong" or "good," compared to 63.2% in the pre-course survey.

The competency in which participants expressed the greatest improvement was basic written communication. Before the course, only 18.4% of respondents indicated that their written skills were "strong" or "good" compared to 60.8% of participants following the completion of the course.

While the post-course survey results indicate an overall improvement in participants' competencies after completing the FFTWF course, a higher percentage of respondents to

the post-course survey as compared to the pre-course survey indicated that their basic written communication and verbal communication were “very poor.”³

Confidence

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total (n=23)
I feel confident when answering questions in French during an interview or work meeting.	4.3%	52.2%	26.1%	13.0%	4.3%	100.0%
I feel confident making small talk in French.	13.0%	52.2%	21.7%	8.7%	4.3%	100.0%
I feel confident enough to participate in French professional networking events/conferences.	4.3%	34.8%	34.8%	21.7%	4.3%	100.0%
I feel confident writing a good cover/business letter in French.	21.7%	56.5%	13.0%	8.7%	0.0%	100.0%

The post-course survey also reveals an improvement in participants’ confidence levels after completing the FFTWF program. In the pre-course survey, the largest share of respondents tended to “disagree” that they felt confident in the situations described, whereas in the post-course survey, the majority of participants tended to “agree” that they felt confident in the same situations.

Additionally, the proportion of respondents who indicated that they “strongly agreed” that they felt confident in the situations described increased across the board. In the pre-course survey, no respondents “strongly agreed” that they felt confident in any of the situations described.

Confidence in writing a cover or business letter was the area in which participants expressed the most confidence, and it was also the area that saw the most improvement in confidence level. More than three-quarters of participants indicated that they either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt confident completing this task following the course, compared to the

³ This is related to the survey sample size: the 2.6% of respondents who indicated that their written communication skills were “very poor” in the pre-course survey amounts to one person out of the 38 total respondents, while the 4.3% of respondents who indicated that their written communication skills were “very poor” in the post-course survey also amounts to one person out of the 23 total respondents.

15.8% who “agreed” prior. This was also the task for which the largest proportion of participants felt the least confidence prior to the course (26.3% “strongly disagreed” that they felt confident).

Overall Satisfaction

Regarding overall satisfaction with the course, 82.6% of respondents either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were satisfied with the course, and 73.9% of survey respondents either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the FFTWF classes met their needs.

Overall, the data suggests that the FFTWF program had a strong positive impact on participants. The survey findings indicate that the program improved participants’ French-language skills and, perhaps equally importantly, boosted their confidence in various situations and tasks.

Participant Feedback

This section is organized thematically according to feedback received from participants through closed and open-ended survey responses and interviews.

Instruction

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total (n=23)
The class instructor was easy to talk to and encouraged me to ask questions.	65.2%	30.4%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
The class instructor explained things in a way I could understand.	73.9%	26.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
The class instructor adapted the course content to different employment situations.	52.2%	39.1%	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Overall, the class instructor was an effective teacher.	69.6%	30.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Participants had overwhelmingly positive feedback to share about the instructor in the post-course survey. All post-course survey respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the instructor was an effective teacher. Additionally, all post-course survey respondents

either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that he explained things in a way that was easy to understand, and the majority (95.7%) of respondents also “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the course instructor was easy to talk to and encouraged them to ask questions.

Many respondents shared positive feedback in the post-course survey. One respondent remarked: “Louis is a great teacher! This was the first French class I have taken since elementary school, and Louis quickly dispelled any anxieties I had about my language skills and I have much more confidence when speaking in French.” Another shared, “Louis was very good at time management during the courses and everything was run very smoothly.”

Two main highlights shared by survey respondents were the instructor’s kindness and support in bolstering their confidence, as well as the course pacing. Similarly, interviewees consistently remarked that their overall impression of the class was positive, and when asked why, they cited the instructor’s demeanour and teaching style.

French Level of Participants

In both the open-ended survey questions and interviews, participants discussed the different levels of French-language proficiency within the class. Several respondents indicated they had higher or lower French-language proficiency than the course required, impacting their learning experience.

My French level was too low to be accepted into this course. If my French level were appropriate I would have gotten a lot more from the course. Instead, I could see how much I needed to improve before this course could really help me. Were I a true intermediate, I would have found this more helpful. [...] The instructor did well with the diverse levels he had, and the material was appropriate for the course. However, I should have been directed to a foundation-building course prior to taking this.

- Survey Respondent

It might be better to take more time in assessing students to really see if they need more foundation levels of French before recommending them to this program. Providing foundation levels of French would be very helpful.

- Survey Respondent

At the other end of the spectrum, an interviewee with a high level of French-language proficiency indicated that she was often bored in class because the class level was below what she needed. She expressed that she would have preferred to know this in advance or that it was more clearly noted in the course marketing.

Conversational French

Survey respondents and interviewees both highlighted that they appreciated the opportunities to practice their spoken French in class, and expressed interest in having more opportunities to do so. Some survey respondents indicated that they preferred to have these

within the class, with one respondent stating, “We would have benefited from more conversations in French with each other to gain better confidence and be more at ease with speaking French.”

Several interviewees indicated that they appreciated the breakout sessions; these enabled them to have one-on-one time with other participants to practice their spoken French. However, they highlighted different options that they felt would strengthen their spoken French: one interviewee suggested that having one-on-one time with Louis would have enabled them to get more detailed feedback, while another expressed interest in having informal exchanges with the entire class.

Additional Courses

Participants also indicated they would be interested in taking an additional course to improve their French conversational skills: “A class that focuses on conversation would be helpful. A group that meets for a shorter time (1 hour) just to talk.” Similarly, another survey respondent stated, “Great course, I learned a lot and it was really well designed. I think a continuation or a course on French conversation would be beneficial.”

Other participants also expressed interest in different course formats, especially a longer course that would give them more time to delve into the course content and practice their French. One interviewee indicated the course was “like drinking from a fire hose” – full of valuable content they moved through too quickly for her to absorb. Participants shared different timelines they would prefer; one interviewee indicated that a three-month course would be ideal for them, while another stated that they would prefer a six-month course.

Course Content

Participants shared specific feedback about the course content through open-ended survey questions and interviews. Several remarked that the syllabus was thoughtfully put together and well-paced and that the content was highly useful.

We had opportunities to talk, write and present to the group helping us stay engaged and practice skills. The progression of the content made it easy to slowly build on skills until we felt more confident. I also liked having a guest to practice asking questions.

- Survey Respondent

Three respondents to the post-course survey highlighted that the job-search-specific content was especially helpful.

The exercises were relevant. I felt myself changing, learning and getting excited about practicing what I had learned during the course. The fact that we all leave with a corrected French cover letter and C.V. is priceless!

- Survey Respondent

An interviewee who was already employed noted that the job-search content felt less relevant to her but that she appreciated the instructor's efforts to tie in her current situation to the course. Ultimately, however, she would have preferred a course on French for the workplace without a job-search lens. Another interviewee expressed a similar idea; she would be interested in course content specific to her industry/profession.

Program Provider Insights

YES Program staff shared insights on the course through activity reports. The key challenges they identified often revolved around course enrollment. They described how they increased the enrollment threshold with the understanding that some participants would likely drop out: in the first cohort, for example, they registered 17 students, five of whom dropped out, yielding the target enrollment of 12 participants. They expressed concerns about how the drop-out of participants impacts target enrollment numbers and the challenges they face in planning for and mitigating this unpredictability.

Program staff also noted that the fact that they were able to enrol more students than the target number highlighted the program's popularity and success. Even in cases where participants dropped out, they dropped out for reasons unrelated to the course (e.g. finding a new job, illness).

Additionally, program staff discussed the challenges of implementing changes and recommendations to a program in an iterative evaluation setting, but also generally when implementing changes to improve a program. They stressed the importance of increased support from funders and more internal capacity to implement larger program changes, such as curriculum revisions that involved increasing instructor time and program costs. Second, program staff discussed the challenges of deploying and implementing experimental program models. While the hope is that experimental and pilot programs can yield positive results, program staff expressed concerns about cases where pilot and experimental programs fail to meet the program's objectives. They stressed that the failures encountered while testing program approaches must be understood as valuable learning opportunities, particularly with program funders.

Cumulative Findings and Overview (Years 2 and 3)

Shared Findings

The evaluations in Years 2 and 3 of the FFTWF program returned similar findings and feedback. The quantitative survey data reveals consistent improvement in participants' French-language competencies and confidence. The quantitative data also shows a high level of overall satisfaction with the course and a high level of satisfaction with the course instructor.

Quantitative findings about the course instructor were supplemented by the qualitative findings collected in the evaluation. In both open-ended survey questions and interviews, participants remarked that Louis was an excellent instructor who structured the course effectively and made participants feel safe when practicing their French.

Across both years, participants also provided the same feedback about French-language levels and program formats. Participants indicated that the course housed too many individuals with diverse French-language competencies in the same place; they suggested having multiple courses to better accommodate participants' diverse levels and learning needs. They additionally suggested having more options in terms of schedule (e.g. evening classes, weekend classes, as well as both shorter and longer course timelines), again to accommodate the different interests and needs of participants.

Finally, participants indicated they would have liked more opportunities to practice their spoken French within the course.

Changes between Year 2 and Year 3

Evaluators identified several areas for improvement within the Year 2 evaluation: participants indicated that they would prefer small class sizes, more written assignments, and the opportunity to connect online with other participants to engage in informal exchange and practice. Following this, the French for the Workforce Program was adjusted in Year 3 to cap class sizes at 12 participants and include more written assignments.

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In interviews, evaluators asked Year 3 participants about class sizes and the written assignments. Interviewees indicated both were good: class sizes were the right size to allow for exchange without being overcrowded, while the writing assignments provided students with sufficient opportunities to receive feedback. Participants also noted that the French-language resume and cover letter they created were highlights of the course.

The recommendation to create an online platform was not integrated in Year 3; participants remarked that they would still be interested in the opportunity to engage in informal exchange with their classmates and that having a facilitator would better support this.

The recommendation to offer multiple program formats and levels could not be integrated into Year 3 of the program; it remains a recommendation for future cohorts.

Recommendations

Building upon the data collected in this evaluation, as well as the data collected during Year 2 of this project, we offer the following recommendations to further improve the course and enable it to better meet the needs of future participants.

1. Maintain small class sizes

Participants in the larger cohorts offered during Year 2 remarked that the course was too large, while participants in the smaller cohort of Year 2, as well as all cohorts of Year 3, indicated that the class size worked well. For this reason, we recommend maintaining class size at approximately 12 individuals.

2. Introduce different course formats and content

Participants remarked on the value that different course formats and different content would offer. These included:

- a. A course offered at a different time slot (e.g. the evening)
- b. A course that offered a different distribution of hours (e.g. three times a week for 2 hours)
- c. Two courses structured as “Part 1” and “Part 2” (where, e.g., Part 1 utilizes the current course curriculum and Part 2 introduces a new curriculum focused on workplace communications)
- d. Longer courses (e.g. three months)
- e. Courses more closely tailored to skill level
- f. Courses focused on different professions, contexts, or vocabularies
- g. Courses that offer participants the opportunity to engage in informal conversation and exchange

3. Increase opportunities to practice spoken French

Participants expressed interest in more opportunities to practice their spoken French. While some expressed interest in an additional course that would meet this need, others expressed interest in having more time to converse during class, both in small breakout groups and with the entire class.

4. Online platform for participants to connect

Many interviewees indicated that an online platform or discussion forum would benefit their learning experience. They suggested that it would give them space to connect with other participants and share their experiences (e.g. with interviews). Furthermore, they would be able to practice their written French skills informally.

Implementing this recommendation may be feasible in the short term via a platform such as Discord or Discourse.org, but if stakeholders are interested in developing a different platform, this may be a longer-term recommendation appropriate for a grant.

Conclusion

This evaluation is delivered following Year 3 of a three-year project. It presents the evaluation findings from Year 3 and compares these to the findings of the Year 2 evaluation. In general, findings are similar: students experienced an improvement in both their French language competencies and confidence and indicated that the course instructor provided a warm but professional environment that fostered positive growth.

Key recommendations to improve the course centre on different course formats and increased opportunities to practice spoken French. Participant feedback reveals that any constructive comments or dissatisfaction generally do not arise from inherent or structural problems with the program but rather because the program is not designed to meet the needs of a broad range of users. This highlights the necessity of expanding the program into multiple formats to better meet the needs of diverse users.

Appendix A

CURRICULUM

WEEK 1: Introducing the Course Plan, Comprehension and Communication: Job Posting
Competencies met: Evaluation of the participant's communication and comprehension of French as a second language at the beginning of the course, setting expectations for what they can expect to learn, and how they can expect to improve. Evaluated through teacher's observations and correction of verbal and written communication, and participant's self-assessment (pre-survey, created by YES and French teacher). Oral and written communication, and comprehension (listening and analyzing) will be practiced and tested (formative, not summative).

Class 1:

1. Introductions – welcome to the class (from this moment, communication in French-only begins)
2. Translation 101 – a YES brochure
3. Course outline – breakdown, answering questions
4. Oral communication: participants and teacher introduce themselves

Class 2:

1. Closed Questions – Asking and Answering questions that warrant YES or NO answers.
2. Verbal communication: preparing and asking questions related to the workplace
3. Reading comprehension: 3 job postings
4. Verbal and written communication: Participants compose written (email) and oral (voicemail) responses to employers (interview, job posting, application follow-up)
5. Evaluation (formative, teacher evaluates participants' responses in a group setting)
6. Workplace terminology practice: answering the question “tell me about yourself”

WEEK 2: Comprehension and Communication: Interview Questions

Competencies met: Participant's practice answering and asking questions, preparing them for the interview setting. Making connections between vocabulary learned in previous week and answering open questions (not yes/no answers).

Class 3:

1. Theory on Open questions: expanding vocabulary / responses beyond yes/no
2. Writing exercise: practicing responses to open questions
3. Oral communication: Asking these prepared questions to fellow participants, self and peer feedback/evaluation
4. Vocabulary exercise: comprehending, answering and asking questions with the verbs “can” and “want to” using workplace terminology
5. Self-evaluation: participants evaluate (formative/summative) their own written and oral responses/work

Class 4:

1. Theory on open questions: Responding and asking “which” “what” questions
2. Written communication: answering questions, self-evaluation of responses
3. Callback/review of theory on answering questions
4. Oral evaluation: asking 10 questions to an employer during an interview (preparing and delivery being evaluated)
5. Reading comprehension: Catching errors/faulty question/sentence structure

WEEK 3: Written Communication: Cover letter

Competencies met: Written communication to employers/hiring managers of skills, qualifications, previous experiences and achievements. Bridging cultural barriers by providing participants with the opportunity to communicate what makes them a strong fit for a job, in a second language. Comprehension (workplace terminology) is being tested, as participants have to analyze what the employers are looking for in a candidate in a job description, and tailor their experiences to meet these requirements. Preparation of documents (CV, cover letter) in a Quebec/French-standard, verb tenses, terminology, understanding the sentence structure/style differences compared to writing these documents in English.

Class 5:

1. Theory: Cover letters
2. Reading: structuring a cover letter in French
3. Written communication: Verb tenses (perfect tense) and workplace terminology for cover letters
4. Answering questions (perfect-tense) about job hunt
5. Comprehension and writing: verb tenses continued
6. Written exercises and self-evaluation: identifying and using verb tenses in cover letters

Class 6:

1. Theory: prepositions
2. Comprehension exercises: identifying prepositions in cover letters
3. Written exercises: In/To and From, and self-evaluation
4. Reading exercise: General skills and qualifications for employment
5. Oral communication exercises: Communicating your professional and personal skills
6. Written exercise: Writing a cover letter
7. Evaluation by teacher: Cover letter

WEEK 4: CV Preparation and Course Review

Competencies met: Participants draw from knowledge and practice from previous classes, application of learnings and understandings to the CV (workplace terminology, verb tenses, analysis of what an employer is looking for, communication of skills, tailoring). Bridging cultural barriers by explaining the differences between structuring a CV in French vs English. Participants will be evaluated on their interviewing skills (oral responses to questions), reading comprehension (analysis of the terminology and identifying skills).

Class 7:

1. Theory: structuring your CV
2. Theory: how to present negative work experiences on a CV and in an interview (getting fired, conflicts with colleagues/employers, etc.)
3. Oral communication exercise: group discussions on framing negative experiences
4. Sharing learnings and experiences with the entire group
5. Written exercise: Chronological and Skills-based/structured CVs
6. Evaluation of the CVs by teacher
7. Terminology: verbs and tenses for CV writing

Class 8:

1. Brainstorming session: Interviews
2. Group discussion/theory on common interview mistakes
3. Reading exercise: Scenario, analysis of applicant profiles based on the job they are applying to (skills, qualifications, experience)
4. Oral communication exercise: Which applicant would you select?
5. Reviewing interview questions
6. Evaluation: Prepare 10 interview questions
7. Speed interviews among participants

WEEK 5: The Experiential Learning Week

Putting the theory of the past four weeks and skills learnt on display, the fifth week of the program will consist of two classes where students will both practice their new vocabulary, grammar, networking skills, while also being exposed to the Quebec community. This fifth week would give participants an opportunity to practice conversational skills with support and feedback from peers and the instructor, encouraging the formation of a community and a group learning experience for the benefit of these students. In response to survey feedback from previous cohorts, students will have more extensive opportunities to practice their French-language networking skills (questions, conducting research, connecting with external guest speakers with experience in the Quebec labour market). Finally, participants will also self-evaluate what they have learned, how they have improved (survey created by YES/RDN and French teacher).

Class 9:

1. Theory: Brief overview of skills (personal and professional) and how to connect them to the employment/job postings that were discussed in the previous four weeks.
2. Explanation of activity: 16personalities test, how to read and analyze results
3. Communicative activity: rotating break-out rooms, 2 by 2 (20 students = 10 breakout rooms)
 - a. Exchanging results, whether or not they agree with their results and why (based on their personal and professional experiences)
 - b. Answering questions from previous courses (for example "tell me about yourself" interview question) using workplace terminology and appropriate tenses
 - c. Discussing projects, both personal and professional, with the skills related to the personality test results

- d. Peer feedback and self-evaluation
- e. Goal: increase comfort and confidence with oral communication

Class 10:

1. Feedback survey distributed.
2. Bilingual professionals from Quebec-based organizations/companies recruited as guest speakers. (These volunteers will be recruited by YES and RDN. Each organization will be responsible for the recruitment of volunteers for 2 cohorts / year)
3. Students will have researched and prepared industry and role-specific questions for the speaker to encourage discussions about the Quebec workforce according to the professional's experience.
 - a. Motivational talking points relevant for non-native French speakers: entering the French workforce as an English speaker (for example how to convey their emotional intelligence/soft skills to a French hiring manager and manage interview stress)
 - b. Opportunity for students to raise concerns and ask questions around their experience of integration and how to best approach job applications/interviews in French