Social Impact Assessment
Spring 2016
Lauren Ducrey
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key points of the assessment

In the scope of HEC Paris’s MSc in Sustainability and Social Innovation, Lauren Ducrey conducted a social impact assessment of the NYC chapter of the French Heritage Language Program, an educational initiative led by the FACE Foundation in partnership with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy since 2005. The program provides free French classes (afterschool and Advanced Placement) to French-speaking high school students recently immigrated to the US, enrolled as English Language Learners (ELLs) in the Internationals Network for Public High Schools with the aim of making French an asset in their becoming new Americans.

Methodology

This study aims at understanding the impact of NYC chapter of the French Heritage Language Program on all of its local stakeholders. To do this Lauren Ducrey interviewed 72 students (54 in person, 18 via written surveys), 7 teachers and assistant teachers from the program, 3 principals from partner high schools within the INPS, 2 founding members of the program, 2 executives from the INPS, the President of the FACE Foundation, the Cultural Counselor and Deputy Cultural Counselor of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in NYC, 3 alumni from the program. Student interviews took between 8 and 12 minutes. Teacher interviews varied between 15 min to 1 hour. Interviews with secondary stakeholders lasted between 30 min and 1 hour.

Overall, the program has a positive impact on 3 fronts.

The FHLP fosters:

- **Linguistic proficiency** by offering a unique setting for new non-English speaking immigrants to maintain their mother tongue and hasten English acquisition.
- **Academic success** thanks to college readiness projects (mainly AP French)
- **Cultural awareness** of having a unique culture and being part of a valued francophone community.

Further improvements identified by this study:

- **Expand students’ cultural awareness** regarding African and Caribbean countries being integral to *la francophonie*.
- **Award official recognition** to all of the students’ work and skills
- **Insure the program’s sustainability** by consolidating relationships with educational partners.

New horizons for the project

**Developing new prospects in existing locations**

- Develop intra-campus relations
- Make the FHLP integral to the curriculum of international high schools
- Consolidate the FHLP’s project-based arts-driven educational model
The program offers both ADVANCED PLACEMENT FRENCH CLASSES that run during school hours and AFTERSCHOOL CLASSES. Classes count between 4 and 26 students. The content for AP French is standardized; content for afterschool is based on artistic projects and workshops with external partners (theater competition with the Lycée Français de NY, music production with professionals etc.)

The TEACHERS are not certified NYC teachers, however they form an eclectic team of freelancers with teaching and/or artistic backgrounds and hail from Africa, Haiti, France and the US.
Formalized as a 501(c)3 in 2004, the INPS’s expertise lies in its ability to design high schools and prepare educators to successfully serve English language learners (ELLs). Students in these high schools are in the country for four years or less and score in the bottom quartile on English language tests at the time of admission. The network’s mission is to provide quality education for recently arrived immigrants and ensure all these students have access to a quality high school education that prepares them for college, career and full participation in democratic society.

Source: internationalsnps.org
WHO ARE THE STUDENTS OF THE FHLP?

Framing the program’s impact

THE AVERAGE FHLP STUDENT

The average FHLP student is a 16-year-old who immigrated to the US from Western Africa or Haiti nearly 2 years ago, now living with a parent or relative. Most have come to the US fleeing unrest in their homeland to seek for asylum, family reunification and/or better opportunities overall.

1. 94.4% of students live with at least one parent or a close relative (aunt, uncle, grandparent), and the few remain students live with a tutor.

1% 13% 21% 8% 15% 3% 1%

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 21

average

Years old

Distribution of students by grade

56% 44%

33% 27% 27% 9%

9th 10th 11th 12th

Countries of origin

Haiti 22%
Senegal 18%
France 1%
Burundi 1%
Togo 14%
Ivory Coast 11%
Burkina Faso 7%
Congo 3%
Mali 3%
N/A 3%

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LAUREN DUCREY - SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT - SPRING 2016
**Natural Born Multilinguals**

Language used
At school Before the US

- French only: 94%
- French and another language: 6%

Use of French at home before the US

- Yes: 79%
- No: 21%

100% of those who spoke French also spoke another language at home before the US.
100% of those who did not speak French at home did speak French in school and another language at home. Sometimes even 2.

= 100% of the students grew up bilingual or trilingual

Other languages spoken at home before the US:
- Creole
- Wolof
- Fulani
- Kotokoli
- Ewe
- Malinke
- Mandingo
- Bambara
- Mooré
- Tchamba
- Lingala
- Dyula
- Guro
- Munukutuba
- Susu
- Soninke
**Level of English when moving to the US**

**MOVING TO THE USA KNOWING BARELY ANY ENGLISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Additional languages spoken at home before the US other than French</th>
<th>Other languages spoken at home in the US</th>
<th>Evolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creole</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolof</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulani</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kotokoli</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malinke</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandingo</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambara</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooré</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tchamba</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingala</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyula</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guro</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soninke</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE DAILY CHALLENGES OF BEING A FRENCH SPEAKER AND AN ELL (ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER)

The linguistic impact

Evolution in the use of French and English at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French at home</th>
<th>English at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before the US</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the US</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked “Do you believe knowing how to speak, read and write French is useful here in the US?” 96% of students responded with a firm yes.

Places where students claim to speak the most French in the US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at school</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during FHLP classes</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at home</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with friends, outside of school</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE LOCATIONS AND USES OF FRENCH IN THE USA

Comparative use of French and English in extra curricular activities in the USA

French therefore remains a significant lifeline for these young immigrants to remain in touch with their native communities.

Why do you believe Knowing French is useful in the US?

- It helped me learn English
- It will help me get a job
- It’s important for me personally because it’s my language
- It allows to interact with people in international settings
- It’s a skillset that sets me apart from others
- Other

FAMILY MATTERS

Places where students speak the most French in the US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading a book</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the internet</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using social media</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching movies</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking over the phone</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing a letter or email</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to music</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does your family tell you it is important to keep up your French?

- yes, very important
- yes, somewhat important
- no
- I don’t know

Families from SENEGAL AND TOGO particularly stress the need for their children to keep up their French.
SCHOOL: WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

Since starting school in the US, do you feel like you have lost your French?

- 26% No, I have improved
- 19% No, I have maintained the same level
- 54% Yes I have

The awareness of losing these skills can explain the 32% of FHLP students who would rather the class be an elective, with grades: most explained that the more rigorous setting of an elective class could allow them to really focus on their skills. Another 28% said they would like the FHLP to be both an elective and afterschool program.

Where do you feel most confident speaking French?

- 17% at home
- 21% at school
- 32% during FHL classes
- 10% everywhere, French is my language

50% is the proportion of students who claimed that “no, the FHLP does not feel like any other class” because “it’s a place I come to speak French.”
**THE FHLP: A HOME AWAY FROM HOME**

**Cultural and social impact**

**Why do you believe knowing French is useful in the US?**

- 33% It’s important for me personally because it’s my language
- 15% It’s useful in my career
- 23% It’s because I want to visit France
- 21% It’s a place where I come to speak French
- 8% Other

**What makes FHL classes feel different?**

- 51% It’s afterschool so it’s more fun
- 23% It’s a place I come to speak about my culture
- 15% It’s a place where I come to speak French
- 1% Other

**THE FHLP: A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS**

Did French help you make friends when you first arrived in the US?

- 74% Yes, many/my best friends
- 20% Yes, a few friends
- 6% Not really

100% of the respondents from Bronx International HS asserted that that French allowed them meet their best friends, as did 88% of students at International Community HS, 80% at Union Square IHS and 75% at Claremont IHS.

Several countries of origin stood out in this segment: the Ivory Coast, Senegal, Togo and Guinea.
How would you describe your relationship with the other students of the FHLP?

- 56%: They're good friends, I might even see them outside of school
- 24%: They're school friends
- 20%: They're just classmates I see in this class

Certain schools stood out at creating particularly strong groups of friends within their FHLP classes.

100% of respondents both at Community IHS in the Bronx and at the IHS for Health and Sciences in Queens asserted that the other FHLP students were good friends, as did 75% of the respondents at Lafayette IHS. Half of the students at Claremont IHS answered the program regroups their good friends, the other half referred to their classmates as school friends.

Bringing Awareness to the Many Faces of La Francophonie: An Ongoing Challenge

What places or countries spontaneously come to mind when you think about "French" or the "French language?"

- 83%: France
- 60%: My country
- 34%: Countries neighboring my own
- 30%: Canada
BECOMING A NEW AMERICAN

Academic and projected professional impact

Today, living in the US, why do you believe knowing French is useful?

- 23% it helped me learn English
- 23% it will help me get a job
- 15% it’s important to me personally, because it’s my language
- 21% I can take AP French and get credit for college
- 23% It allows me to interact with different people in an international setting
- 8% It’s a unique skillset that sets me apart

THE AWARENESS OF FRENCH AS AN ACADEMIC ASSET

Are you already or are you interested in taking the AP French exam?

- 64% yes
- 1% maybe
- 4% no
- 26% I don’t know

Students from Haiti, the Ivory Coast and Guinea appeared particularly intent on taking the AP French exam.
Why do you plan on or are taking the AP French exam?

- 50% it will help me get into college
- 45% to improve my French and challenge myself
- 5% because my teacher(s) want me to

FRENCH BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL: COLLEGE AND CAREER

How important do you want French to be in your college curriculum?

- 74% I want to keep on taking French classes
- 14% I want to major in French
- 8% I do not care to keep it up
- 4% I don’t know

Students from Haiti, Senegal and Togo appeared particularly intent on actively keeping up French in college.

Do you want French to play an important part in your job?

- 46% I want a job that involves French at least a little
- 38% I want a job very related to the French language
- 6% I do not care for a job that involves French
- 10% I don’t know
**WHY SHOULD SCHOOLS SHOULD CARE?**

**A UNIQUE PROGRAM ALIGNED WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS**

The principals interviewed for this assessment all highlighted how unique the program is: it is the only heritage language afterschool program offered in their schools that focused both on language and culture.

**AP FRENCH:**

**A WIN-WIN FOR BOTH STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS**

1. **Quality Report Cards** rank NYC schools according to a range of criteria among which is college readiness. By allowing it students to prepare and take AP French, the FHLP directly contributes to improving the report cards of its partner schools by contributing to college readiness.

2. At the IHS at Lafayette, the FHLP’s AP French has inspired a litter of other AP language classes.

3. Through AP French, the FHLP creates a **win-win situation**: schools receive recognition without having to mobilize teaching staff, examination fees are waived for low income students, and the test champions student’s unique skills.

**DEVELOP NEW PROSPECTS IN EXISTING LOCATIONS**

**DEVELOP INTRA-CAMPUS RELATIONS**

International high schools are located on campuses that can house up to 8 other schools, which cater to English speakers. The FHLP can recruit French-speaking students in other non-international schools within existing campuses and/or partake in exchange projects with other culture clubs from the same school.

**MAKE THE FHLP INTEGRAL TO THE CURRICULUM OF INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS**

In the INPS, 11th graders must complete an **INTERNSHIP** and 12th graders must complete a **NATIVE LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO** that invites students to reflect upon the experience of having a native language. The FHLP be of assistance for both these core requirement

**CONSOLIDATE THE FHLP’S PROJECT-BASED ARTS-DRIVEN EDUCATIONAL MODEL**

Music writing : 33%
Creative writing: 26%
Theater production: 25%
Reading and literature: 24%
Open debate and discussion: 17%

What is your favorite way of practicing French?